



Festival Tours of India

Nepal - Sri Lanka - Bhutan



State Express

INDIA

NEPAL - BHUTAN - SRI LANKA





Festival Tours

India - Nepal - Bhutan - Sri Lanka

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Tour starts	19 March 2024 in Delhi
Tour ends	26 March 2024 in Delhi
Location	Vrindavan
Festival Dates	19 - 20 March 2024

Holi festival is one of most interesting and colourful festivals celebrated in India. Holi in Braj region is especially charming in its uniqueness. The festivities begin days before the main day of the festival, from the Phalgun Amavas to Ekadashi. During this period, the region comes alive with artists singing around in Braj language and performing dance dramas depicting the life of Lord Krishna, temples and houses beautifully lit up and decorated, and streets covered with colors. It is a special and an exclusive tour to witness this unique experience. Besides, you will also see world famous "Taj Mahal" in Agra and historical city of Delhi.

HOLI FESTIVAL IN BRAJ

7 NIGHTS / 8 DAYS TOUR: VRINDAVAN - MATHURA - AGRA - DELHI

DAY 1: DELHI - VRINDAVAN (190 KM/4 HOURS): 19 MARCH 2024 (HOLI CELEBRATION AT BARSANA)

Morning drive to Vrindavan for check in at hotel. Afternoon leave for Barsana to witness the most vibrant festival of Color. Thousands of people from all corners of India visit Mathura and Vrindavan especially on this occasion. The festivities begin with Lathmar Holi played in Barsana, a small village near Mathura. Lathmar Holi usually begins around a week before the main Holi day. During the celebrations, women from Barsana village gather with wooden sticks in their hands to welcome men from Nandgaon. This is part of the tradition as Hindu Mythology says that Lord Krishna along with his friends visited Barsana, Radha's village (Radha was Lord Krishna's girlfriend), to tease her and other Gopis (girls) by throwing colored water on them. In retaliation, Radha and Gopis chased Krishna and his friends to beat them up with sticks. Even today, people from Nandgoan and Barsana follow the ritual. Men soaked in colored water arrive in Barsana and tease women by singing provocative songs. The women then beat them with sticks (Lathis) and men use shields to protect themselves. Later in the evening, return to hotel for overnight stay.



DAY 2: VRINDAVAN: 20 MARCH 2024

(HOLI CELEBRATION AT NANDGAON)

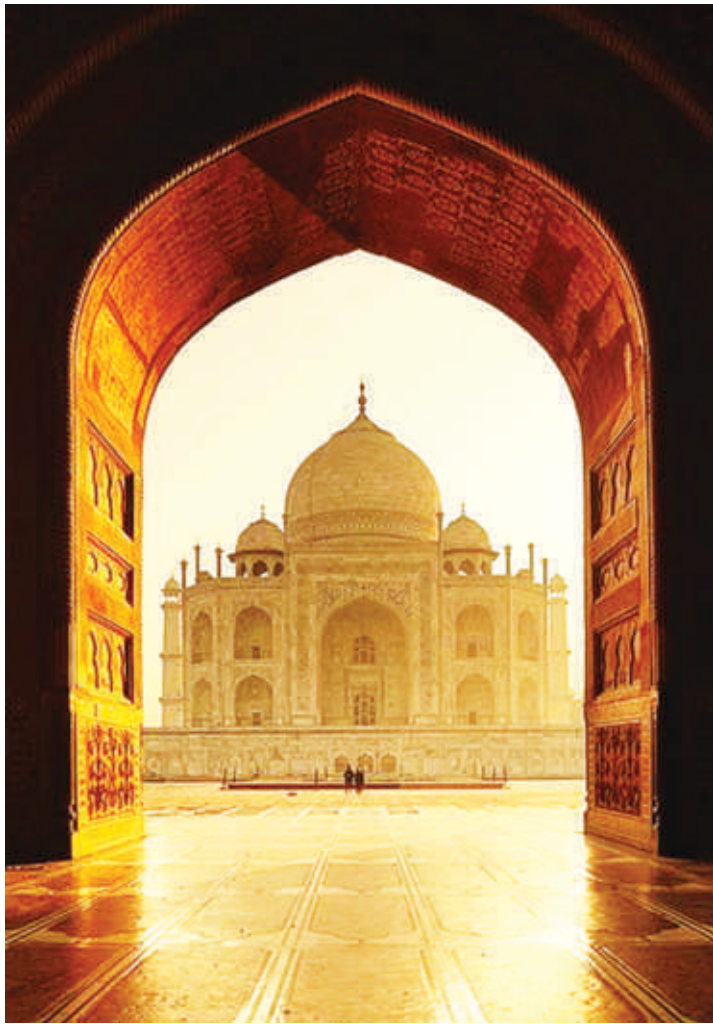
Morning breakfast at the hotel and then leave for Nandgaon as celebration in Barsana is followed by similar celebrations in Nandgaon (Krishna's village) on the very next day. It was at Nandgaon that Krishna spent his childhood. As the legend goes, Radha with her friends called Gopis would come to Nandgaon on this day to take revenge on Krishna and his friends by splashing color on them. Since the women do not go, men and trans-genders dressed as women representing them from Barsana go to Nandgaon to celebrate Holi with the men there. They are welcomed with water and colour in the village. This is very unique as the menfolk play Holi with women in a way which is not sexual in its approach but it has the rustic element of wooing and teasing. The main celebrations are held in the courtyard of the temple at Nandgaon and soon the courtyard transforms itself into a visual delight of beautiful colour-explosion. People from both the villages sit across each other singing and dancing here. Overnight stay.

DAY 3: VRINDAVAN: 21 MARCH 2024

(HOLI CELEBRATION AT BANKE BIHARI TEMPLE)

The Banke Bihari Temple hosts a week long celebrations during Holi here. During the festivities, Bihariji (Krishna's popular name in Braj area) is dressed up in white clothes and Goswamis (priests in the temple) sprinkle colour on everyone the whole atmosphere is made even livelier with music (Bhajans) in the background and people dance to the tunes. On this day of Ekadashi before Holi, there are special celebrations at famous Banke Bihari Temple at Vrindavan in the afternoon after the Temple gate opens at about 4 pm. Holi is celebrated not with colour, but with flowers. That is why it is called "Phoolon wali holi" meaning Holi with flowers. Overnight stay.





DAY 4: VRINDAVAN – FATEHPUR SIKRI- AGRA (110 KM / 3 HOURS): 22 MARCH 2024

Morning we shall leave for Agra. While on our way we shall halt at Fatehpur Sikri. Fatehpur Sikri is a well-known historical place of architectural significance. It is an ancient city built in 16th century by the Mughal emperor Akbar. Akbar built this city in honor of Sheikh Salim Chishti, a Sufi saint, who had predicted the birth of Akbar's son Jahangir. It has been recognized as one of the many UNESCO heritage sites in India. Then proceed to Agra. On arrival check in at the hotel. Afternoon visit Agra Fort and then Sikandara, where lies the Tomb of the Emperor “Akbar the Great”. Return to hotel for overnight stay.

DAY 5: AGRA – VRINDAVAN: 23 MARCH 2024

Morning visit world famous “Taj Mahal” during sunrise, the monument of love immortalized in marble. It was built by Emperor Shah Jahan in the memory of his Queen Mumtaz. Everyone has most likely seen a picture of Taj, but nothing really comes close to the real thing –the Taj Mahal looks a lot better in reality than in a picture. Back to hotel for breakfast.

After breakfast leave for Vrindavan. Today is the day to celebrate Holi festival with emotions as you will witness a special celebration with poor widows. Widows in India always had a difficult life. They were often banished from their homes and were compelled to live in far off ashrams in places like Varanasi and Vrindavan. They would wear only white clothes and could never use colour or play Holi. It is only couple of years ago that the widows of Pagal Baba Widow Ashram, Vrindavan decided to do away with this ritual and play with colour. It will be really be very encouraging if you support this noble cause by participating in Holi with them and bring some cheer and colour to their life. Check in at the hotel for overnight stay.



DAY 6: VRINDAVAN (MATHURA): 24 MARCH 2024

Today again the focus will shift to Banke Bihari temple in the morning as the temple opens its doors to all visitors to come and play Holi with the lord Krishna himself. The priests throw colour and holy water and the crowd chants madly in unison. It's an unbelievable experience to be a part of this event until the doors of the temple are shut at lunch time. In the afternoon, leave for Mathura to participate in the colourful Holi procession which starts at Vishram Ghat. In the procession, there are about ten vehicles which are decorated with flowers, and some even have kids dressed up as Radha-Krishna. Later in the evening, it is time for Holika Dahan which means burning of effigy of Holika, the devil. Overnight stay.



DAY 7: VRINDAVAN (MATHURA): 25 MARCH 2024

Today is big Holiday, the biggest event takes place at the historical Dwarkadheesh Temple in Mathura. On this day, there is tradition of making and drinking bhang which is an edible preparation of cannabis. We shall come to Vishram ghat to catch the process of making bhang by the priests. You may also try a glass yourself. The temple opens at 10 o'clock in the morning and there is a big crowd outside the gates by then playing Holi and throwing color on anyone who comes there. The atmosphere inside the temple is really great. Priest play Dhols and everyone there is singing and dancing. You can also join and enjoy the celebration by being apart. Later return to hotel and it is time to relax after all these fun frolic activities. Overnight stay.



DAY 8: VRINDAVAN - DELHI

(190 KM / 4 HOURS: 26 MARCH 2024)

After breakfast, leave for Delhi and the tour ends.

*The distance and time taken indicated is just to give you an idea and does not include time taken on visit of places.

“TOUR ENDS”

The Holi schedule and venues are subject to change, day to day activities will be given as per the programs fixed by local people.



HOLA MOHALLA GANGES

7 NIGHTS / 8 DAYS TOUR: DELHI - AMRITSAR - ANANDPUR SAHIB - RISHIKESH - DELHI



Tour starts	22 March 2024 in Delhi
Tour ends	29 March 2024 in Delhi
Location	Anandpur Sahib (Punjab)
Festival Dates	24-25 March 2024

Hola Mohalla is an important Indian Sikh festival held in Anandpur Sahib in Punjab which follows Hindu festival of Holi. Unlike festival of Holi, where people playfully throw colored powders on each other, Hola Mahalla is an occasion for the Sikhs to demonstrate their martial skills. Sikhs gather here in large numbers to witness a very impressive and colourful procession of Nihangs, in their traditional attire displaying their skill in the use of arms, horse riding and other war-like sports. The fair is also famous for community service as Langar (voluntary community kitchens) are held by the locals for serving traditional cuisine to visitors to this festival. You will have all this unique experience and also get a chance to visit Amritsar, city of "Golden Temple" and spiritual Capital of India "Rishikesh" as well as historical city of Delhi.

DAY 1: DELHI: 22 MARCH 2024

Arrival at Delhi Airport. You will be greeted by our representative at the airport and transferred to hotel. Later start tour of New Delhi with wide tree lined avenues, parks and fountains surrounding the imposing Government and State Buildings. Drive past imposing India Gate, Parliament Buildings and President House. Then visit Qutab Minar, built in 1193 A.D. It is a striking medieval tower of victory of Persian architecture style. Next stop is Humayun's Tomb. Afternoon, drive to Raj Ghat, where Mahatma Gandhi was cremated. Then visit Old Delhi that includes visit to Red Fort. Enjoy a rickshaw ride along the alleys of ancient bazaar of Chandni Chowk with stop at Jama Masjid, the largest mosque in Asia. Return to hotel. Overnight stay.

DAY 2: DELHI - AMRITSAR: 23 MARCH 2024 (BY DAY TRAIN)

Early morning transfer to New Delhi Station to catch train for Amritsar. On arrival at Amritsar station, transfer to hotel. Later this afternoon we will visit the Wagah Border. Located on the India/Pakistan border, Wagah is 28 kilometers from the Amritsar main town. A number of visitors come to this place to witness the "Changing of the Guard" ceremony and the flag hoisting and lowering activities which are done with great skill and precision by the border security forces of both countries. Overnight stay at hotel.





**DAY 3: AMRITSAR - ANANDPUR SAHIB (190 KM / 4 HOURS):
24 MARCH 2024**

Early in the morning, we go to Golden Temple for procession known as Prabhat Pheri. There is a continuous singing of Gurbani Kiran (hymns) since the opening of its doors until closing. After the departure of the Palki Sahib (palanquin) carrying the sacred book - Sri Guru Granth Sahib to The Akal Takhat Sahib temple, the devotees, accompanied by the Gurdwara's temple staff, clean Sri Harimandir Sahib for one hour. At the completion of the Ardas (Sikh Prayer), Karah Prasad (holy offering) is distributed among the devotees. We will spend most of our morning at the Golden Temple, which offers great photo opportunities. The Golden Temple is located in the heart of the city and characterized by its four entrance doors (called deoris) in all four directions and the tastefully decorated shrines. Golden Temple welcomes everyone regardless of the religion or faith one follows. The stunning sanctum, shimmering in the water of the holy tank, flanked by spotlessly clean marble walkways and

pavements makes it breathtakingly beautiful. Afternoon drive to Anandpur Sahib and check in at camp. Overnight stay.

DAY 4: ANANDPUR SAHIB (HOLA MOHALLA): 25 MARCH 2024

The whole day is dedicated to experience festivities of Hola Mohalla which include impressive traditional display of bravery and valor. The ultimate display of machismo - Hola Mohalla, an annual Sikh festival held a day after Holi, has the drama, the sweat and the incredible colors that Indian festivals are known for. With impressive display of traditional weaponry, archery and wrestling, there's also music, poetry, prayers, singing and chanting. An important part of the festival is the Langar (community food) that is served to pilgrims irrespective of their religion or caste. One of the main attractions at the festival are the Nihangs — a prestigious armed sect of the Sikh who have thick twisted moustaches and wear a striking blend of blue and orange robe with overwhelmingly large and embellished turbans. They also demonstrate thrilling horse riding shows where the riders gallop bareback,



performing tricks like riding astride two horses. It is estimated that over 100,000 Sikh devotees attend the festival. This is an amazing festival with great photo opportunities! Overnight stay at camp.





