



TAJ MAHAL AND THE TREASURES OF INDIA - PUSHKAR FAIR - A LUXURY SMALL GROUP JOURNEY (2024)

Explore India's greatest treasures as you visit the timeless Taj Mahal, seek the graceful Bengal tiger and witness a holy rite beside the sacred Ganges — all while staying in royal palaces-turned-luxury hotels.

Small Group Journeys, Luxury Small Group Journeys



Indian Subcontinent, India



16 days from AU\$25,025 pp



18 Guests

Journey Overview

Explore kaleidoscopic India, from Mumbai to Delhi, seeing contrasting Old and New Delhi, holy Varanasi and — if luck has it — the elusive Bengal tiger in Panna National Park. Behold the peerless Taj Mahal at sunrise and sunset, attend the colourful Pushkar Fair, and privately cruise placid Lake Pichola in Udaipur.

Journey Highlights

- Enjoy two days at the Pushkar Fair to experience its vibrant spectacle
- Stay in former palaces, including iconic royal residences such as the lavish Taj Lake Palace in Udaipur and the grand Rambagh Palace in Jaipur
- Embark on a private sunset boat cruise on Lake Pichola, your palace hotel seemingly floating on the water beneath an orange-hued sky, and cap it off with a refreshing cocktail
- Behold the glorious Taj Mahal at sunrise and sunset
- Set out on private safaris in Panna National Park, home to the elusive Bengal tiger, and enjoy an exclusive talk on conservation by a member of the local Pardhi community
- Observe priests performing an aarti ceremony on the banks of the Holy Ganges in Varanasi
- Experience the diverse appeal of India's great cities, from Delhi, a centre for politics and, with its enduring British influence, a blend of old and new, to colourful, fast-paced Mumbai, the innovative commercial heart of the country



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Mumbai, India

Arrive in Mumbai, where you are met by an Abercrombie & Kent representative and transferred to your hotel.

The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai

Day 2: Mumbai | Bustling Environs

Explore the city's classic sites, beginning with the Gateway of India, a 25-metre-high arch with a design that reflects India's Muslim and Hindu traditions. Visit the Prince of Wales Museum and Mani Bhawan, a museum dedicated to the life and works of Mahatma Gandhi. Next, see the Dhobi Ghat, the largest open-air laundry in the world and a wonderfully colourful spectacle to behold. Tonight, enjoy a welcome dinner.

The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai | Meals: BD

Day 3: Udaipur | Cruise to Jag Mandir

Fly to Udaipur this morning and settle into your stunning palace hotel set in the middle of scenic Lake Pichola. Relax this afternoon before embarking on a private cruise past Jag Mandir, a marble palace on an island in Lake Pichola, followed by a Scenic Sundowner and dinner at your hotel.

Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur | Meals: BD

Day 4: Udaipur | Glories of Mughal Palaces

Explore the City Palace, a marble complex that offers unforgettable views of Lake Pichola and its surroundings. Continue to the Crystal Gallery in Fateh Prakash Palace. Stroll through the Sahelion Ki Bari (Garden of the Maids of Honour) before returning to the hotel.

Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur | Meals: BL

Day 5: Pushkar | Experiencing the Colourful Fair

Early this morning, drive to the otherwise quiet, secluded desert town of Pushkar, sharing the road with camels, trucks, cattle, water buffalo and rickshaws as you approach. Spend the next two days experiencing the bustling Pushkar Fair, a colourful whirl of activity drawing people from all around the globe.

Pratap Mahal, Ajmer-IHCL SeleQtions | Meals: BLD

Day 6: Pushkar | A Bevy of Activity

Enjoy another opportunity to experience the Pushkar Fair. See painted and adorned camels and cattle being traded; peruse stalls selling camel tassels and woven gypsy dowry bags; and witness Hindu devotees as they throng the ghats around Pushkar Lake in order to bathe, cleanse their sins and attain a place in heaven.

Pratap Mahal, Ajmer-IHCL SeleQtions | Meals: BLD

Day 7: Jaipur | City Palace & Jantar Mantar

Travel overland to Jaipur and check in to your hotel, the former residence of the Maharajah of Jaipur. Later, explore the City Palace, a unique and arresting complex of several palaces, pavilions, gardens and temples. Located within the palace's gates is the Mubarak Mahal, or "Auspicious Palace," which contains textiles including the royal formal costumes, sanganeri block prints, Kashmiri pashminas and silk saris. Then, visit Jantar Mantar, an open-air array of astronomical instruments.

