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Wild Expedition with Taj and Ganges

Duration: 13N/14D

Key Sights: Delhi - Jaipur - Ranthambore - Bharatpur - Agra - Lucknow - Allahabad - Varanasi

Day	Program	Mode	Distance/Time
Day 1	Arrived Delhi	By Surface	
Day 2	Delhi		
Day 3	Delhi – Jaipur	By Surface	280KM/05-06 Hours
Day 4	Jaipur		
Day 5	Jaipur – Ranthambore	By Surface	167KM/03-04 Hours
Day 6	Ranthambore		
Day 7	Ranthambore – Bharatpur	By Surface	240KM/04-05 Hours
Day 8	Bharatpur – Agra	By Surface	57KM/01-02 Hours
Day 9	Agra – Lucknow	By Surface	336KM/05-06 Hours
Day 10	Lucknow		
Day 11	Lucknow – Allahabad	By Surface	200KM/04-05 Hours
Day 12	Allahabad – Varanasi	By Surface	120KM/02-03 Hours
Day 13	Varanasi		
Day 14	Varanasi – Delhi	By Flight	



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Day 1	Arrived Delhi	By Surface	
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Arrival in India (New Delhi), traditional welcome by our representative at airport, transfer assistance to hotel. Check-in at hotel, before you proceed to your room/s, our representative will hand-over the travel documents and brief you about the tour programme. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 2	Delhi		
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After breakfast, proceed for the full day tour of Old and New Delhi. Old Delhi in earlier times known as Shahjahanabad has impressive monuments built by Mughal Emperor Shahjahan, visit the Red Fort for a photo stop - 17th century imposing fortress built of red sandstone, the Jama Masjid, India's largest mosque where more than 20,000 people can kneel in prayer at a time, visit Chandni Chowk, the bustling and colourful market of the old city with a cycle-rickshaw ride and Raj Ghat - Mahatma Gandhi's Memorial.

Later visit New Delhi designed and built by the British in the 1920's it's a city of wide boulevards impressive Government buildings, green parks and gardens. First drive past Connaught Place, the heart and main shopping district of the capital, visit the Laxmi Narayan Temple - Garishly coloured modern temple built by the industrialist Birla. Then drive to Rajpath (King's Way), India Gate - the 42mt high stone "Arch of Triumph", erected in the memory of Indian soldiers who died in First World War. Drive past Rashtrapati Bhawan (President Palace) and Parliament House. Later visit the Qutab Minar - the building complex dates back to the onset of Muslim rule in India and are fine examples of Afghan architecture, built by Qutabuddin Aibek - Slave dynasty ruler in 12th century. Return to hotel for overnight stay.

Day 3	Delhi – Jaipur	By Surface	280KM/05-06 Hours
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After breakfast check-out from hotel, afterwards drive to Jaipur, upon arrival check-in at hotel. In the evening visit the Birla Temple to learn more about the fascinating religious life of Jaipur. The marble structure, built as recently as 1985, houses ornate statues including one of Lakshmi (Goddess of Wealth and Beauty) and Narayan dressed in gaudy robes, representing a Hindu vision of heavenly luxury. Witness the Aarti Ceremony (Prayer ceremony) which involves oil lamps being lit and waved, in order to awake and invoke the deity. Also visit the Albert Hall for a photo stop. Return to hotel for overnight stay.

Day 4	Jaipur		
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Breakfast at hotel, this morning take an excursion to Amber Fort, located at short distance of 11 kms from the city, this complex stands amidst wooded hills, with its threatening battlements reflected in the motionless waters of the Maota Lake below. You can have the unique experience of riding on a decorated elephant to the top of the hill. One of the premium examples of Rajput architecture, it was the ancient capital of the Kachhawaha rulers. The original palace was built by Raja Man Singh and additions were made later by



Sawai Jai Singh. Here are the personal chambers of the Queens with windows having latticed screens so that the ladies could look at the events of the Royal court in privacy. There is also the Jai Mandir or the "Temple of Victory", with its well-known Sheesh Mahal, the sparkling "Hall of Mirrors". Within the Palace are the Diwan-e-Aam or the "Hall of Public Audience", the Diwan-e-Khas or the "Hall of Private Audience" and the Sukh Niwas where a cool breeze blows across channels of water for the purpose of air-conditioning. Later return to the city for the sightseeing, visit the City Palace located in the heart of Jaipur known for its blend of Rajput and Mughal architecture, the complex which houses the rare and rich collection of Ornaments, Arms, Royal Costumes, Carpets and Decorative Art objects of traditional Rajasthani and Mughal Art and Architecture. Another monument near the City Palace is Jantar Mantar, a solar observatory - It is the largest of the five astronomical observatories built by Sawai Jai Singh-I, the founder ruler of Jaipur. It is an astronomical treasure house, with solar device that give accurate predictions till date, it is classified as a world heritage site. Later do a Photo-stop at Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds), a seven storied facade of pink sandstone and one of the most picturesque landmarks with semi-octagonal and delicately honeycombed windows overlooking the main street of the old city. It was built in 1799 so that veiled royal women could see the royal processions through its 593 stone screens without being seen by the outsiders. Return to hotel for overnight stay.