DAY 5: ANANDPUR SAHIB (HOLA MOHALLA) – CHANDIGARH (90 KM / 2 HOURS): 26 MARCH 2024

We will start early in the morning to witness and capture the various activities that take place during the festival. We will spend the day here photographing this colorful and amazing festival.

Later driver to Chandigarh which is undoubtedly best-planned Indian city designed by world famous architect Le Corbusier who realized dream of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, the first prime minister of India. Visit Capitol Complex which is most spectacular work of Le Corbusier. The splendid buildings, set against the Shivalik peaks, stand as massive sculptures, representing the monumental character authority that the complex represents. The complex consists of three master-pieces: the Secretariat, the High Court and the Legislative Assembly. Besides the master work of Le Corbusier, the city is also known for unique world acclaimed Rock Garden which houses art objects made of Industrial and urban waste. Rock Garden's entrance leads to a magnificent display of boulders, broken chinaware, discarded fluorescent tubes, broken and cast away glass

bangles, building waste, to create a dream folk world of palaces, soldiers, monkeys, village life, women and temples. The open air sculptures and concealed gateways separating them is enhanced by a waterfall, pools and an open air theatre with proper stage setting. Overnight stay.

DAY 6: CHANDIGARH - HARIDWAR - RISHIKESH (240 KM / 6 HOURS): 27 MARCH 2024

Morning leave for Rishikesh with en-route stop at Haridwar. It is one of most important holiest places for Hindus and one of four cities where Kumbh Mela is held after 12 years which is known for one of biggest human gathering in the world. Visit Har-ki-Pauri (the footstep of God) Later drive to Rishikesh which is located in foothills of the Himalayas. It is also called the "Gateway to the Garhwal Himalayas" and considered as one of most important pilgrim places for Hindus. The sacred river Ganges flows through Rishikesh before entering plane areas of North India. Rishikesh is also famous for many Ashrams and also known Yoga Capital of the world. Arrival at Rishikesh and check in at hotel for overnight stay.





DAY 7: RISHIKESH: 28 MARCH 2024

Morning tour of Rishikesh - known as the 'place of sages', at the confluence of the Chandrabhaga and Ganga rivers. It is the starting point for the Char Dham pilgrims but also important place for the people who are interested in meditation, yoga and other aspects of Hinduism. In Rishikesh, visit Laxman Jhula - a hanging bridge on the river Ganga which is one of the most famous spots in Rishikesh. The bridge offers a scenic view of the river Ganga as it tumbles down to Haridwar. Overnight stay.

DAY8: RISHIKESH-DELHI AIRPORT (250 KM / 7 HOURS) DEPARTURE: 29 MARCH 2024

Morning drive to Delhi airport to catch flight for onwards destination.

*The distance and time taken indicated is just to give you an idea and does not include time taken on visit of places.

"TOUR ENDS"

The festival dates are subject to final confirmation.



HOLI & HOLA MOHALLA

9 NIGHTS / 10 DAYS: DELHI - VRINDAVAN - MATHURA - AGRA - AMRITSAR - ANANDPUR SAHIB - CHANDIGARH - DELHI



Tour starts	18 March 2024 in Delhi
Tour ends	27 March 2024 in Delhi
Locations	Vrindavan & Anandpur Sahib
Holi Festival	19-21 March 2024
Hola Mohalla	24-25 March 2024

This tour combines best of Holi festival, colorful festival celebrated in Braj region near Mathura – Birth place of Lord Krishna and Sikh festival of Hola Mohalla in Anandpur Sahib as Holi is known there in Punjab. The festivities at both places are enthralling but very different. Besides the spectacular events, the tour also gives you possibility to visit Historical city of Delhi, Amritsar – City of Golden Temple, Agra – City of “Taj Mahal” and Chandigarh – City of Le Corbusier, the world famous architect. This festival is truly a treat for those who have interest in photography.



DAY 1: ARRIVAL DELHI & DRIVE TO AGRA: 18 MARCH 2024

Arrival at Delhi Airport. You will be greeted by our representative at the airport. Straight transfer to Agra. On arrival check in at the hotel.

Afternoon visit world famous “Taj Mahal”, the monument of love immortalized in marble. It was built by Emperor Shah Jahan in the memory of his Queen Mumtaz. Everyone has most likely seen a picture of Taj, but nothing really comes close to the real thing – Taj Mahal looks a lot better in reality than in a picture. Also visit Fort and then Sikandara, where lies the Tomb of the Emperor “Akbar the Great. Overnight stay.



**DAY 2: AGRA – VRINDAVAN (60 KM / 1 HOUR)
(HOLI CELEBRATION AT BARSANA):
19 MARCH 2024**

Morning after breakfast transfer to Vrindavan, on arrival check in at the hotel. Afternoon leave for Barsana to witness the most vibrant festival of Color. Thousands of people from all corners of India visit Mathura and Vrindavan especially on this occasion. The festivities begin with Lathmar Holi played in Barsana, a small village in Mathura. The Lathmar Holi usually begins around a week before the main Holi day. During the celebrations, women from Barsana village gather with wooden sticks in their hands to welcome men from Nandgaon. This is part of the tradition as Hindu Mythology says that Lord Krishna along with his friends visited Barsana, Radha's village (Radha was Lord Krishna's spiritual girlfriend), to tease her and other Gopis (girls) by throwing colored water on them. In retaliation, Radha and Gopis chased Krishna and his friends to beat them up with sticks. Even today, people from Nandgaon and Barsana follow the ritual. Men soaked in colored water arrive in Barsana and tease women by singing provocative songs. The women then beat them with sticks (Lathis) and men use shields to protect themselves. Later in the evening, return to hotel for overnight stay.

**DAY 3: VRINDAVAN (HOLI CELEBRATION AT
NANDGAON): 20 MARCH 2024**

Morning breakfast at the hotel and then leave for Nandgaon as celebrations in Barsana is followed by similar celebrations in Nandgaon (Krishna's village) on the very next day. It was at Nandgaon that Krishna spent his childhood. As the legend goes, Radha with her friends called Gopis would come to Nandgaon on this day to take revenge on Krishna and his friends by splashing color on them. Since the women do not go, men and trans-genders dressed as women from Barsana go to Nandgaon to celebrate Holi with the men there. They are welcomed with water and colour in the village. This is very unique as the menfolk play Holi with women in a way which is not sexual in its approach but it has the rustic element of wooing and teasing. The main celebrations are held in the courtyard of the temple at Nandgaon and soon the courtyard transforms itself into a visual delight of beautiful colour-explosion. People from both the villages sit across each other singing and dancing here. Overnight stay.

**DAY 4: VRINDAVAN (HOLI CELEBRATION
AT BANKE BIHARI TEMPLE): 21 MARCH 2024**

The Banke-Bihari Temple hosts a week long celebrations during Holi here. During the festivities, Bihariji (Krishna's popular name in Braj area) is dressed up in white clothes. Go-Swamis (priests in the temple) sprinkle colours on everyone. The whole atmosphere is made even livelier with music (Bhajans) in the background and people dancing to the tunes. On this day of Ekadashi before Holi, there are special celebrations at famous Banke Bihari Temple at Vrindavan in the afternoon after the Temple gate opens at about 4 pm and Holi is not celebrated with colour, but with flowers. That is why it is called Phoolonwali Holi. Rest of the day at leisure. Overnight stay.





DAY 5: VRINDAVAN-DELHI (150 KM/3 HOURS): 22 MARCH 2024

Morning breakfast at the hotel and then leave for Delhi. On arrival sight-seeing tour of New Delhi with wide tree lined avenues, parks and fountains surrounding the imposing Government and State Buildings. Drive past the imposing India Gate, The Parliament Buildings and President House. Then visit Qutab Minar, built in 1193 A.D. It is a striking medieval tower of victory of Persian architecture style. Next stop is Humayun's Tomb.

Afternoon, drive to Raj Ghat, where Mahatma Gandhi was cremated. Then visit Old Delhi that includes visit to Red Fort. Enjoy a rickshaw ride along the alleys of ancient bazaar of Chandni Chowk with stop at Jama Masjid, the largest mosque in Asia. Evening check in at the hotel for overnight stay.

DAY 6: DELHI - AMRITSAR (BY DAY TRAIN): 23 MARCH 2024

Early morning transfer to New Delhi Station to catch train for Amritsar. On arrival at Amritsar station, transfer to hotel. Later this afternoon we will visit Wagah Border, located on the India/Pakistan border, 28 km from Amritsar. A good number of visitors come to this place to witness the "Changing of the Guard" ceremony and the flag hoisting and lowering activities which are done with great skill and precision by the border security forces of both the countries, a sight you cannot afford to miss. Overnight stay at hotel.

DAY 7: AMRITSAR- ANANDPUR SAHIB (190 KM / 4 HOURS): 24 MARCH 2024

Early morning we go to Golden Temple for procession known as Prabhat Pheri. There is a continuous singing of Gurbani Kirtan, hymns from the opening of its portals (doors) to their closing. After the departure



of the Palki Sahib (palanquin) carrying the sacred book - Sri Guru Granth Sahib to The Akal Takhat Sahib temple, the devotees, accompanied by the Gurdwara's temple staff, clean the Sri Harimandir Sahib for one hour. At the completion of the Ardas (Sikh Prayer), Karah Prasad (holy offering) is distributed among the devotees. We will spend most of our morning at the Golden Temple, which offers great Photo opportunities. The Golden Temple is located in the heart of the city and characterized by its four entrance doors (called Deoris) in all four directions and the tastefully decorated shrines, Golden Temple welcomes everyone regardless of the religion or faith one follows. The stunning Sanctum, shimmering



in the water of the holy tank, flanked by spotlessly clean marble walkways and pavements makes it breathtakingly beautiful. Afternoon drive to Anandpur Sahib and check in at camp. Overnight stay.

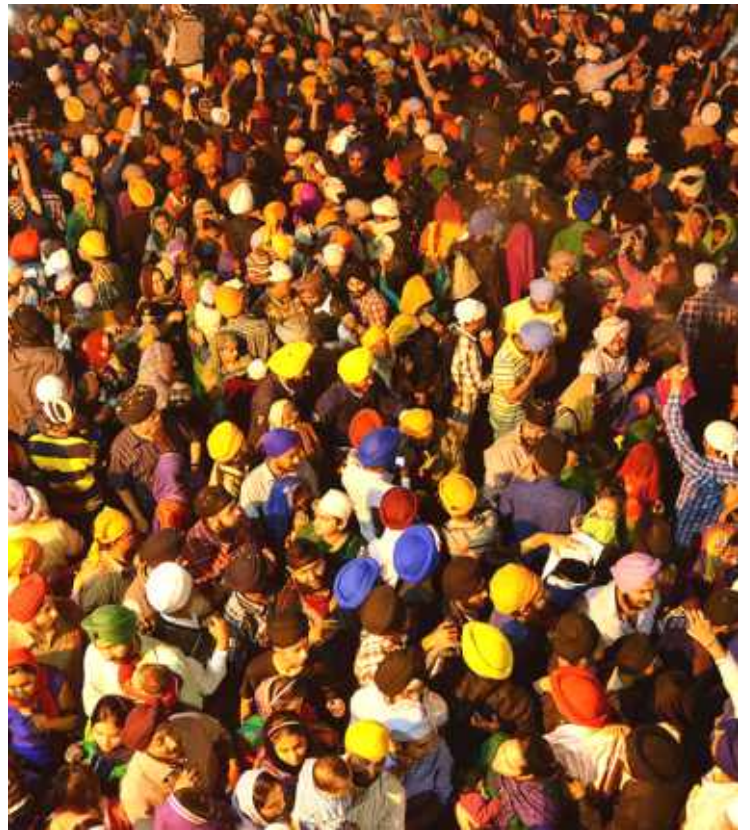
DAY 8: ANANDPUR SAHIB (HOLA MOHALLA): 25 MARCH 2024

The Hola Mohalla is an impressive traditional display of bravery and valor that is a must see. The ultimate display of machismo-Hola Mohalla, an annual Sikh festival held a day after Holi, has the drama, the sweat and the incredible colour that Indian festivals are known for. With impressive displays of weaponry, archery and wrestling, there's also music, poetry and prayers, singing and chanting. An important part of the festival is the Langar (community food) that is served to pilgrims irrespective of their religion or caste. One of the main attractions at the festival are the Nihangs — a prestigious armed sect of the Sikh who wear a striking blend of blue and orange, with thick twisted moustaches and overwhelmingly large and embellished turbans. They also demonstrate thrilling horse riding shows where the riders gallop bareback, performing tricks like riding astride two horses. It is estimated that over 100,000 Sikh devotees attend the festival. This is an amazing festival with great photo opportunities. Overnight stay at camp.

DAY 9: ANANDPUR SAHIB (HOLA MOHALLA) - CHANDIGARH (90 KM / 2 HOURS): 26 MARCH 2024

We will start early in the morning to witness and capture the various activities. Later drive to Chandigarh and upon arrival check in at hotel. If time permits, we shall go for tour of Chandigarh city which is known as Le Corbusier's Indian masterpiece. Overnight stay.





DAY 10: CHANDIGARH - DELHI AIRPORT (250 KM / 7 HOURS) DEPARTURE: 27 MARCH 2024

Morning drive to Delhi airport to catch flight for onwards destination. Depending on the departure flight time, you can spend some time for visiting more attractions of Delhi city before going to airport.

*The distance and time taken indicated is just to give you an idea and does not include time taken on visit of places.

"TOUR ENDS"

The Holi schedule and venues are subject to change, day to day activities will be given as per the programs fixed by the local people.