Rambagh Palace, Jaipur | Meals: BLD

Day 8: Jaipur | Design Your Day

See the Palace of the Winds – built for the women of the royal household to observe street life without being seen. Proceed to explore the beautiful Mughal-style Amber Fort. This red sandstone and marble palace is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This afternoon, enjoy one of these **Design Your Day** activities.

- **Practice Yoga During a Private Session** at Rambagh Palace.
- **Visit Digantar Vidyalay** to interact with the students at an innovative school supported by Abercrombie & Kent Philanthropy.
- **Discover the Bazaars of Jaipur**, taking in the vibe of local life and browsing for mementos.

Rambagh Palace, Jaipur | Meals: BL

Day 9: Agra | Visions of the Taj Mahal

Drive to Agra, observing the colourful rural life of Rajasthan on your journey. Upon arrival, catch your first glimpse of the breathtaking Taj Mahal from your luxurious room. Visit the Taj Mahal in the late afternoon, as the setting sun bathes it in a soft orange glow.

The Oberoi Amarvilas, Agra | Meals: BL

Day 10: Agra | Monuments of Emperors

Make a return visit to the Taj Mahal this morning, when the rising sun lends a warm pink tint to its marble face. This elaborate mausoleum, created by the emperor Shah Jahan in memory of the most beloved of his wives, is the apex of Mughal architecture, its gem-encrusted marble skin giving it a shimmering, intangible quality. Proceed to Agra Fort, a 16th-century Mughal monument and UNESCO World Heritage Site where Sha Jahan was once held, prisoner.

The Oberoi Amarvilas, Agra | Meals: BD

Day 11: Panna National Park | Into the Wild

Depart by express train to Jhansi. After lunch, continue to remote Panna National Park, a haven for India's wildlife, and check in to your wilderness lodge. Then meet with a member of the nomadic Pardhi community to learn about their role in the continuing effort to repopulate Panna National Park with the Bengal tiger, an A&K-exclusive insider access moment.

Pashan Garh, Panna National Park | Meals: BLD

Day 12: Panna National Park | Tracking the Bengal Tiger

Rise early this morning for a game drive in Panna National Park by four-wheel-drive vehicle, spotting crocodiles or perhaps the elusive Bengal tiger. Learn how a successful conservation program has grown the park's tiger population, increasing the odds of a sighting. Return to the lodge to savour a Chef's Table experience featuring an Indian cooking demonstration, as your lodge's chef prepares local delicacies for lunch. Enjoy an afternoon game drive before returning to Pashan Garh for dinner.

Pashan Garh, Panna National Park | Meals: BLD

Day 13: Khajuraho & Varanasi | India's Holiest City

Drive to Khajuraho and explore the magnificent Hindu and Jain temples of Khajuraho, adorned with intricate stone carvings depicting all aspects of life. Fly to Varanasi early this afternoon, a city sacred to Hindus and Buddhists alike. At dusk, head to the banks of the sacred Ganges River to witness the aarti ceremony. Chanted prayers and rhythmic drumming fill the air as you watch lantern-bearing priests bid the gods and goddesses a restful slumber.

Taj Ganges, Varanasi / Meals: BLD

Day 14: Varanasi & Delhi | Private Sunrise River Cruise

Rise early for a private sunrise cruise on the Ganges River to observe activity along the ghats (stone steps leading down to the river), where locals and pilgrims cleanse themselves, literally and spiritually. Later, fly to Delhi and settle into your hotel, where you later gather for a farewell cocktail and dinner.

The Oberoi, New Delhi / Meals: BD

Day 15: Delhi | Exploring the Old & the New

Visit the great Jama Masjid, the most important mosque in India. Completed in 1656, its two minarets, made from red sandstone and white marble, each stand 40 metres tall. Then, Ride Like a Local on an exciting rickshaw ride through the carts and stalls of Chandni Chowk bazaar, one the oldest and busiest markets in Old Delhi. After lunch, explore New Delhi, including Humayun's Tomb, the last resting place of an esteemed 16th-century Mughal emperor and an architectural precursor of the Taj Mahal.

The Oberoi, New Delhi / Meals: BL

Day 16: Depart Delhi

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your departing flight.

Meals: B

Journey Details

Internal air included: Mumbai/Udaipur; Khajuraho/Varanasi/Delhi

This journey contains some active elements.

Minimum age is 10 years.

First group event: welcome briefing at 12:00 p.m. on Day 2.

Last group event: end sightseeing at 5:00 p.m. on Day 15.

Departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 2 guests.