Day 5	Jaipur – Ranthambore	By Surface	167KM/03-04 Hours
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Breakfast and later check-out from hotel. This morning drive to Ranthambore, famous for its Tiger Reserve (National Park). Upon arrival check-in at hotel. Remaining day will be at leisure for independent activities Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 6	Ranthambore		
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Breakfast at hotel. Morning and Evening drives in the park. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 7	Ranthambore – Bharatpur	By Surface	240KM/04-05 Hours
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Breakfast and check-out from hotel. This morning drive to Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary. Visit the Bird Sanctuary with a rickshaw ride and the naturalist. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 8	Bharatpur – Agra	By Surface	57KM/01-02 Hours
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Breakfast and check-out from hotel. Afterwards drive to Agra. En-route visit Fatehpur Sikri. Fatehpur Sikri - Built in 1571, it is a synthesis of the flourishing styles of the Persian courts and the prevailing Hindu Islamic trends. It was planned as a great town by Emperor Akbar with great care and planning, but it had to be abandoned after fifteen years due to scarcity of water in the town. Constructed mainly as a tribute to the great Sufi Saint Shaikh Salim Chisti who had blessed Akbar with a son. His son was named after the Saint as Salim and he succeeded the Emperor Akbar and was known as Emperor Jehangir. The town was originally named Sikri after the village, where it was founded but its twin city Fatehpur (Victory Town)



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was erected to celebrate Akbar's conquest of Gujarat. However, ruins of the temple dating back to 12th century suggest the reign of Rajputs in the area long before Mughals took over the area. The two mosques in the village of Sikri have inscriptions, which announce their conception in 1314 under Mohd. Khilji. There have been records that Babur renamed the village 'Sikri' as 'Shukri', meaning 'thanks to the god'. It was also the famous dwelling place and Khanqah of Shiekh Salim Chishti, the famous Sufi saint whom Akbar revered for blessing him with child. Built in Red Sandstone, an example of robust stability combined with originality each important edifice here represents a type by itself. Notable among them is the Buland Darwaza, Tomb of Shaikh Salim Chisti, Jama Masjid, Diwan-e-Aam, Diwan-e-Khas, Panch Mahal, Palace of Jodha Bai, Birbal Bhawan, Miriam's Palace, Karawan Serai and Hiran Minar.

Later continue your drive to Agra, upon arrival check-in at hotel. PM - Visit the Agra Fort a World Heritage Site, located near to the Taj Mahal gardens on the banks of River Yamuna. The real specimen of architectural marvel, this fortress was constructed in the 15th century. The construction of this mammoth structure started during 1565 during the reign of Emperor Akbar and continued the developments up to the period of Emperor Shah Jahan. The fort, in a length of 2.5 km marvelous enclosure walls, is built in red sandstones and encloses many monuments which are real architectural wonders. Many exquisite palaces such as the Jehangiri Mahal, Shah Jahani Mahal, the Khas Mahal, Diwan-i-Aam - which was used as a communications ground between the public and the aristocracy and once housed the Peacock Throne, Diwan-i-Khas - a hall of private audience, it was used to welcome Kings and dignitaries and Mussaman Burj - a large, octagonal tower with a balcony facing the Taj Mahal are enclosed in the Fortress. Other monuments include the Fish Pavilion, the Nagina Masjid, Garden of Grapes and the Pearl Mosque. Views of the Taj Mahal from the Fort are amazing.

Later visit Itmad-Ud-Daulah's Tomb. Along with the main building, the structure consists of numerous outbuildings and gardens. Tomb of Mirza Ghiyas Beg - A Wazir (Chief Minister) in the court of Mughal Emperor Jehangir. Ghiyas Beg was honored with the title of Itmad-ud-Daulah or the Pillar of the State. Emperor Jehangir married her beautiful widowed daughter Mehr-un-Nissa, she was later christened Noor Jahan and went down in the history as one of the most beautiful and artistically gifted women in the world. After the death of Mirza Ghiyas Beg in 1622, Noor Jahan undertook the project to build his mausoleum, which took six years to get complete. It is entirely made of white marble. This tomb represents the transition between the first phase of monumental Mughal architecture - primarily built from red sandstone with marble decorations with mosaic and lattice.

Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 9	Agra – Lucknow	By Surface	336KM/05-06 Hours
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Early morning a visit to Taj Mahal – “ One of the Seven Wonders of the World, little needs to be said about this architectural wonder which looks breathtaking at the time of dawn. A pristine monument of undying love, built by Emperor Shah Jahan, the Taj is a white marble memorial to his beautiful wife Mumtaz Mahal. This monument took 22 years to be completed and was designed, and planned by Persian architect Ustad Isa. Taj Mahal symbolize the richness of art and architecture of the Mughal period. Apart from its stunning design balance and perfect symmetry, the Taj is also noted particularly for its elegant



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domes, intricately carved screens and some of the best inlay work ever seen. The Taj has continued to be a mark of love since ever.