HEMIS FESTIVAL LADAKH

(9 NIGHTS / 10 DAYS TOUR): LEH - HEMIS - ALCHI - ULEYTOKPO - LAMAYURU - NUBRA VALLEY - LEH

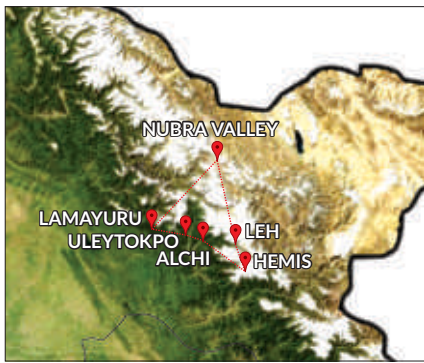
DAY 1: LEH: 14 JUNE 2024

Arrive at Leh airport and then transfer to hotel. Leh is a picturesque little town, cocooned amid the hills and is drowned in calmness. Beautiful monasteries and historical monuments attract visitors from all over the world. The rugged terrain with snow clad mountains in the clear blue sky is the perfect holiday destination. Complete day is for acclimatization as Leh is situated at 3500 meters above the sea level. In the evening you will enjoy a short walk through the bazaars of Leh. Overnight stay at hotel.

DAY 2: LEH (SHEY, THIKSEY & STOK): 15 JUNE 2024

Full day excursion to the monasteries of Leh. The tour starts with visit of Thiksey Monastery. Resting on the hill top in the Indus Valley region is this extraordinary Monastery, Thiksey monastery. It is the largest Gumpa in central Ladakh. This 12 storey building houses an amazing collection of Buddhist art. The monastery got a nickname – Mini Patola since its architecture resembles that of Tibet's Patola Palace. Continue tour to visit Shey Monastery which is situated within the complex of Shey Palace. The palace was the summer capital of the royal kingdom, but now it is in ruins. The palace was built in 1655 by

the king of Ladakh. Shey Gumpa has a high elevated statue of Lord Buddha. Finally visit Stok Palace which is the Private Palace of the present King of Ladakh. A part of the Stok Palace has been converted into a museum. It is a photogenic palace with colorful window frames and patola like architecture. Return to hotel for overnight stay.



Tour starts	14 June 2024 in Leh
Tour ends	23 June 2024 in Leh
Location	Hemis
Festival Dates	16 June - 17 June 2024

There is no better time to visit Ladakh than during Hemis Festival as Hemis Gumpa becomes a hub of celebrations. During the festival, sacred dances and special musical performances are the major highlights. Buddhist lamas and monks gather at Hemis Gumpa to perform sacred Mask Dances. This also gives you an opportunity to experience life of Ladakhi people as it is an occasion for villagers and families to come together and socialise. This tour also takes you to other beautiful monasteries of Ladakh and Nubra Valley, a must visit place in Ladakh which lies on an extraordinary trans-Himalayan trade route which originated with the Silk Road in medieval period.



DAY 03: LEH – HEMIS – LEH
(HEMIS FESTIVAL): 16 JUNE 2024

Morning drive to Hemis to witness famous Hemis Festival. Hemis Gompa becomes a hub of activities during the festival. The gompa, which is known to be the wealthiest and the biggest in Ladakh, also features the largest thangka in Ladakh. The Buddhist gompa remains divided into two main parts - the assembly hall on the right and the temple on the left. Sacred dances, and special musical performances are the major highlights of the Hemis Festival in Ladakh. During the festival, lamas and monks gather to perform sacred Mask Dance. The specific dance form is meant to celebrate victory of good over evil. The Hemis Festival brings an opportunity for all the villagers and families to come together and socialise. Men can be seen wearing cummerbands while women are dressed in bright headgear and lots of jewellery. Brass trumpets, which are threemeter in length, are played and the whole festive scene becomes a sight to behold. Later return to Leh hotel for overnight stay.



DAY 4: LEH-ALCHI-LIKIR –ULEYTOKPO
(110 KM / 3 HOURS): 17 JUNE 2024

After breakfast drive to Uleytokpo and on the way, visit Alchi village which is ancient site known for its Alchi monastery. The monastery is situated on the banks of River Indus and this is the only monastery situated in the plains. The place houses a spot where Lama's walking stick was planted and has now grown into a tree. Continue drive to Likir Monastery which belongs to Gelugpa sect or Yellow hat sect. The monastery was founded in the year 1065 by Lama Duwang Chosje under the reign of the fifth king of Ladakh. The monastery houses a 25 ft. high gold covered Buddha statue. It is a repository of old manuscripts, magnetizing array of Thangkas, and ancient costumes. It has very colorful buildings and offers breathtaking views over the mountains. Finally drive to Uleytokpo. Overnight stay in the camp.



DAY 5: ULEYTOKPO – RIDZONG –
LAMAYURU – ULEYTOKPO
(100 KM / 3 HOURS): 18 JUNE 2024

After breakfast drive to Lamayuru Monastery which was built in the 10th century. The monastery is situated between Kyagar and Sumur villages. Belonging to Red hat sect of Buddhism, the monastery is famed for its opulent wall paintings, murals, scriptures, collection of Thangkas and statutes of different form of Buddha. Later drive to Rizong Monastery, located in the remote end of the valley. The monastery provides an impression of rocky fortress. Lama Tsultim Nim founded the monastery and the Gompa follows strict monastic disciplines. Return to Uleytokpo Village which is one of the largest villages in Ladakh, situated on the banks of the Indus River. Overnight stay in camp.



**DAY 06: ULEYTOKPO – PHYANG – SPUTUK – LEH
(90 KM / 3 HOURS): 19 JUNE 2024**

After breakfast drive to Leh. En-route stop at Phyang monastery which is named after the blue mountain that is situated behind the monastery. The monastery complex features numerous shrines along with a wide array of exquisite paintings that date back to royal period. The oldest temple in the monastery complex is Gomkhang which was founded in the 16th century. Then visit Spituk monastery located on the hill top offering a commanding view of Indus River. The Spituk Gumpa was founded in 11th century. There is a collection of ancient masks, antique arms and



fine thangkas. The terrifying face of Vajrabhairava is unveiled only at the annual festival in January. Continue drive to Leh and check in at hotel for overnight stay.

DAY 07: LEH-NUBRA (160 KM / 5 HOURS): 20 JUNE 2024

After early breakfast at hotel we shall leave for the Nubra valley with lunch box. In the north of Leh, capital of Ladakh is the Nubra Valley. The natural beauty of this place will leave you spellbound. This high altitude valley in the tranquil region of Ladakh serves as the ideal place for the finest serene trekking routes as well as a few ancient Buddhist monasteries. Stop, en-route to visit Diskit and Hunder Monastery. Diskit Monastery is the oldest and the largest monastery in Nubra Valley. The monastery was established in the 14th century and belongs to the Gelukpa sect of Buddhism. The monastery was constructed in Tibetan style and houses beautiful murals and frescos. The monastery also offers picturesque view of the Nubra valley. Hunder Monastery is situated just below Diskit monastery. It is a very beautiful monastery housing a huge statue of Buddha. Arrive and check in at camp for overnight stay.

DAY 08: NUBRA: 21 JUNE 2024

After breakfast, visit Panamik village. This is the last village that is accessible to foreigners. The green valley of Panamik is the sight to behold because the village is surrounded by snow clad mountains. The village is renowned for its curative hot springs. The destination is worth a visit as it has sulfur springs and Saichan glacier in close proximity. The village is also famous for Bactrian camels and Pashmina goats. Return to camp for lunch and in the afternoon visit Samtaling monastery in Sumur village. It is a very beautiful monastery located in Nubra Valley. The monastery houses numerous shrines with intricate wood carvings. Later in the evening return to camp for dinner and overnight stay.





DAY 09: NUBRA-LEH (160 KM / 5 HOURS): 22 JUNE 2024

After breakfast, we shall leave for Leh with a lunchbox. En-route stop at the Khardung-La Pass. The Khardung-La Pass is a high mountain pass located in Ladakh region and is 39 kms from Leh. The pass is the gateway to Nubra Valley. The locals claim the pass to be the highest motorable road in the world. Continue drive to Leh. Arrive and check in at hotel. The rest of the day is free for exploring local bazaar and independent activities. Overnight stay at hotel.

DAY 10: LEH: 23 JUNE 2024

In the morning transfer to Leh airport to catch your flight.

*The distance and time taken indicated is just to give you an idea and does not include time taken on visit of places.

“TOUR ENDS”

The festival dates are subject to final confirmation.



PUSHKAR CAMEL FAIR

13 NIGHTS / 14 DAYS TOUR: DELHI - AGRA - JAIPUR - PUSHKAR - UDAIPUR - JODHPUR - JAISALMER - BIKANER - MANDAWA - DELHI

DAY 1: DELHI: 09 NOVEMBER 2024

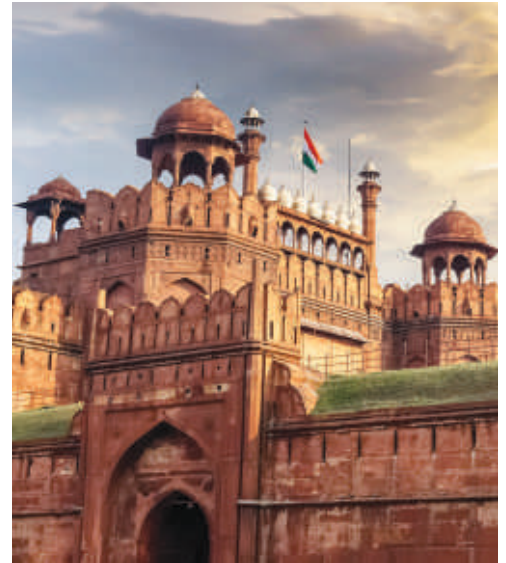
Arrival at Delhi Airport. You will be greeted by our representative at the airport and transferred to hotel. Later start tour of New Delhi with wide tree lined avenues, parks and fountains surrounding the imposing Government and State Buildings. Drive past the imposing India Gate, the Parliament Buildings and President House. Then visit Qutab Minar, built in 1193 A.D. It is a striking medieval tower of victory of Persian architecture style. Next stop is Humayun's Tomb. Afternoon, drive to Raj Ghat, where Mahatma Gandhi was cremated. Later visit Old Delhi that includes visit to Red Fort. Enjoy a rickshaw ride along the alleys of ancient bazaar of Chandni Chowk with stop at Jama Masjid, the largest mosque in Asia. Return to hotel. Overnight stay.

DAY 2: DELHI - AGRA (200 KM / 4 HOURS): 10 NOVEMBER 2024

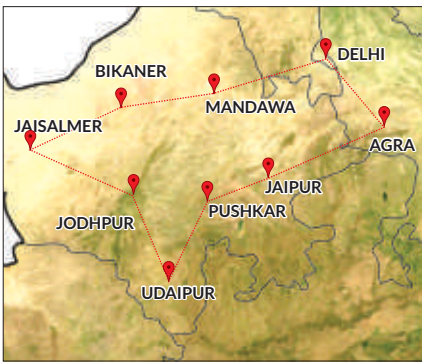
Morning drive to Agra which was once the Capital of Mughal India and centre of great power and glory. Visit world famous "Taj Mahal", the monument of love immortalized in marble. It was built by Emperor Shah Jahan in the memory of his Queen Mumtaz. Also visit Agra Fort and Sikandra, where lies the Tomb of the Emperor "Akbar the Great". Overnight stay at hotel.

DAY 3: AGRA-FATEHPUR SIKRI-ABHANERI - JAIPUR (265 KM / 6 HOURS): 11 NOVEMBER 2024

Morning leave for Jaipur. Stop en-route and



visit Fatehpur Sikri, undoubtedly the best preserved Mughal Palace city of all. Built by Great Akbar around 1570, he used the highest quality craftsman to construct the city only to abandon it some fourteen years later when it is said that the water system failed. Next stop is to visit Chand Baori step well in small village of Abhaneri, 95 km before Jaipur. The step well was built in 9th century and it is 13 storeys deep with 3500 steps. This is a great piece of architectural expertise as it displays the geometrical intelligence of the architects of bygone era. Proceed to Jaipur and check in at the hotel. Jaipur city was founded by Maharaja Jai Singh in 1727. It is a magnificent planned city built of pink colored stones that is why it is also known as "Pink City". Rest of the day is at leisure. Overnight stay.



Tour starts	09 November 2024 in Delhi
Tour ends	22 December 2024 in Delhi
Location	Pushkar (Rajasthan)
Festival Dates	13-14 November 2024

Pushkar Fair also known as camel fair is held in lakeside village of Pushkar in Rajasthan. It is undoubtedly one of the most colorful fairs of India and visitors from all over the world come here to enjoy this unique experience. The festival is known as camel fair because people from all over Rajasthan and nearby places throng the fair with their camels, horses and other livestock to trade in the fair. No less than 30,000 camels are here to participate in competitions like beauty contest, races and dances. The town also turns into a shopper's paradise as the bazaar is set up and visitors can bargain for silver and semi-precious jewellery, puppets, tie and die fabric and handicrafts. Although Pushkar fair is the main highlight of the tour but it is not limited only to the fair and also gives an opportunity to travel in a fantasy land of forts and palaces. You will also get to see "Taj Mahal", one of the Seven Wonders of the World and historic city of Delhi.





DAY 4: JAIPUR: 12 NOVEMBER 2024

Morning excursion to Amber Fort. Ascend by painted elephant up to fort with its huge gateways and pillared pavilions. The fort was originally built by Raja Mansingh and is one of the finest examples of Rajput Architecture. Afternoon city tour of Jaipur visiting City Palace and its museums. Nearby is the ornate Hawa Mahal (Palace of winds) which is five stories high and is decorated with delicate screens carved from stone which allowed royal ladies to view the city and bazaar from there. Also visit Jantar Mantar, magnificent stone observatory built in 1728. This is still equipped with immense brick and mortar instrument including a very accurate 90 feet sundial. Overnight stay.

DAY 5: JAIPUR - PUSHKAR (150 KM / 3 HOURS): 13 NOVEMBER 2024

Morning leave for Pushkar. Stop en route at Ajmer and visit "Dargah", a world famous sacred place for Muslims. Then proceed to Pushkar, the sleepy town comes alive with burst of activities in the month of Kartik when world famous Pushkar Camel Fair is held. It is one of most unique experiences for travelers to India as it attracts thousands of camels, horses and cattle, besides a big number of visitors from all over the world. This is the occasion which brings villagers from all part of Rajasthan to trade their camels and other animals. Pilgrims also throng this town to take a dip in the holy lake of Pushkar. Afternoon enjoy the Mela and overnight stay.