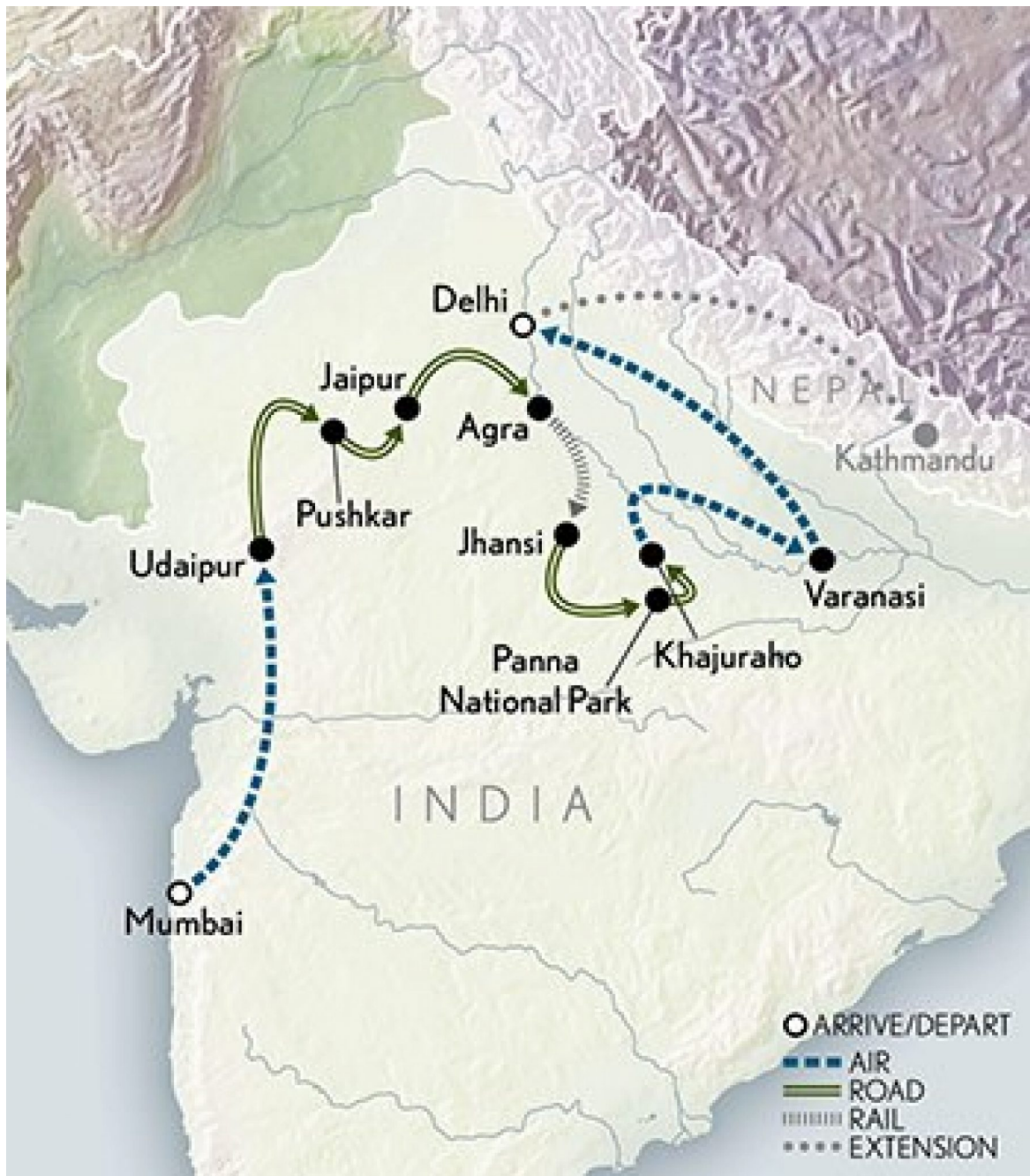
Included in every Luxury Small Group Journey

- English-Speaking Resident Tour Director and Local Guides
- Hand-Selected Luxury Accommodations
- Airport Meet and Greet with Private Transfers
- Travelling Bell Boy Luggage Handling
- Breakfast in Bed on Select Days
- Full Breakfast Daily; Select Lunches and Dinners
- Your Choice of Activity on Design Your Day
- Traveller's Valet Laundry Service
- Internet Access
- Entrance Fees, Taxes and All Gratuities Except Resident Tour Director
- 24/7 A&K On-Call Support
- Guaranteed Departures with Just Two Guests

Customise this Journey

Talk to one of our expert Journey Designers or your travel agent about booking this tour as a private journey for your own small group with family or friends. Or, if you would prefer to travel privately, find out more about creating the perfect bespoke Tailor-Made Journey based on this itinerary.