After the visit return to hotel for breakfast. Check-out from hotel. Afterwards drive to Lucknow. Upon arrival proceed to hotel for check-in. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 10	Lucknow		
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Breakfast at hotel, this morning proceed for the full-day sightseeing of the city. The various architectural wonders in Lucknow are absolute must visits. One of the most famous monuments, the Bada Imambada is significant not only from historical, but also cultural and heritage point of view. The complex dates back to the year 1784 and was founded by the then Nawab of Awadh, Asaf-ud-Daula. It is a complex that is made up of a number of buildings, including Asafi mosque, the Bhul-Bhulaiyah (the Maze) and a summer palace with running water. Nawab Asaf-ud-Daula came to Lucknow in 1777 and in 1784, a harsh famine hit the city. In order to provide food relief to the famine-hit people, the Nawab decided to build the great Imambada, on food-for-work basis. He employed approximately 22,000 people to work day and night. This complex comprises of a great hall, situated at the end of an impressive courtyard. It is largest hall in Asia, without any external support of wood, iron, or stone beams; the hall has a ceiling that is more than 15 m high. The roof of the hall is said to be 16 feet thick, with a weight of nearly 20,000 tons. People marvel at this roof, which has been built without girders or beams to uphold it. The architect of the Bada Imambada is believed to be a Persian, by the name of Kifait-Ullah. The acoustics of the hall are such that one can even hear the strike of a matchstick across the length of the hall. The top terrace is reached through a narrow flight of steps and has a tangled set of passages. These passages were designed to confuse even the most alert minds, thus creating a maze called Bhul Bhulaiya. The main reason for the construction of the maze was to support the thick walls of the Imambada. The terrace of the monument provides a magnificent view of old Lucknow, along with its numerous Mosques and Minarets. A number of monuments are situated inside the complex.

Visit Rumi Darwazah 'Turkish Darwazah' whose beauty and majesty will brush you off your feet. This huge 60-feet-high door was also built by Nawab Asaf-ud-Daula. It is a massive gate on the the western side of the front of Bara Imambara. Its uppermost part consists of an eight-faceted Chhatri, which is approachable by a staircase.

Hussainabad (Chhota Imambada) was built by Muhammad Ali Shah – 3rd Nawab of Awadh in 1837, to serve as his own mausoleum. The interior of this magnificent building has lamp shades and chandeliers from Belgium, the extensive use of glass work in the building reflects Persian style of architecture. The walls are inscribed with Arabic calligraphy.

Thousands of labourers worked on the project to gain famine relief and the end result was a fantastic-looking tomb. The large courtyard encloses a raised rectangular tank on each side. The main building of the Imambara is topped with numerous minarets and domes -- the main one is golden.

Overnight stay at hotel.



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Day 11	Lucknow – Allahabad	By Surface	200KM/04-05 Hours
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Breakfast at hotel and check-out, this morning drive to Allahabad city. Upon arrival check in at hotel. PM - proceed for the sightseeing tour of city, visit the Triveni Sangam where river Ganga, Yamuna and the mythical Saraswati meet, followed by tour of Allahabad temples - Mankameshwar Temple, Hanuman Mandir, All Saints Cathedral (Patthar Girjaghar) and Shankar Viman Mandapam. Overnight stay in Allahabad.

Day 12	Allahabad – Varanasi	By Surface	120KM/02-03 Hours
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Early breakfast at hotel and later check-out, Drive to Varanasi in the morning. En route, you can also visit the Allahabad Fort, Allahabad museum and Jawahar Planetarium. Arrive in Varanasi. Check in at the hotel.

PM - Excursion to Sarnath - one of the holiest Buddhist sites in the world, where Buddha preached his first Sermon in 590 BC. Witness the ruins of a once flourishing Buddhist monastery and then visit a fine Museum which houses an excellent collection of Buddhist art and sculptures found at the site. In the evening enjoy the Aarti at the river Ganges Ghats (evening prayer ceremony).

Overnight stay in Varanasi.

Day 13	Varanasi		
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Early in the morning, proceed to river Ghat and take a boat ride on the sacred river Ganges to see and witness the living traditions of one of the world's oldest and most important religions. Proceed to the middle of the river, where at sunrise the sight unfolds before you. Thousands of faithful come daily to the banks to bathe and pray while in the background, temples and palaces rise in tiers from the water's edge. Return for a walk through the cobblestone streets along the banks of "Ganga". As shops are opening, the place now becomes a beehive of activity as the faithful are coming and going. Return to hotel for breakfast. Afterwards Proceed for a day tour of Varanasi including the Bharat Mata Temple, which features a big relief map of Mother India, engraved in marble. Visit the 18th century Durga Temple. Proceed to the Tulsi Manas Temple, crafted from white marble which features the entire Ramayana inscribed on its walls. Also visit the Benaras Hindu University, considered as the biggest residential university in Asia and visit the new Vishwanath temple located in the campus itself. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 14	Varanasi – Delhi	By Flight	
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Breakfast at hotel and later check-out. In-time transfer to airport to board flight for Delhi. Upon arrival in Delhi, proceed to visit the Akshardham Temple, after the visit drive to a local restaurant for farewell dinner. After dinner transfer for International airport to board flight for return journey.