DAY 6: PUSHKAR FAIR: 14 NOVEMBER 2024

Full day is at your disposal to enjoy Pushkar Fair which is synonymous to the Cattle fair. The cattle are decorated in very colorful manner to attract the buyers and visitors to the Fair. Besides camels, horses and bullocks are also sold here. The colorfully dressed people enhance the exuberant mood of the fair. Various competitions are held during the fair. The famous camel race also takes place. The culture of Rajasthan comes alive in Pushkar through the folklores, music and dance performances. Cultural events and exhibitions reflect the rich culture of Rajasthan. These days, the ghats and the surrounding areas of the lake becomes a mini Rajasthan market. Overnight stay.

DAY 7: PUSHKAR-CHITTORGARH - UDAIPUR (320 KM / 6 HOURS): 15 NOVEMBER 2024

Morning leave for Chittorgarh, the legendary city of Rajasthan, is the epitome of Rajput pride, romance and spirit, therefore also known as the city of bravery and sacrifice. The magnificent 7th century Chittorgarh Fort is the largest fort in India.





The formidable fort is perched atop a 180 meter high hillock covering a massive area of 700 acres. The fort has many magnificent monuments, which are fine examples of the Rajput architecture. Then proceed to Udaipur, which is also called city of lakes. On arrival check in at hotel for overnight stay.

DAY 08: UDAIPUR:
16 NOVEMBER 2024

Morning excursion to Eklingi and Nagda temples. Eklingji with a number of ancient temples is 22 km north of Udaipur. The Shiv temple in the village was originally built in 734 AD, although its present form dates from the rule of Maharana Raimal, between 1473 AD and 1509 AD. The walled complex includes an elaborately pillared hall under a large pyramidal roof and features a four faced Shiva image of black marble. At Nagda, there are old temples. The Jain temple of Adbudji is almost ruined, but its architecture is quiet interesting. Return to Udaipur. In the evening, you may enjoy sunset cruise on Lake Pichola which overlooks Lake Palace & Jag Mandir. Later evening is free to explore the local bazaars where you may bargain for interesting souvenirs. Overnight stay.

DAY 9: UDAIPUR - RANAKPUR - JODHPUR (260 KM / 5 HOURS):
17 NOVEMBER 2024

Morning leave for Jodhpur. Visit Ranakpur



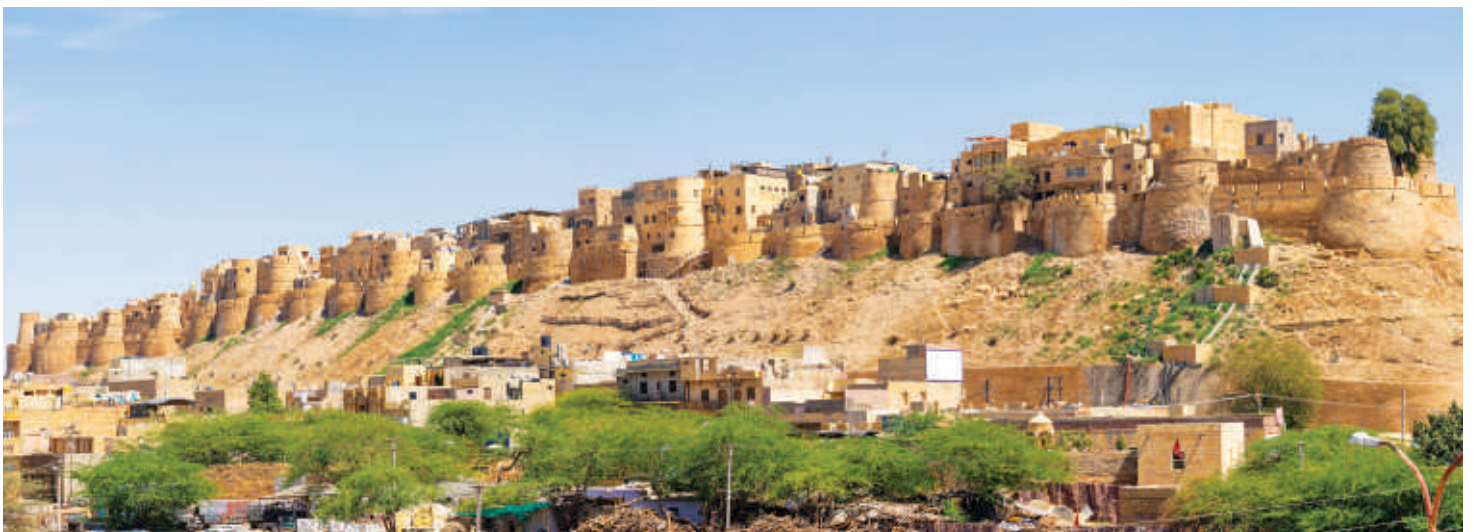
on the way where there are 15th century Jain Temples known for outstanding sculptures. The Temple has very fine ornamentation in wonderful setting with peacocks, langurs and numerous birds. It has 1444 pillars and none of them is alike. Then proceed to Jodhpur. After arrival check in at the hotel. Overnight stay.

DAY 10: JODHPUR- JAISALMER (310 KM / 6 HOURS):
18 NOVEMBER 2024

Morning city tour of Jodhpur, visiting Mehrangarh Fort, built in 1457, situated at an altitude of about 125 meters is spread over an area of 5 sq. km and has seven gates. It was the toughest fort to conquer in whole Rajasthan. Later visit Jaswant Thada which is a white marble memorial built in memory of Maharaja Jaswant in 1899. Afternoon drive to Jaisalmer which is an architectural dream in the lonely yellow silence of the desert. On arrival check in at hotel. Overnight stay.

DAY 11: JAISALMER:
19 NOVEMBER 2024

Morning city tour of Jaisalmer visiting fort – known as Sonar Quila, rising from the sand, the mega structure merges with the golden hues of the desert ambience and the setting suns in its most colourful shades, gives it a fairy tale look. Also visit Patwaon Ki Haveli





and Nathmal Ki Haveli which are famous for wonderful carving. Afternoon excursion to sand dunes located at a distance of 42 km from Jaisalmer. Take an unforgettable experience of camel rides and the sun set view. Return to hotel for overnight stay.

DAY 12: JAISALMER – BIKANER (330 KM / 6 HOURS):
20 NOVEMBER 2024

Morning leave for Bikaner which is a desert city on the ancient caravan routes that originated from Africa and West Asia. Arrival and check in at the hotel. Afternoon city tour of Bikaner visiting impressive Junagarh fort. One of the most unique features of the Junagarh Fort is that it has been built on a desert plain, a stark contrast to the high elevation forts we normally find in Rajasthan. Blending the best of Oriental and European forms of architecture, the Junagarh Fort spells grandeur all the way. Overnight stay.

DAY 13: BIKANER - MANDAWA (200 KM / 4 HOURS):
21 NOVEMBER 2024

Morning leave for Mandawa. After arrival check in at hotel Mandawa Castle. Visit Mandawa which has been referred to as the "open art gallery" of Rajasthan because the entire Shekhwati region and not just Mandawa is dotted with fascinating mansions (havelis) that have lavishly painted walls. Overnight stay at hotel.

DAY 14: MANDAWA - DELHI (270 KM / 6 HOURS):
22 NOVEMBER 2024

Morning drive back to Delhi. Arrival in Delhi. The car with driver will remain at your disposal for some sightseeing or last minute shopping. Later transfer to Delhi airport to catch flight for onward destination.

*The distance and time taken indicated is just to give you an idea and does not include time taken on visit of places.

"TOUR ENDS"

The festival dates are subject to final confirmation.





Tour starts	5 December in Kolkata
Tour ends	15 December in Dibrugarh
Location	Kohima (Nagaland)
Festival Dates	1-10 December 2024

Hornbill is the most glamorous cultural festival celebrated in one of the most remote part of the world. The festival is named to signify the Naga's devotion to the hornbill bird, which has historically been a part of their folklore. The festival provides a glimpse into the kaleidoscopic cultures and ethnicities of Nagaland and other states of North East India. All the tribes gather at the foothills of Mount Japfü, at the venue of the festival Naga Heritage Village, Kisama. It is at a short distance from Kohima, the capital city of Nagaland. There are a host of activities that take place such as cultural performances, indigenous games, craft bazaar, music events, fashion events, cycling competition, floral galleria, food courts and film festival to leave visitor spellbound.

HORNBILL FESTIVAL NAGALAND

10 NIGHTS / 11 DAYS TOUR: KOLKATA - KOHIMA - MOKOKCHUNG - MON - DIBRUGARH

DAY 1: KOLKATA: 05 DECEMBER 2024

Arrival at Kolkata airport and transfer to hotel. Kolkata, formerly known as Calcutta was once glorious Capital during British Raj. The city was once a small fishing village on Hooghly River which is a tributary of Ganges and used to be called as "Ganga" traditionally in Bengal. Kolkata can also be called cultural Capital of India as it has been home to many artists, painters and poets. Rabindranath Tagore, noble prize winner for Literature in 1913 from the city remain intellectual cradle of India even today. The importance of Kolkata in this field is established by the fact that four out of only five Indians who have so far won the Nobel Prize, have a Kolkata connection. Kolkata is also known as city of Mother Teresa, known in the Catholic Church as Saint Teresa of Calcutta where she spent nearly four decades working with the poor and the destitute.

DAY 2: KOLKATA: 06 DECEMBER 2024

Morning visit Kolkata and start your tour by first visiting Victoria Memorial, a truly majestic structure made of white marble. It was built in memory of Queen Victoria, as the name suggests, during British Raj. The

architecture is a blend of Mughal and European style. The Memorial also houses a museum where many specimens of the past and artefacts are kept. Also visit Howrah Bridge, the Icon of Kolkata was built in 1939 but opened for public only in the year 1943. The bridge was constructed using 26500 tons of steel with support of two massive 90 metres high pillars. The next stop is Indian





Museum which is not only the largest but also one of the first Museum not only in India but in entire Asia-Pacific region. The visit of Kolkata remains incomplete without visiting The Missionaries of Charity's Mother House. It is a place of reverence for anyone searching for his meaningful existence. Mother House was established by the Saint Mother Teresa in 1950 with the purpose of selfless service to mankind. Later visit Belur Math which is headquarters of Ramakrishna Mission. It was founded in 1900 by Swami Vivekananda, the world acclaimed philosopher and yogi who was disciple of Ramakrishna Paramhansa. The place is so calm and peaceful that it gives a relief from hustle and bustle of the city. Later we proceed to river bank to catch a boat for visiting Dakshineswar Kali Temple which almost looks like a painting on the

canvas. The temple complex has huge courtyards and is surrounded by 12 temples dedicated to Lord Shiva. Before finishing city tour, we stop at Indian Coffee House, the best place to experience local traditions and culture. Return to hotel for overnight stay.

DAY 3: KOLKATA - DIMAPUR - KOHIMA (BY FLIGHT + 75 KM / 2 HOURS): 07 DECEMBER 2024

Morning transfer to Kolkata airport to catch flight to Dimapur. Arrival at Dimapur airport and transfer to Kohima, the capital of Nagaland state in North East India. Kohima has its name in history and is known for changing the world politics during 2nd World War as it was here that Allied forces with the help of Naga people stopped winning spree of Japanese forces in this part of the world. A memorial was built to honour

those who lost their lives during the war. Afternoon visit Kohima Museum, known for a rare collection of artefacts of Nagas. Also visit Cathedral and Kohima World War Cemetery. Overnight stay.

DAY 4: KOHIMA (HORNBILL FESTIVAL): 08 DECEMBER 2024

Morning drive to Kisama Heritage Village which comes alive during Hornbill festival, a cultural extravaganza where great cultural traditions and dances of Nagas are on display. The name of festival is derived from the bird which plays a very important role in the folklore of these tribes. The whole day is dedicated to witness Hornbill festival. As you take your seat in amphitheatre which is like an open air museum, sixteen Naga tribes perform dances and dramas enacting scenes relating to war and their way of life. It is not only the music and dance which mesmerize you but the exquisite local handcrafts and handlooms are equally captivating. This is also a perfect opportunity for those who love photographing ethnic people and their ceremonies. The Nagas are one of most elaborately dressed tribal people and are stunning in their colourful dresses. There are many food stalls serving local cuisine which also includes smoked pork, a local delicacy. Overnight stay.

DAY 5: KOHIMA (HORNBILL FESTIVAL): 09 DECEMBER 2024

The day is to enjoy performance of traditional dances not only from Nagaland but from all the North Eastern states of India names as 'seven sisters'. You will also get a chance to see tribal houses as the Kisama village Complex consists of a cluster of sixteen houses of each tribe created in the





indigenous typical architectural design and concept. The tribal house is called "Morung or Youth Dormitory" in local language which depicts colourful life and culture of 16 recognized Naga tribes. Overnight stay.

DAY 6: KOHIMA (VILLAGE TOUR): 10 DECEMBER 2024

The whole day is dedicated to visit tribal villages near Kohima. We start tour with visit of Khonoma village known for valor and courage of its tribal people. It is also a fine example of Alternative form of living in full harmony with nature. The naga tribes who live here used to go for mass hunt for their food and used to indulge in other practices which would harm nature. But, today, it has been converted into an eco-friendly village and has unique water system as the water is piped long distances using bamboo. This village is very scenic and surrounded by green rice terraces. Then explore the charming Kigwema village which is a charming old village of the Angami tribe. Kigwema means 'inheritance of the house', as it is said that many other Angami villages originated from here only. Walk through the lanes of the village and see their traditional houses with

wooden pillars. Later also visit Jakhama village to experience the real Angami Naga tribal way of living. Overnight stay.

DAY 7: KOHIMA - MOKOKCHUNG (160 KM / 6 HOURS): 11 DECEMBER 2024

After breakfast, depart for Mokokchung which is a picturesque town situated at altitude of 1325 metres. It is also the cultural and intellectual hub and headquarter of Ao Nagas who are famous for their colourful attire and dances. We shall en-route visit Ungma village which is an ancient village and gives an insight into folklores and tradition of tribal people in this area. The drive on the way through winding roads and forest is an unforgettable experience. Arrive at Mokochung and you can feel a distinct colonial atmosphere here. Afternoon we can visit Longkhum village which lies at an altitude of 1846 metres. The town also offers view of eastern Himalayas and the panoramic view of surrounding hills is truly breath-taking. You can find exquisite handicraft and handloom items here in the town. Overnight stay.