Map



Accommodation

The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai



The history of Mumbai and The Taj Mahal Palace are dramatically intertwined. The hotel is Mumbai's first harbour landmark (built 21 years before the Gateway of India) and the site of the first licensed bar in the city. For more than a century, the Taj has played an intrinsic part in the life of the city, hosting Maharajas, dignitaries and eminent personalities from across the globe. Today it is a Leading Hotel of the World and favourite destination for discerning travellers.

Whether you choose a room in the Palace or Tower, your accommodation is certain to be a remarkable blend of old-world elegance and modern facilities. Mixing traditional touches with stylish, contemporary design, all are decidedly upscale, in the style of a spacious luxury apartment. What's more, all afford superb views.

The Taj Mahal Palace is also home to 44 generously appointed suites, each adorned with original paintings and period furniture to evoke the grandeur of another age. Combining contemporary and classic styles, the richly hued interiors exemplify luxurious living, a sense re-enforced by perfect service - personal butlers can be summoned at the touch of a button - attending to every request from check-in to departure.

Why we like it

- Choice between old-world Heritage Wing rooms and those in the contemporary Tower Wing
- Excellent location with front-row seats to the Gateway of India
- Range of award-winning restaurants with cuisines ranging from contemporary Indian to fine-dining
- Jiva Spa offers traditional Indian treatments, from the relaxing Vishram to Pehlwan Malish warrior massage
- Hotel has a large courtyard swimming pool surrounded by sun decks

Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur



Wonderful in every detail, the Taj Lake Palace was built between 1743 and 1746, and was originally a lake island palace named Jag Niwas after his highness Maharana Jagat Singh II, 62nd successor to the royal dynasty of Mewar. Not surprisingly, it is a truly regal building, its gleaming, white marble façade rising from the surface of the lake topped by domes, arches and gilded detailing.

Inside, the public areas combine breathtaking views with eye-catching interiors. Intricately carved, pure white walls and ceilings stand above tiled floors - all punctuated by fountain courtyards, roof terraces and secluded corners.

The rooms too are utterly palatial. With frescoes and superb original features in abundance, they showcase the finest modern craftsmanship, yet never leave their heritage behind. In truth, they have to be seen to be believed - suffice to say that, with their beautiful décor, furniture and furnishings, they are fit for royalty.

Given its tranquil location and luxurious, personalised services, Taj Lake Palace is the ideal place to end a tour of Rajasthan – or an ideal base from which to explore the region.

Why we like it

- All rooms and suites enjoy stunning views
- This hotel appears to float on the tranquil waters of Udaipur's Lake Pichola
- Fantastic location complements sublime cuisine in the four restaurants, which serve Asian, Indian, contemporary Western and Italian dishes
- Rooftop pool surrounded by sun loungers

- Jiva Spa offers signature treatments, Indian therapies, Indian aromatherapy, scrubs, wraps and beauty service

Rambagh Palace, Jaipur



This historic palace, having undergone an extensive refurbishment, exudes a regal elegance – from its antique chandeliers to the peacocks on the lawn. Rich textures, opulent furnishings and exquisite *objets d'art* abound, whilst the expansive, ornamental gardens are arranged in brilliant symmetry. The rooms were once the sanctuaries of kings, princes and their guests, and it shows. All have opulent interiors with unique themes, hand painted motif work on the walls, regal four-poster beds, walk-in wardrobes and luxurious bathrooms. The atmospheric Polo Bar serves up signature cocktails inspired by the royal sport while fine dining in Suvarna Mahal is an unforgettable experience. Signature treatments at the Jiva Spa await and there are two swimming pools to choose from.

Why we like it

- The Rambagh Palace is set in the heart of Jaipur
- Suvarna Mahal, with its gilded dining room setting and serving the finest Indian cuisine, is the pick of the five dining options
- Experience signature Jiva Spa therapies and ancient regal Indian treatments at the fairytale style spa for an impossibly lavish experience
- The hotel has both indoor and outdoor swimming pools

The Oberoi Amarvilas, Agra



The Oberoi Amarvilas is recognised as the leading luxury hotel in Agra. Built in a style inspired by Moorish and Mughal architecture, the resort is a splendid display of richly detailed interiors, terraced lawns, fountains, reflection pools and pavilions with rich interiors that take you back to an era of emperors and princes.

The rooms and suites are beautifully appointed. Most feature Burma Teak flooring, teak armoires and spacious marble bathrooms with both a bathtub and a separate shower cubicle, along with a basket of Ayurvedic toiletries. Some have the added benefit of a private balcony.

The hotel's Luxury Suites are a real treat. Located on the fifth floor, they have an entrance foyer, separate living and dining rooms and a spacious bedroom with a four-poster bed. Each suite has two private open-air terraces, both offering splendid views of the Taj Mahal.