DAY 8: MOKOKCHUNG - MON (220 KM / 8 HOURS): 12 DECEMBER 2024

After breakfast, leave for Mon located along the India-Myanmar border, It is mystic and ethic paradise for rich tribal heritage of Nagaland. The drive is as interesting as the destination as you pass through scenic valleys. It is home to Konyak Nagas, the tattooed warriors who are known for their tattooed faces, blackened teeth and head hunting prowess. The tattoos on their faces and the exquisite jewellery on their body was symbol of their achievements in earlier days. A visit to Mon will not be complete without a visit to Angh's house (the ruler of the village) as it is adorned with skull and superb woodwork. The ear rings, tattoos and headgear are sign of his power and glory. It will be interesting to meet the villagers and get to know about their tradition. Overnight stay.

DAY 9: MON: 13 DECEMBER 2024

After breakfast, go for tour of characteristic Shangnyu village of Konyak tribe. Here, you will witness human skull's collection at Konyak Murungs. In ancient time, the chief hunter used to keep the head of his enemies like a trophy. The Angh's house here is believed to be more than 500 years old. The uniquely carved structure stands tall even today and the memorial stones are also found in front of the house. Then visit Longwa, one of the biggest villages in the area situated right on the India - Myanmar border. The village lies in two countries and the most interesting is Angh's house here as half of the house is in India and other half is in Myanmar. The chief (Angh) has dozens of wives and his house is decorated with trophies of various animal skulls. He used to be so powerful that his jurisdiction would extend up to Myanmar and Arunachal Pradesh. Also visit Hongphui village. Where the lifestyle of the people is not yet influenced by modern world. Overnight stay.





**DAY 10: MON – DIBRUGARH (180 KM / 7 HOURS):
14 DECEMBER 2024**

After breakfast, leave for Dibrugarh which is located along Brahmaputra river. The town is surrounded by tea plantations and misty contours of the Himalayas in the background makes it a fascinating place. Afternoon, set out for a “tea tour”. The tea Gardens are full of tea pickers dressed in colourful dresses who are mostly women as they are considered better than men to “pinch” the delicate buds and youngest leaves. Overnight stay.

DAY 11: DIBRUGARH: 15 DECEMBER 2024

After breakfast, transfer to Dibrugarh airport to catch a flight for onward destination.

*The distance and time taken indicated is just to give you an idea and does not include time taken on visit of places.

“TOUR ENDS”

The festival dates are subject to final confirmation.

IMPORTANT POINTS

- There are no deluxe or luxury hotels in Northeast India and in few places, the accommodation is very simple and basic and no star category accorded.
- Restricted and Protected Area Permit is required for which we shall require the following documents to get the permit.
 - Valid Passport.
 - Valid Indian Visa.
 - Date of entry and exit in India.
 - Flight details.



RANN MAHOTSAV GUJARAT

10 NIGHTS / 11 DAYS TOUR: AHMEDABAD - PATAN - MODHERA - DASADA - BHUJ - RANN UTSAV - JUNAGADH - SASANGIR - DIU - BHAVNAGAR - PALITANA - AHMEDABAD

DAY 1: AHMEDABAD

Arrive at Ahmedabad airport and transfer to hotel. Ahmedabad was founded by Ahmed Shah on the banks of the Sabarmati River in 1411 and thus named as Ahmedabad. The city is also known for its association with Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation. Later start tour of the city visiting Gandhi Ashram, also known as Sabarmati ashram. This

Ashram was set up by Mahatma Gandhi in 1915 and is one of his most famous memorials. Also visit Dada Hari Vav which was built in 1499 by a woman of Sultan Begara's harem. Continue tour to visit Adalaj, situated about 17 km north of Ahmedabad. The baoli or stepwell at Adalaj Vav is one of the finest stepwells in India. The baoli is decorated with exquisite stone carvings. Overnight stay.

Rann Utsav is a celebration of life depicting festivities and the culture of Kutch region in Gujarat. Utsav gives visitors an opportunity to experience the diverse traditions and hospitality of the Kutchi people with sprinkle of colour on otherwise barren land of Kutch. The unique landscape of Kutch with picturesque "White Desert" welcomes you here. The entire place comes to life with endless cycle of dance on a full moon night during fair. There are many activities such as Horse Riding, Camel Safaris to Bird Watching, This tour also takes you to Ahmedabad, known as textile capital of India and also for Gandhi Ashram. Visit Palitana with largest cluster of beautiful Jain temples, Tribal villages of Kutch and many other interesting sites of Gujarat.





DAY 2: AHMEDABAD - SIDHPUR - PATAN - MODHERA - DASADA (270 KM / 6 HOURS)

Morning leave Ahmedabad to first visit Sidhpur. The town also holds importance for the Bohra Muslims, an affluent Muslim community. Their old havelis and mansions, some over 100 years old have a markedly European flavor and a walk through the 'Bohra Vad' is like a stroll through an English countryside, replete with the lamp lighters at dusk. Bohra Havelis' represent a nostalgic visual straight out of a Dickenson novel. Next stop is The Rani ki Vav, a step well in Patan which is an excellent example of subterranean architecture in Gujarat. This represents the finest of the Indian sculptures and architecture and forms the link between a kunda and the classical step-well. Final en-route stop is Modhera, known for the 11th century Sun Temple and it is one of the finest Hindu Temples in Gujarat, built by the great Solanki dynasty. The temple is designed to let the dawn sun shine on the image of Surya, at the time of equinoxes. Later continue drive for Dasada and check in at hotel for overnight stay.

DAY 3: DASADA - BHUJ (250 KM / 4 HOURS)

Morning enjoy jungle safari as The Little Rann of Kutch is well-known for remaining habitat of the endangered Indian Wild Ass, a magnificent member of the horse family. Nilgai (blue bull), the largest antelope in India can be seen during the drive. Indian Wolf, Indian and White-footed Desert Foxes, Golden Jackal, Striped Hyena, Desert, Jungle and Fishing Cat, and smaller mammals like hares, hedgehogs, gerbil and field mice are seen in the sanctuary. Later depart for Bhuj, Arrive and check in at hotel. Go for Sightseeing of Bhuj, visiting Kutch Museum founded by Maharao Khengarji III in 1877 AD. The museum is the oldest in Gujarat built in Italian style and located in picturesque surroundings on the banks of the

Hamirsar Lake. The museum has a large collection of Kshatrapa inscriptions, various archaeological objects, arms and specimens of various crafts of the Kutch region. Also visit Aina Mahal Palace which was built by Rao Lakhpattji in 1750 A.D. It is a two storey building with Darbar Hall, Hall of mirrors, and suites for royal family. The Hall of mirror has white marble walls which are covered with mirrors and gilded ornament. The architecture of the palace is a unique example of an Indian palace built in the mid-eighteenth century with European influence. Overnight stay.

DAY 4: BHUJ - RANN MAHOTSAV (90 KM / 3 HOURS)

Early morning proceed to Banni Village to experience lifestyle of various tribes living in villages of Kutch region - Hodka, Ludiya and Dhordo. These villages are home to tribes namely Mutvas, Harijans, Jats and Meghwals. Mutvas have been living in northern part of Kutch and form part of Muslim community who came to Kutch in





search of grass and water for their living stock. Harijans migrated from Marwar in Rajasthan five centuries ago and they live in Banni area. They live in traditional huts made of grass and dried mud. Jats are also shepherds who earn their livelihood as camel herders and buffalo breeders. They wear huge nose rings which make them very distinct from others. Meghawal tribe mainly lives in Ludiya village and their women wear colorful embroideries along with ornamental jewelry made of gold and silver. We set out to visit HODKA village for beautiful embroidery and mud work as well as Leather craft. Then visit LUDIYA village, known for intricate wood carving embroidery work, mud-work and wall painting for decorating homes. Also visit DHORDO village for attractive traditional mud houses decorated with mirror work and fine Mutwa embroidery.

Then leave to enjoy Rann Utsav and upon arrival check in at camp. The remaining day is at your disposal to enjoy Rann Utsav which is a celebration of life depicting festivities and culture of Kutch. The fair gives you an opportunity to experience diverse traditions of Kutchi people in the evening visit the unique landscape of Kutch with picturesque "White Desert" which will astonish you. The entire place comes to life with endless cycle of dance. Overnight stay in camp.

DAY 5: RANN MAHOTSAV

The whole day is dedicated to enjoy the celebration in desert. Besides cultural extravaganza, there are many other activities which include horse riding, camel safari, and archery. There is also a local handicraft bazaar where visitors can find great bargains. You can find

best souvenirs of silver jewellery, artefacts, seashell toys, embroidery and wood carved furniture as Kutch artisans are known for their master craftsmanship. There is also an optional complimentary tour to Kala Dungar (highest point in Kutch). Overnight stay in camp.

DAY 6: BHUJ - JUNAGARH (360 KM / 8 HOURS)

Morning leave for Junagarh. Arrive Junagarh and check in at hotel. Later start tour of Junagarh town visiting Mahabat Maqbara which is a stunning mausoleum of one of the Nawabs of Junagadh and one of the Gujarat's most glorious examples of Indo-Islamic architecture. Also visit Ashoka's Rock Edicts, located on the route to the Mount Girnar hill. The fourteen Edicts of Emperor Ashoka are inscribed on the rock edicts. Finally visit Upperkot Fort. The fort was built in 319 B.C. by Chandragupta Maurya, the great Emperor. This has been rebuilt many times over the centuries. Overnight stay.

DAY 7: JUNAGARH- SASANGIR (60 KM / 2 HOURS)

Morning, you may visit Mount Girnar which is one of the most sacred places to visit for Jain community. This hill rises to a height of more than 600 metres, a climb marked by 10,000 stone-steps. On this hill various Hindu and five Jain temples are located. Later depart for Sasangir and after arrival check in at hotel. Gir National Park is famous for Lions. Besides lion, various other variety of wild animals are found in this park; Wild Boar, Bear, Panther, Jackal, Sambar, Spotted Deer, Striped Hyena, Leopard, Nilgai, Chinkara Gazelle, Jungle cat, Black napped hare, Common langur, Porcupine, Langur, Blackbuck, Mongoose and the Indian Chousingha, the four horned





antelope. During monsoons, about 200 species of birds can also be seen in this park including the peafowl, grey partridge, Bonelli's eagle, crested serpent eagle, jungle bush quail, painted sandgrouse, common green pigeon and several species of doves. Gir is also home of the marsh crocodile, which can be sighted easily in the lake of the Kamaleswar dam. Overnight stay.

DAY 8: SASANGIR – DIU (110 KM / 3 HOURS)

Early morning go for jungle safari at Sasangir and enjoy wild life. There is a great possibility of a date with Asiatic Lion which will be an event to remember for rest of your life. After breakfast, drive to Diu and upon arrival check in at hotel to relax. Later you will visit Diu Fort which is a very large and imposing structure, situated on the coast of the island. This fort was constructed between 1535 and 1541 A.D. after the treaty signed between the Sultan of Gujarat and the Portuguese. Rest of the evening is to relax on the beautiful palm-fringed beach. Overnight stay.

DAY 9: DIU - BHAVNAGAR (220 KM / 5 HOURS)

Morning leave for Bhavnagar. Arrival at Bhavnagar and check in at the hotel. In the afternoon, visit Historical Takhteshwar Temple, located on a small hill. This temple provides good views of the city and the Gulf of Cambay. Also visit Barton Library which is housed in

a beautiful two story building. You may also enjoy evening stroll on the banks of Gauri Shankar Lake. Overnight stay.

DAY 10: BHAVNAGAR – PALITANA – LOTHAL - AHMEDABAD (270 KM / 6 HOURS)

Early morning before sunrise, get ready for drive to Palitana Shatrunjaya Hill which is located at a height of 591 metres. The Shatrunjaya Temple is the most sacred temple complex of the Jains and one of the largest of its kind in India. You need to climb up the hill for about 4 km (600 metres) on a stepped path to Shatrunjaya which means place of victory over worldliness. You may reach the top in Doli or lift chairs or by walking. There are about 863 white marble Jain temples, built over 900 years on the hilltop, each with its own enclosure. Later continue drive to visit Lothal, known for remains of Indus valley civilization. Finally leave for Ahmedabad and upon arrival check in at hotel for overnight stay.

DAY 11: AHMEDABAD

Morning leave for airport to catch your flight.

*The distance and time taken indicated is just to give you an idea and does not include time taken on visit of places.

“TOUR ENDS”



PARO FESTIVAL BHUTAN

9 NIGHTS / 10 DAYS TOUR: PARO - THIMPHU - PUNAKHA - BUMTHANG - WANGDUE - PARO

DAY 1: ARRIVAL PARO:

20 MARCH 2024

Arrival at Paro airport. You will be greeted by our representative at the airport and transferred to hotel. Your unique exotic experience of travelling to Bhutan begins even before you arrive there as you are flying along the Himalayan range offering you magnificent view of Chomolhari and Jichu Drake Mountain peaks. The first reward for your Bhutan trip is the cool, clean fresh air which you will feel as soon as you step out of the plane. After lunch, start the tour with a visit to Paro Dzong, which means fortress on a heap of jewels. The Dzong was built in 1646 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyel. The Dzong was formerly the meeting hall for the National Assembly. The Dzong is located on a vantage point on the hillside and has two Lhakhangs (monasteries) and a Central Utse (Central tower). Rest of the day is to enjoy festivities of Paro Tshechu. In the evening, return to your hotel for overnight stay.

DAY 2: PARO: 21 MARCH 2024

Full day is at your disposal to enjoy festival at Paro which is in honour of "Padmasambhava", popularly known as "Guru Rimpoche". He was



an Indian saint who made an immense contribution in spreading Tantric Buddhism around 800 A.D. in the Himalayan region of Nepal, Tibet and Bhutan. He is also the founder of Nyingmapa, the old School of Lamaism which even today has a number of followers. The dances are performed by monks as well as by laymen during the festival. Although this is a religious festival but this also gives an opportunity for people to socialise as people from all regions come here to celebrate. It is a very special occasion on which people are dressed in their finest traditional attire. The main highlight of the festival is masked dances which narrate events from the life of "Padmasambhava" as well as stories of other saints. Dance, folk songs, and music (cymbal, drum, flute, and yak-horn) are performed both by monks and general public. This also provides an



Tour starts	20 March 2024 in Paro
Tour ends	29 March 2024 in Paro
Location	Paro (Bhutan)
Festival Dates	20-24 March 2024

This tour takes you to Bhutan - The Land of Thunder Dragon during Paro Festival which is celebrated in honor of "Padmasambhava" born in India from a lotus flower, symbolizing the original purity of his mind. He is known as Guru Rinpoche and founding father of Tibetan Buddhism. Masked dances are performed by monks depicting his life and of other Buddhist gurus. Although this is a religious festival but you also experience true Bhutanese culture and their way of life as people from all corners come here to celebrate and socialise. Besides experiencing Paro during the special festival, you also visit Thimphu (the Capital of Bhutan), Punakha Valley - one of Bhutan's most scenic destinations and Bumthang - The Remote Valley and Cultural Capital of Bhutan.



opportunity for Bhutanese people to re-establish connection with their Gurus who have deep impact on their life. In the evening, Transfer to your hotel for overnight stay.

DAY 3: PARO: 22 MARCH 2024

In the morning, leave on foot for excursion to Taktsang Monastery. The Monastery is situated on a nearly vertical cliff at 3000 metres above sea level, north of Paro. This is also known as "Tiger's Nest" because it is said that Guru Rimpoche had flown on the back of a tigress in 8th century and he meditated in a cave there for three months. It is at this place that monastery was built. The cave is considered to be the origin point of Buddhism in Dragon Kingdom. After enjoying the scenic beauty of the surroundings, you will gradually walk down to the valley. Overnight stay.

DAY 4: PARO - THIMPHU (2320 M/7,610 FT): 54 KM / 1 HOUR: 23 MARCH 2024

Enjoy the last day of participation in ParoTsechu for few hours at Paro Dzong. It is one of the most important day and the unfolding of the silk Thangka which is so large that it covers the face of the building, is considered to be the most sacred blessings to people in entire kingdom of Bhutan. This is exhibited only for few hours, at day break of the final day of the festival. Later drive to Thimphu and upon arrival check-in at hotel. In the afternoon, visit Memorial Chorten, built in memory of third king of Bhutan in 1974 is a prominent landmark of Thimphu. Also visit Radio Tower which offers great view of entire valley. Later visit Tashichho Dzong which is one of the most impressive edifices in whole Bhutan. (The visit to Dzong is permitted only after office hours and subject to permission). If time permits, you will visit Junshi Handmade Paper Factory before returning to your hotel for overnight stay.

DAY 5: THIMPU - PUNAKHA: 90 KM / 2 ½ HOUR: 24 MARCH 2024

After breakfast, departure for Punakha valley. It is a very scenic drive through pine, oak and rhododendron forest with stop at Dochula Pass (3150 mts) Here you will enjoy unforgettable spectacular views of Himalayas on a clear day. Continue drive to visit Chimi Lhakhan Temple which is dedicated to Lama Drukya Kunley, the divine Madman. The Temple is also known as Temple of Fertility. Later on visit impressive Punakha Dzong which was earlier known as the Druk Punthang Dechen Phrodang meaning "The Palace of great happiness". The massive Dzong built in 1637 was damaged six times by different reasons. You will be amazed to see spectacular Kuenrey (assembly hall) as it is now open to visitors. Overnight stay.





**DAY 6: PUNAKHA – TRONGSA –
BUMTHANG: 220 KM / 7-8 HOUR:
25 MARCH 2024**

Today will be a long drive as you have to reach Bumthang which is considered to be cultural Capital of Bhutan. En-route you will drive through Trongsa across Pele-La Pass at an altitude of 3300 metres, considered to be a traditional boundary between Eastern and Western Bhutan. You will realize sudden change in vegetation with high altitude dwarf bamboo replacing mountain forest. On the way, you will stop at Chendbji Chorten which is designed on pattern of famous Swayambhunath Stupa in Kathmandu. Drive to reach Trongsa where you will visit Trongsa Dzong which is a true masterpiece of Bhutanese architecture. After lunch, we proceed to Bumthang which is situated in a fascinating valley for overnight stay.

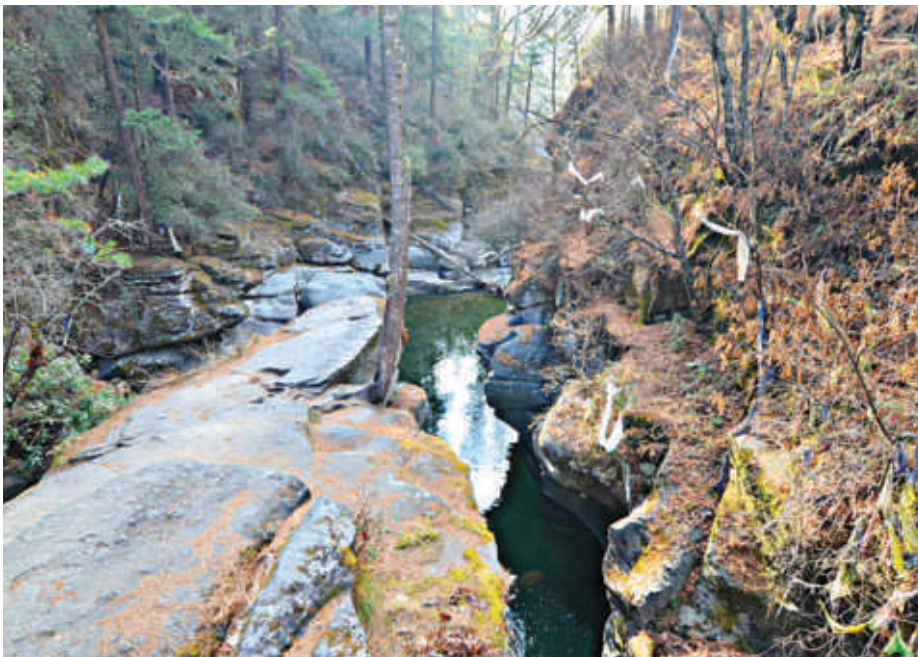
**DAY 7: BUMTHANG – JAKAR –
BUMTHANG: 26 MARCH 2024**

Morning visit Bumthang valley and nearby Jakar. The valley is truly spectacular and being religious heartland of Bhutan, is home to some of the oldest Buddhist temples and monasteries. In the morning, we will trek to visit Tamshing Monastery which lies on other side of the river opposite Kurje Lhakhang. It is one of the oldest monasteries set up by Tertön Prema Lingpa, a re-incarnation of Guru Padmasambhava in 1501. Here Saint Padmasambhava is said to have conquered a local demon and left his body imprint on a rock. Later visit Jambay Lhakhang, one of the oldest temples in Bhutan, built by King Songsten in 8th century to suppress evil spirits in Himalayan kingdom. Later visit Jakar Dzong which was built as a monastery by Great grandfather of Zhabdrung in the year 1549. It is located on a ridge above Jakar town in the Chamkhar valley and is considered to be the largest dzong in entire Bhutan with are of more than 1500 meters. Overnight stay.



**DAY 8: BUMTHANG – GANGTEY –
WANGDUE: 180 KM / 7 HOUR:
27 MARCH 2024**

Morning driver back towards central Bhutan and pass through beautiful Phobjikha valley and this remote valley is home to black necked cranes which migrate from Tibet during winter season. Visit the great monastery of Gangtey which is perched on a small hill overlooking the valley. Gangtey Gompa as it is called locally is surrounded by local village which is home to 140 Gomchens families who look after the monastery. It is the largest Nyingmapa monastery in entire Bhutan, founded by Pema Trinley in 17th century. Then continue drive to pass through Pelela pass again descending through open meadows and you will come across many villages and yak herders on the way. Finally, drive to Wang due which is a typical Bhutanese town. Overnight stay.





**DAY 9: WANGDUE – PARO: 150 KM / 5 HOURS:
28 MARCH 2024**

Wangdue is home to Wangdue Phodrang Dzong which is built on a spur at the confluence of two rivers, Punak Tsang Chhu and the Dang Chhu. The Dzong has a wonderful location as it overlooks the spur and you will have a magnificent view over both the north-south and east-west roads. The Dzong was built in 1638 by Zhabgdrung and holds an important place in Bhutanese history as it was once second capital of Bhutan. Unfortunately, it caught fire in 2012 and was destroyed except some remains and now it is being rebuilt. Later departure for Paro. On the way, Visit the new Druk Wangyal Monastery, which is known for elaborate paintings depicting the lineage of the present monarchy and their visionary works. The evening is free to explore the town. Overnight in Paro.

DAY 10: DEPARTURE: 29 MARCH 2024

Morning transfer to Paro airport to catch flight for onwards destination.

*The distance and time taken indicated is just to give you an idea and does not include time taken on visit of places.

“TOUR ENDS”

The festival dates are subject to final confirmation.



NEPAL MANI RIMDU FESTIVAL

10 NIGHTS / 11 DAYS TOUR: KATHMANDU - LUKLA - PHAKDING - NAMCHE BAZAAR - TENGBOCHE

DAY 1: ARRIVAL KATHMANDU (1334M): 07 NOVEMBER 2024

Arrive at Kathmandu airport and transfer to your hotel. Then start your city tour of Kathmandu (this will depend on your flight arrival time) with visit to Durbar Square, site of hanuman Dhoka Palace Complex which was royal residence until 19th century. Continue your tour to visit Bhadgaon which is a conglomeration of pagoda and shikhara style temples grouped around a brick and wood palace of fifty five windows. Overnight stay.

DAY 2: DRIVE TO MULKOT (145 KM APPROX 05 /06 HRS DRIVE): 08 NOVEMBER 2024

After breakfast, Drive to Mulkot from Kathmandu (we can do sightseeing tour of Bhadagaon on this day if times doesn't permit in day 01 Check in at Mulkot Hotel (Tourist standard hotel)

Rest of the afternoon Overnight stay at Mulkot.

DAY 3: RAMECHHAP- LUKLA (2860M) – PHAKDING (2830M): 09 NOVEMBER 2024

Transfer to Ramechhap airport to take a morning flight to Lukla. This is a 35 minutes scenic flight as it will offer you first view of Himalayas which is simply breathtaking. You would fly at approximately 4000 metres and you just imagine that in next days, you would be walking through mountains which are at a greater height than your flight. After arrival at Lukla airport, you will be given a briefing by your guide. Once a tiny settlement, Lukla is now a fairly large town, with many shops and even a couple of internet cafes. You will then start your trek to Phakding which will take few hours. The trail is spectacular with a number of streams flowing due to melting snow from mountain peaks above and trekking through massive green valleys. You will share trail with other trekkers and locals. Reach at Phakding and overnight stay at lodge.

Trek 2/3 hours.



Tour starts	07 November 2024 in Kathmandu
Tour ends	18 November 2024 in Kathmandu
Location	Tengboche (Everest Region)
Festival Dates	12 Nov - 14 Nov 2024

Mani Rimdu festival is an annual event which takes place on 10th lunar month of Tibetan Calendar. The festival is celebrated in beautiful monastery of Tengboche. The monastery is on the way to Everest Base Camp and located at the confluence of Dudh Koshi and Imja Khola rivers. Lamas and Sherpas along with natives of Khumbu valley gather here for five days and celebrate the festival. The festival is a culmination of religious ceremonies, feasts, songs, special mask dances which are followed by singing and dancing of Sherpas. The masked dances performed during the festival symbolize mythological events depicting victory of good over evil. The tour provides you an opportunity to not only enjoy and participate in this colourful and interesting festival but also combines it with unique experience of trekking in the remote Everest region.



DAY 4: PHAKDING – NAMCHE BAZAAR (3480M): 10 NOVEMBER 2024

Breakfast at the lodge and get ready for famous trek to NamcheBazaar. This is not so easy trek as you have to go through steep unhill climb consistently besides crossing a number of suspension bridges. The trek follows DudhKoshi River and you need to cross the river on many Occasions before stopping at Jorsale for lunch. After lunch, you continue the trek for a couple of hours passing through traditional huts and trail surrounded by pines and sharing it with yaks and porters. You will also come across many prayer wheels on the way. These are protected by wooden shelters which are decorated with intricate artwork dedicated to Buddha. Soon, Namche Bazaar, situated at 3480 metres will appear which gives you a great sense of achievement. You will pass through the plateau which is also the location for famous Saturday bazaar and enter the village which is surrounded by mountains on three sides and DudhKoshi River on one side. Namche Bazaar is a hub of this area where trekkers replenish their stock of food and other essential times. Overnight stay at lodge.

Trek – 4/5 hours



DAY 5: NAMCHE BAZAAR – KHHUMJUNG (3840M) – NAMCHE BAZAAR: 11 NOVEMBER 2024

Today is the day for acclimatization to prepare yourself to high altitude. But it will be wrong to imagine that it is a rest day. The day is used to get the body used to lower level of oxygen in the air. For this, you need to hike to a high altitude place before returning to lower altitude. Therefore, you will be taken to Khumjung village on foot. The village is densely populated and gives you an opportunity to enjoy breath taking view of Himalayan peaks including Mount Everest. The village is home to many Sherpas who are famous for their mountaineering skill and have helped all mountaineers in their expeditions. There is also an old monastery which you will visit before returning to Namche Village. Rest of the day is free to enjoy a drink at friendly bar or a well-deserved massage. Overnight stay at lodge.

Trek – 4/5 hours

DAY 6: NAMCHE BAZAAR – TENGBOCHE (3890M): 12 NOVEMBER 2024

Breakfast at the lodge and get ready to start the trekking with the walk on ridge and flat mountain path. There will be now familiar sight of porters and yaks along the trail which gets narrower and less concrete as you go into the mountains. The trek is steeper than you would have done so far and it is important to go steady. The temperature falls rapidly as you ascend the mountain. You will come across many Stupas, dedicated to Buddha. The stupas are with four sets of eyes, one in each direction which signify the all-seeing ability of Buddha to see you everywhere. After a flat zigzag walk for few hours, you descend to the river and reach Phunki Tenga and then climb through Rhododendron forest up to Tyangbuche, your final destination for the day which is also home to one of the largest monasteries. Upon arrival, check in at lodge for overnight stay.