Why we like it

- All rooms afford uninterrupted views of the Taj Mahal
- A deliciously eclectic choice of cuisine is served in the hotel's two restaurants
- The Oberoi Spa at Amarvilas offers an unmatched array of therapies, rituals and journeys designed to renew, refresh and replenish
- Set in the terraced garden, with an option of shade and open sky, the cobalt blue pool is straight from the pages of the Arabian nights

Pashan Garh, Panna National Park



Tucked into a rocky outcrop with views of the Vindhya Hills and 200 acres of private jungle, the opulent Pashan Garh lodge, a Taj Safari lodge, offers 12 luxury stone cottages as well as an intimate guest area. Built with dry-packed stone in the local Panna style, each suite has a private verandah and gazebo.

The guest area features a cosy sitting room with a shaded deck area overlooking the wilderness, a Safari Shop with a library. The exotic lodge is a mere seven miles (40 km) from the Panna National Park entrance and a 60-minute chauffeured drive from Khajuraho. Our expert chefs prepare divine Indian cuisine, served to you at the location of your choice.

Unique palanquin dining displays a bush dinner on an ox cart, while our 'haandi' dinner is served in traditional earthenware pots. Try an al fresco lunch by the pool, or opt for in-room service, discreetly delivered using butler hatches. Our experienced naturalists trained by &Beyond ensure you have an intimate and meaningful interaction with nature.

Exciting safaris, held twice a day, let you explore the thick teak forests and rocky terrain from the comfort of a specially designed Tata open 4x4 safari vehicle. Learn about the rich flora and fauna while keeping your eyes open sightings of tigers, crocodiles and Panna's 10 Star Birds! Situated in the Vindhya Hills along the pristine Ken River, Panna National Park is an important protected wildlife area and a base to explore Khajuraho—a famous World Heritage Site.

A vast plateau dominated by tropical forests, deep ravines, cascading waterfalls and thick teak forests, the famous national park links the eastern and western populations of resident wildlife. Take a leisurely stroll through

the village of Khajuraho, and discover the charm of its tiny trinket shops and famous temples. Panna town, renowned for its diamond mines and historic temples is also well worth exploring. Come, discover the wild while nestled in luxury.

Why we like it

- Stone cottages within the forest
- Just 50km from the temples of Khajuraho
- Surrounded by 200 acres of pristine forest

The Oberoi, New Delhi



From its fabulous location in the heart of New Delhi's cosmopolitan metropolis, the Oberoi New Delhi offers a central base for exploring this cultural city.

With luxury and comfort front of mind, this hotel was designed as a contemporary interpretation of Sir Edwin Lutyens' architecture found around the district. This is reflected in the 220 rooms and suites, which are carefully furnished with handpicked items and artwork in line with Lutyens' approach. These somewhat pale into insignificance though when you catch a glimpse of the views through large picture windows of the Delhi golf course and Humayun's Tomb, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Service here is second to none with butlers available 24 hours every day and four bars and three restaurants. Choose to indulge in the views with a sundowner in the brand new open air rooftop bar Cirrus9, along with the savvy residents of the city. If you would like to be a little more low key, head to either the wine cellar Enoteca, the Club Bar or the Cigar Lounge.

The restaurants cater to international and local tastes with Omya serving authentic Indian cuisine, under the mentorship of internationally renowned chef Alfred Prasad and Baoshuan offering Chinese delicacies on the rooftop terrace. Enjoy a meal at the recently redesigned 360 degree for either breakfast, lunch or dinner.

When you have taken in the sights, sounds and smells of Delhi, retreat to the Oberoi Spa for some R'n'R at the wellness centre – either in the heated indoor and outdoor pool or in the fitness centre.

Why we like it

- Centrally located in the heart of the city
- Contemporary design with traditional New Delhi accents
- Temperature-controlled wine cellar with a superb selection of fine wines and champagnes
- Outstanding culinary offering in three different restaurants
- Stunning views over the Delhi golf course and the UNESCO World Heritage site of Humayun's Tomb

Dates & Pricing

Prices are in AUD, per person, based on double occupancy

Nov 5, 2024 - Nov 20, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$25,025 pp	AU\$11,530	Included	Call for Availability

Abercrombie & Kent

**Call Us Now on
1300 851 924
within Australia**

Melbourne Office:

T: +61 (0)3 9536 1800

F: +61 (0) 3 9536 1805

E: contact@abercrombiekent.com.au

Address

Level 26 (North Tower)

80 Collins St

Melbourne, VIC, 3000

International:

New Zealand Call: 0800 441 638

Asia Call: 800 4747 7700