Trek – 5/6 hours



DAY 7: TENGBOCHE (MANI RIMDU FESTIVAL):

13 NOVEMBER 2024

Here you will enjoy Mani Rimdu festival. The festival is celebrated at Tengboche Monastery which has beautiful interiors. The monastery is perched on a hill at an altitude of 3867m. It is on the way to Everest Base Camp and located at the confluence of DudhKoshi and ImjaKhola rivers. This was built by Lama Gulu in 1916 but completely destroyed in 1934 by a massive earthquake. It was rebuilt but again amaged by fire in 1989. The present structure was established by devoted volunteers with international assistance. The monastery plays host to colourful Mani Rimdu festival which lasts for nineteen days. The festival is a culmination of religious ceremonies, songs, special mask dances which are followed by singing and dancing of Sherpas. The masked dances performed during the festival symbolize mythological events depicting victory of good over evil. During these nineteen days, various ceremonies and Pooja are performed by monks. For the last three days, the festival turns into a Public event. The grand finale of Mani Rimdu begins with Tengboche Rinpoche showering blessings to people. The special mask dance is also performed by the monks of the monastery. Please note that photography is now allowed a few places during ceremonies. Overnight stay.

DAY 8: TENGBOCHE (MANI RIMDU FESTIVAL):

14 NOVEMBER 2024

After breakfast, you will be again taken to visit the monastery to enjoy Mani Rimdu Festival. Overnight stay at lodge.

DAY 9: TENGBOCHE – NAMCHE BAZAAR:

15 NOVEMBER 2024

After breakfast and having soaked in breath taking sunrise view over Himalayas in the morning, you will start trek from Tengboche to Namche Bazaar. The trail becomes downhill as it goes to the valley where it crosses a river and you again need to climb up. After this, it becomes flat and passes through small settlements. Reach Namche bazaar and overnight stay at lodge.

Trek – 4/5 hours



DAY 10: NAMCHE BAZAAR – LUKLA:

16 NOVEMBER 2024

After breakfast, get ready for last trekking day of your trip to Lukla. It will be again a pleasant downhill trek except few short uphill climbs then down Bhote-Koshi River which you will cross three times. You will have final uphill climb of 45 minutes to finally reach Lukla. Overnight stay at lodge.

Trek – 5/6 hours





DAY 11: LUKLA – KATHMANDU: 17 NOVEMBER 2024

After early breakfast at lodge, transfer to Lukla airport to catch flight for Ramechhap. Arrival at Ramechhap airport and then drive back to Kathmandu and transfer to your hotel. Rest of the day is free to explore Kathmandu on your own or last minute shopping. Overnight stay at hotel.

DAY 12: DEPARTURE: 18 NOVEMBER 2024

Transfer to Kathmandu airport to catch flight for onward destination.

“TOUR ENDS”

The festival dates are subject to final confirmation.



SRI LANKA KANDY FESTIVAL

7 NIGHTS / 8 DAYS TOUR: COLOMBO - DAMBULLA - SIGIRIYA - POLONNARUWA - KANDY - NUWARA ELIYA - YALA - GALLE



Tour starts	11 August 2024 in Colombo
Tour ends	18 August 2024 in Colombo
Location	Kandy
Dates	13 - 24 August 2024

The Kandy festival or The Festival of Tooth is known as The Esala Perahera in Sri Lanka. It is one of the most ancient and grandeur of all fairs and festivals there. The festival starts with planting of a purified jackfruit tree which is then blessed with sandalwood scented water and the main Priest of Vishnu Temple recites prayers. The first five days of the festival are celebrated dancing and drumming outside temples of Kandy. Later on sixth evening onwards, processions take place from the Temples towards Temple of the Tooth. The highlight of the festival is procession of the last evening as an enormous elephant carrying a gold casket which has a relic of the Tooth and is followed by dancers, drummers, musicians and flag bearers mesmerizing the crowd on the street.

DAY 1: COLOMBO - DAMBULLA: (155 KM / 4 HOURS): 11 AUGUST 2024

Arrival at Colombo airport and transfer to Dambulla. On arrival check in at the hotel. Dambulla is a vast isolated rock mass and it was here that king Valagam Bahu took refuge from invasions in 1st century B.C. and turned the rocks into a cave temple. Late afternoon visit Golden Cave Temples in Dambulla. Few of its frescoes are over 2000 years old. Another attraction is a gigantic figure of the recumbent Buddha carved out of the living rock which is about 15 metres long. The caves have a combination of religious paintings and sculptures with ceiling frescoes depicting scenes from the Buddha's life and Sinhalese history. The Temples contain some of the world's finest ancient Buddhist art. Overnight stay.

DAY 2: DAMBULLA - SIGIRIYA - POLONNARUWA - DAMBULLA (140 KM / 3 HOURS): 12 AUGUST 2024

After breakfast go for tour of Sigiriya Rock fortress. Sigiriya is also considered to be The 8th wonder of the Ancient World. You will be fascinated setting your eyes upon this strange shaped rock with ruins of a palace and citadel hanging on to its sides. A rusty staircase leads you to a cave gallery that has frescoes of the famous Sigiriya Maidens. Later drive to Polonnaruwa, the ancient capital of Sri Lanka between 11th and 14th Century. Visit the ruins of temples, palaces and stupas which till date remain in excellent state of preservation. Also visit The Gal Vihare with three huge rock-cut images of Buddha. It is known as one of the





world's great masterpieces of sculpture. Enjoy a ride on elephant back in Habarana through the forests and villages. In the evening, return to Dambulla for overnight stay.

**DAY 3: DAMBULLA – KANDY (75 KM / 2 HOURS):
13 AUGUST 2024**

Morning breakfast at the hotel and then visit a spice garden in Matale on the way to Kandy to see many different types of spices, Sri Lanka is famous for. Later leave for Kandy. Upon arrival check in at the hotel.

KANDY, the Hill Capital and last stronghold of the Sinhala Kings is a World Heritage Site which still retains an aura of grandeur. The town is encircled by hills and a serene lake in its centre, it is also site of the renowned temple that enshrines the Tooth Relic of Buddha and the Royal Botanical gardens – considered to be home of one of the world's best Orchids collection.

In the evening, you will enjoy The Kandy festival or The Festival of Tooth which is celebrated for ten days. It is believed to commemorate the first teachings given by Gautam Buddha after he was

enlightened. The term “Perahera” means a procession in Sinhalese. During the festival, there is a huge procession of thousands of dancers, musicians, acrobats and other artists who participate in this gala event. The biggest attraction of the procession is also a large number of caparisoned Elephants who accompany these performers in the streets to celebrate this auspicious occasion. The main reason for this event is to receive blessings of God for good rain to ensure good harvest. Overnight stay.

DAY 4: KANDY: 14 AUGUST 2024

Morning go for excursion to Pinnawela Elephant Orphanage and Peradeniya Gardens. Its Orchid Houses are special attraction. Pinnawela Elephant Orphanage is Sri Lanka's unique tourist attraction. It is a wonderful experience to spend a couple of hours in the company of over 70 elephants, the largest herd in the entire world. You can come here for feeding the elephants at 9 am or enjoy see them bath in the Maha Oya River. Then visit Peradeniya Gardens and Royal Botanical Gardens which are said to be one of the most spectacular gardens in South Asia. The most notable features of the gardens are the Orchid House which houses a collection of over 300 variety of Sri Lankan orchids and spice garden. In the evening get ready to enjoy the grandeur of Kandy festival which will leave you spellbound with its sound, music and rhythm. Overnight stay.

**DAY 5: KANDY – NUWARA ELIYA (120 KM / 4 HOURS):
15 AUGUST 2024**

Morning drive to Nuwara Eliya which is situated at an altitude of 1,868m. It was the original Hill Station of the British tea planters who came to Ceylon, as it was then known. It was built during 19th century and its architecture reminds that of an English country town, with red-brick walls. Blessed with salubrious climate, spectacular views of valleys, meadows and mountains; it's difficult to believe that we are only 180 km away from the hot and humid Colombo. There is a Grand Hotel, Hill Club and a Golf Course which





is the oldest in Asia and even a Race Course – all of which are reminders of an English social life of bygone era which once thrived here. We later depart from Kandy and proceed towards Nuwara Eliya visiting a Tea plantation and Factory to give you an insight of the local tea manufacturing process as well as day to day routine life of local workers there. Arrive at Nuwara Eliya and check in at hotel for overnight stay.

DAY 6: NUWARA ELIYA – YALA (200 KM / 5 HOURS) + TRAIN: 16 AUGUST 2024

After breakfast check out from hotel and depart for Nanu-oya Train station to board the train to Ella. The scenery en-route is wonderful and much better than travelling by road. You be provided pic-nic lunch on board. Reach Ella which is a small town blessed with some of the most stunning views. Ella is also used as a base for trekking trips to the neighboring countryside. You will get a taste of its beauty by just walking into the Garden of the Grand Ella Motel (Formerly Ella Rest House), where you would feel that you are standing at the edge of the world. We later continue our journey towards Yala and after arrival check-in at hotel. Yala is an incredible

destination that has been admired as an unparalleled testimony to the beauty of the wilderness, nature at its best. It is one of the best places in the world to spot leopards, sloth bears, elephants, and a wide range of birdlife.

DAY 7: YALA – GALLE – COLOMBO (290 KM / 6 HOURS): 17 AUGUST 2024

Morning enjoy exclusive jeep safari in the national park. Yala, the largest national park in Sri Lanka is very reminiscent of the African savannah and is the place where the greatest variety of wildlife can be observed. Herds of Spotted Deer, Sambar (Elk) and Wild Boar are common. Yala is now gaining an international reputation as the best place to watch Leopards in the world. The aggressive Sloth Bear is also present but rarely seen. Yala also contains about 250 Elephants including some magnificent solitary cross-tuskeders. Before reaching Colombo, en-route stop to visit the Old World Town of Galle which is known for a charming Old Dutch Fort (1640), one of the best preserved forts in Asia, whose ramparts enclose an Old Town of great historical and architectural value. Finally reach Colombo and overnight stay.





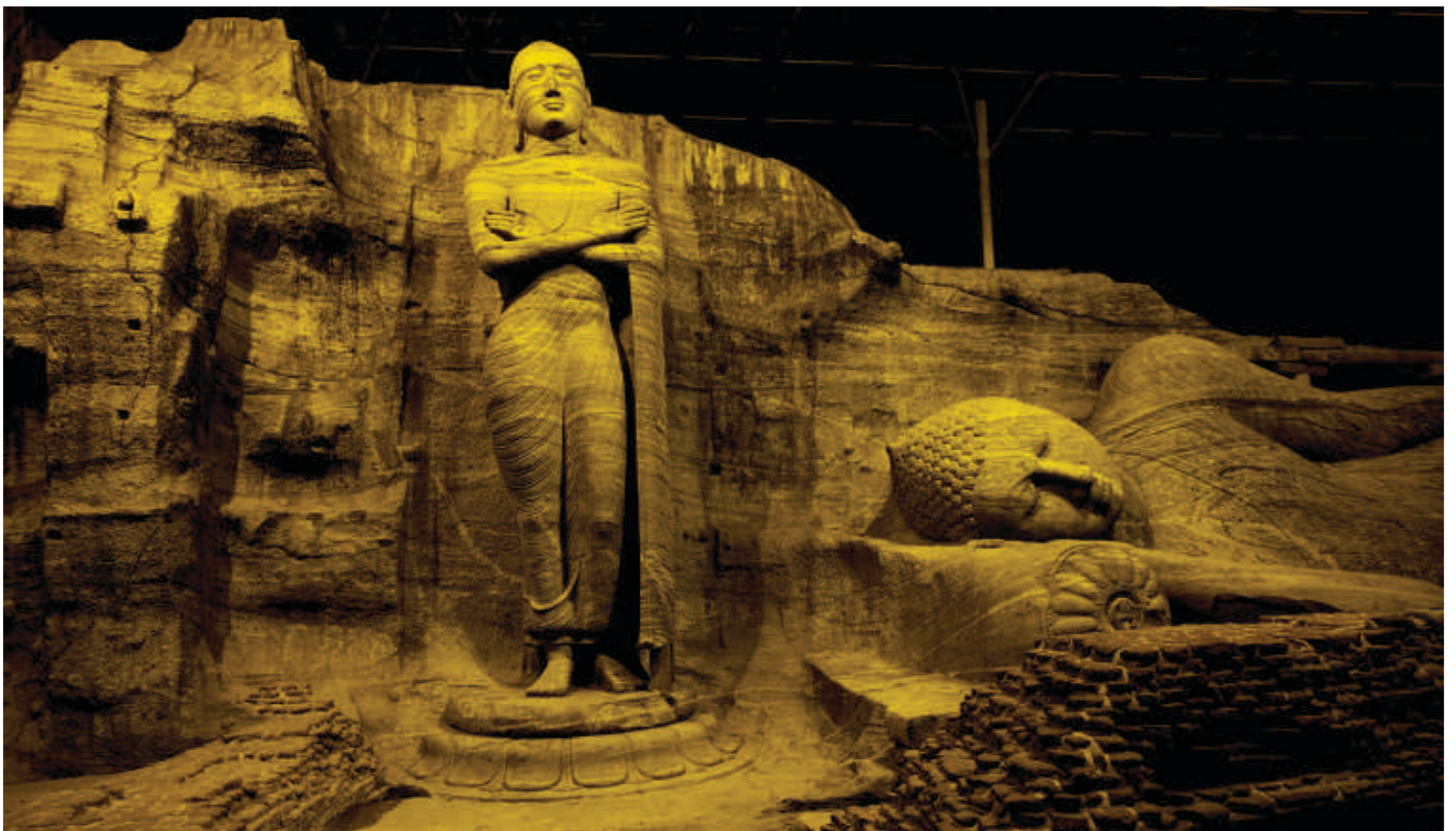
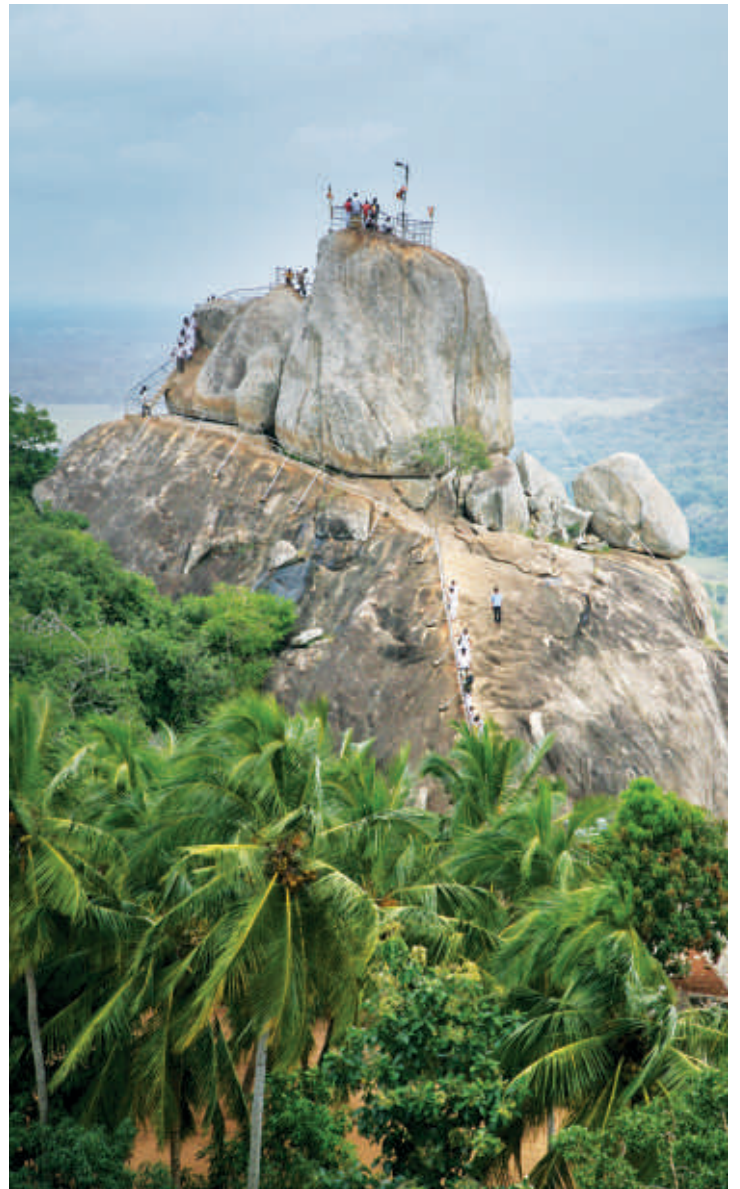
DAY 8: DEPARTURE: 18 AUGUST 2024

Morning after breakfast check out from the hotel and then city tour of Colombo, the trade and commercial capital of Sri Lanka. It is located on the west coast and draws together all the cultures, religions and influences of foreign lands into a pot-pourri of sounds, smells and a kaleidoscope of color. Visit impressive Parliament House, designed by celebrated architect, Geoffrey Bawa. In the evening transfer to airport to catch flight for onward destination.

*The distance and time taken indicated is just to give you an idea and does not include time taken on visit of places.

“TOUR ENDS”

Festival dates are subject to final confirmation.



INTERNATIONAL YOGA FESTIVAL RISHIKESH

The Yoga Tour takes you to Haridwar and Rishikesh, in the lap of Himalayas to participate in International Yoga Festival in Rishikesh. Yoga is a way of life and it is a perfect medium to achieve harmony of body, mind and soul. It helps you in attaining perfect blend of spiritual intelligence and physical fitness in your life. The philosophy of Yoga is complex and it has its own school of thought about The Universe, Humanity and civilization. The main objective of Yoga is self-realization through inner knowledge and meditation. It is not only breathing techniques, various yoga asana or different body postures, but it is more deeply spiritually oriented. To realize our inner Self, we should put our body consciousness in the background, rise above the mind and experience the Divine reality directly within us. In today's complex world, it has become more important and relevant for people to find balance, attain inner peace, well-being and calm in their life. Yoga is the best tool to improve our emotion as well as physical and spiritual ability. Yoga helps you with better mental control and make you calmer, tolerant and eventually making your quality of life better. To practice yoga, you have to cultivate a yogic mind and heart. International Yoga Festival at Rishikesh offers a rare opportunity to introduce Yoga in your life. The week-long yoga festival cleanses and purifies your body, mind and soul. You get a unique opportunity to be trained and guided by prominent spiritual leaders and yoga teachers who participate in the Festival in Rishikesh, the Yoga Capital of the World. There cannot be a better venue for this occasion than the shores of River Ganges amid a spiritual ambience, created by the holy Ganga. Besides learning few of the ancient techniques and participate in sessions of yoga and

meditation, it also provides you an opportunity to understand aspects of Indian culture and spirituality.

During the Festival, there are more than 70 hours of Yoga classes by world-class Yoga Gurus practicing various styles of Yoga which include Iyengar Yoga, Kriya Yoga, Kundalini Yoga, and Power Vinyasa Yoga. Besides these yoga asana, you will also be blessed by Satsangas divine wisdom of esteemed saints and spiritual leaders through their teaching adds to the holistic learning.

The schedule of the International Yoga Festival week may change from day-to-day. But, it normally follows below schedule:

- Classes start at 4 am.
- At 6.30 am, one-hour Yoga class, followed by a simple breakfast.
- At 8.30 am you can join one of several two-hour Yoga sessions.
- At 11:00 am, divine and inspiring lectures from revered saints and yogacharyas on a variety of uplifting and inspiring subjects.
- Traditional Indian lunch from 12.30 pm to 1.30 pm.
- After lunch, instructional classes, followed by three Yogasana classes from 3.30 pm to 5.00 pm.
- From 6.00 pm to 7.00 pm, special light ceremony, Aarti, on the banks of the river Ganga.
- Dinner at 7.00 pm followed by a special evening programs of satsang with spiritual leaders, bhajans and cultural events, finishing by 9.30 pm.



TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1: DELHI: 27 FEBRUARY 2024

Arrival at Delhi. Welcome at the airport and transfer to hotel. Later start your exploration of India with a city tour of Old Delhi that includes visit to Jama Masjid, built in 1650 A.D. and amazing Red Fort which was the seat of Mughal Empire for more than 250 years. Also enjoy rickshaw ride along the alleys of the ancient bazaar of Chandni Chowk. Then drive past India Gate, Parliament Buildings and President House. Return to hotel for overnight stay.

DAY 2: DELHI - HARIDWAR - RISHIKESH (240 KM / 6 HOURS): 28 FEBRUARY 2024

Morning drive to Haridwar. Afternoon visit Har-ki-Pauri (the footstep of God), one of the most sacred ghats for Hindus. Then drive to Rishikesh - also known as the 'place of sages', at the confluence of the Chandrabhaga and Ganga rivers. It is the starting point for the Char dham pilgrims but also for the people who are interested in meditation, yoga and other aspects of Hinduism. Check-in and overnight stay in hotel.

DAY 3 - DAY 9: RISHIKESH: 1 MARCH - 7 MARCH 2024

Full day for International Yoga Festival.

DAY 10: RISHIKESH-DELHI (240 KM / 6 HOURS): 8 MARCH 2024

After breakfast, departure for Delhi.

Note:- There is also an option of either taking a flight from Delhi to Dehradun and transfer by car from Dehradun Airport to Rishikesh or take a train from Delhi to Haridwar and from Haridwar by car to Rishikesh. This may result in change of tour cost for which you may contact us.



OTHER FESTIVALS IN INDIA

KHAJURAHO DANCE FESTIVAL (KHAJURAHO)

This festival is celebrated when harshness of winter begins to fade and spring begins to take over. This weeklong extravaganza gives a treat to the eyes as most colourful and brilliant classical dance forms are on display with their roots to rich traditions of the country. These performances bring forward the age old trends that are firmly established in dance forms. With the passage of time, these age old dance forms still not have lost their charm and are a visual delight.



BAISAUKHI (PUNJAB)

Celebrated each year on 13th April, Baisakhi is most popular festival in Punjab. The festival marks the beginning of the spring season and end of Rabi crops in the country. The festival is celebrated with a lot of gusto and fervour in the country. Farmers thank God for Bountiful growth of the crop, they wake up early and take a dip in the holy waters. The festival is also celebrated as the birthday of tenth Sikh guru, Guru Govind Singh and the foundation of the Khalsa was laid on this day. The skies are rent with cries of "JattaAai Baisakhi" and people of Punjab dressed in best clothes break into traditional Bhangra dance to show their joy for the festival.



RATHYATRA (PURI)

RathYatra is the most important festival of Lord Jagannath which is celebrated with a lot of zest and enthusiasm in Puri in Orissa. It is held every year in the month of June or July when Lord Jagannath comes out to give Darshan to all the sects. It is believed that all those devotees who take part in this festival find their way to heaven. Snana Purnima marks the beginning of the festival. The Yatra is hosted by Chariot Temple in Puri. On the first day, images of Jagannath Temple are carried out in the streets on three huge thundering chariots. Due to this fact, the festival has earned its fame internationally. For next 21 days, the images of the Lord Jagannath are taken to the Narendra Tank in a colourful boat.



JANMASHTMI (MATHURA)

Janmashtmi commemorates the birth of Lord Krishna and is one of the biggest festivals of the country. The celebration for the festival begins before the dawn and continues till midnight. Mathura and Vrindavan, the birth place of Lord Krishna celebrates this festival with a lot of zest and enthusiasm. Incidents from Krishna's life are recreated through Raslilas or religious plays to commemorate the love of Lord Krishna towards Radha. During midnight statue of baby Krishna is bathed and kept in ornamented cradle. The special highlight of this festival is the decoration you'll find in temples or individual homes of people all over north India.



ONAM (KERALA)

Onam is one of the biggest festivals in Kerala and falls during the Malayali month of Chingam. The festival commemorates the homecoming of legendary King Mahabali. This ten-day festival brings out the best of traditions and culture of Kerala. Intricately ornamented Pookalam, ambrosial Onasadya, awe-inspiring Snake Boat Race and glamorous Kaikottikali dance are some of the most extraordinary features of Onam – the harvest festival in Kerala. Elaborate feasts, folk songs, elegant dances, energetic games, elephants, boats and flowers all are a part of the dynamic festival called Onam.



OTHER FESTIVALS IN INDIA



NAVRATRI (GUJARAT)

A nine day festival dedicated to Goddess Durga, is one of the largest Hindu festivals celebrated all over India every year. The exact dates of the festival are fixed by the rotation of the moon but most likely it takes place around September or October. After the nine days of the worship, there comes the event of Ramnavami, signifying Rama's (good) triumph over Ravana (evil). Leaving aside Religion and tradition, the famous Garba dance is performed in every village and cities of Gujarat during Navratri. It is most amazing to watch Gujarat erupt with vibrant colours, music and dance during the festival. It is a time for even the most traditional and housebound women to be out of the house and whirling, uninhibited, towards the divinity that hides within her own body. Many of the songs begin slow and gradually speed up, sending the dancers into a trance, especially when the music and dance is in its rawest form.



GANESH CHATURTHI (MUMBAI)

This magnificent festival is celebrated to commemorate the birth of Lord Ganesha. The festival is celebrated on the fourth day of the full moon according to the Hindu calendar. This 11 day long festival is celebrated with a lot of zest and enthusiasm in Maharashtra and other major parts of the country. One of the best ways to experience the zest of the festival is in Mumbai, where special celebrations take place at Siddhivinayak temple. Prayers are offered to Lord Ganesha every day during the festival. The biggest spectacle of the festival is on the last day, which is also called as Anant Chaturdashi, when Lord Ganesha is immersed in the water.



DIWALI OR DEEPAVALI (ALL OVER INDIA)

The festival of Lights, is the biggest and the most elaborate of all the festivals celebrated in India. Diwali commemorates the return of Lord Rama along with Sita and Lakshman from his fourteen-year long exile and defeating the demon, Ravana. In joyous celebration of the return of their King, the people of Ayodhya, illuminated his kingdom with earthen diyas (oil lamps) and burst crackers. Even today, the victory of good over evil is celebrated and houses are decorated with candles and colourful lights and marked by large firework displays. The families enjoy the feast and share gifts.



DEV DEEPAVALI (VARANASI)

Dev Deepawali is celebrated in Varanasi on 15th day of Diwali. The festival takes place on Kartik Purnima on full moon. It is celebrated and observed by sparkling fire crackers and lighting a bunch of Diyas at the ghats and the Ghats of Varanasi come alive with thousands of Diyas floating in Holy Ganges. In Hindu religion, Dev Deepawali is celebrated in the belief that Gods descend on the Earth at this grand occasion. On this occasion, each and every ghat of Ganges river is thronged by a huge crowd of pilgrims. They flow thousands of Diyas (also known as earthen lamps) in the holy water of Gange for their ritual beliefs and culture. The festival is marked by The 'Ganga-Aarti' which is an important event in the evening as the whole atmosphere becomes imbued with spirituality and reverence.



DURGA PUJA (KOLKATA)

According to the Hindu Mythology, Goddess Durga was created by the collective energy of all Gods as an embodiment of Shakti to destroy demon Mahishasura; who was blessed to not be defeated by any man or God. It is celebrated for ten days, however starting from the sixth day till the ninth day, the Pandals with grand idols of Goddess Durga are open for visitors. The elaborate pandals, or temporary temples made of bamboo and cloth, are created to house the idols in parks or large open areas. The idols are worshipped for five days and then carried in magnificent procession to a local river for immersion, symbolizing Durga's reunion with Shiva. The streets of Kolkata change on the last day of Durga Puja. Thousands of processions, millions of people throng the roads and the traffic gets into a tizzy. Goddess Durga bids adieu to her family as the idols are immersed into the river. A ritual of family reunion takes place following the immersion.





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