

Royal Rajasthan to Kerala’s Backwaters

□ 20 Nights / 21 Days

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Overview

This 20-day cultural journey across India is a vivid celebration of the country's rich history, spiritual depth, natural beauty, and vibrant traditions. It begins in the nation's capital, Delhi, where ancient Mughal landmarks blend with colonial elegance and chaotic bazaars. The experience deepens in Jaipur, the Pink City, filled with royal palaces, astronomical wonders, and sacred hilltop temples.
In Agra, the iconic Taj Mahal reveals its splendor at dawn, followed by the silent majesty of the deserted city of Fatehpur Sikri. The path then winds through the towering fortresses of Gwalior to the quiet charm of Orchha, where riverside temples and forgotten palaces tell timeless stories.
Further south, the intricate sculptures of Khajuraho showcase India's ancient artistry and bold expression of sacred themes. From here, the adventure takes a wild turn into the heart of Bandhavgarh National Park, known for its tiger population and untamed beauty.
As the landscape shifts, discover the spiritual and architectural wonders of Sanchi Stupa and Udayagiri Caves near Bhopal, revealing layers of India’s early religious philosophies. A flight to Mumbai introduces a lively contrast with its colonial-era architecture, fast-paced city life, and enduring local traditions like the dabbawalas and Dhobi Ghat.
The second half of your journey offers peace and serenity in the lush green hills of Munnar, surrounded by tea gardens and cool mountain air. Dive into the cultural heart of Madurai, known for its temple rituals, before heading into the spice-scented forests of Thekkady for a close encounter with nature.
Glide gently through the palm-fringed backwaters of Alleppey on a traditional houseboat, where everyday village life drifts past in tranquil rhythm. Finally, arrive in Kochi, a melting pot of Portuguese, Dutch, and Indian influences, where art, cuisine, and heritage thrive along the Arabian Sea.
This tour is a thoughtfully

crafted experience for travelers who want to witness the diversity of India in all its forms — royal and rural, spiritual and wild, ancient and modern. Over the course of 20 days, you'll connect deeply with the land, its people, and its living traditions.

Highlights

- 🚣 Houseboat ride in the paradise of the backwaters
- 🕌 Taj Mahal – the Indian symbol of love (UNESCO)
- 🏛 Blushing in front of the Kamasutra temples in Khajuraho
- 🍵 Tea picking on the highest tea plantation
- 🐘 Elephants and tigers in the most beautiful national parks

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1 - Arrival and Old Delhi City Immersion

Upon arrival in Delhi, you'll be welcomed with a warm 'Namaste' and transferred to your hotel. The tour begins with the majestic Red Fort, leading into the vibrant maze of Old Delhi's bustling bazaars. You'll witness the spiritual chants at a Sikh Temple before soaking in the colors and aromas of the spice market. A rickshaw ride will take you to Jama Masjid, India's largest mosque. Relish a Mughlai meal in a traditional eatery, then visit Raj Ghat. Pass by India Gate and Government buildings on your return.

Day 2 - Into the Pink City and Sacred Waters of Galta Ji

Journey to Jaipur, known as the Pink City. En route, visit the sacred pilgrimage site of Galta Ji, where temples nestle among hills and pilgrims bathe in holy water tanks. Arrive in Jaipur and check in to your heritage hotel. Take an evening stroll through the geometrically designed old city, reflecting cosmic symbolism in its layout. Overnight in Jaipur.

Day 3 - Royal Grandeur: Forts, Palaces and Sunset Panoramas

Begin the day with a visit to the awe-inspiring Amber Fort, showcasing intricate mirror mosaics in its Hall of Mirrors. Return to Jaipur to admire the City Palace, an exquisite blend

of Rajasthani and Mughal styles. Marvel at the wind-blown latticework of Hawa Mahal and the astronomical genius of Jantar Mantar. Conclude the day atop Nahargarh Fort with a mesmerizing sunset view over the city. Overnight in Jaipur.

Day 4 - Mughal Echoes: Fatehpur Sikri and Agra's Majestic Fort

Depart Jaipur and travel to Agra via the historic ghost city of Fatehpur Sikri, once the Mughal capital. Explore its palaces and mosques abandoned centuries ago. Continue to Agra, where the red sandstone walls of Agra Fort stand tall with tales of emperors and battles. Overnight stay in Agra.

Day 5 - Sunrise Splendor at Taj Mahal and Gwalior's Mountain Fortress

Start early to witness the ethereal beauty of the Taj Mahal bathed in golden dawn. After breakfast, journey south to Gwalior. Here, the towering hilltop Gwalior Fort narrates stories of valor and resistance with its striking ramparts and temples. Overnight stay in Gwalior.

Day 6 - Architectural Marvels in Orchha and Journey to Khajuraho

Travel to the lesser-known town of Orchha, graced by palaces and temples beside the Betwa River. Discover the grand Jehangir Mahal and the spiritual Ram Raja Temple. Explore the riverbank chhatris—cenotaphs of past rulers—before heading to Khajuraho, home to some of India's most exquisite temple sculptures. Overnight in Khajuraho.

Day 7 - Temples of Desire and Devotion in Khajuraho

Begin the day exploring the Western Group of Temples, where sandstone walls are adorned with detailed carvings celebrating life in all forms. Then explore the Eastern Group, where artistry and emotion meet through depictions of devotion, music, dance, and human passion. Discover the vision of the Chandela dynasty. Overnight stay in Khajuraho.

Day 8 - Into the Jungle Realms of Bandhavgarh

Set off for Bandhavgarh National Park, a biodiverse jewel nestled among forested hills. Upon arrival, visit the ancient Bandhavgarh Fort overlooking the wilderness below. The

reserve is known for its high tiger density and dramatic terrain. Evening at leisure. Overnight stay at the resort.

Day 9 - Wild Encounters and the Elusive Bengal Tiger

Embark on two exhilarating safaris to explore the rugged terrain of Bandhavgarh National Park. With grasslands, forests, and wetlands, the park offers a high chance of spotting Bengal tigers. You'll also encounter monkeys, deer, and over 200 species of birds. Rest at the resort between safaris. Overnight in Bandhavgarh.

Day 10 - Through Vindhya Hills to Bhopal via Jabalpur

Leave Bandhavgarh behind and drive through the lush landscapes of Madhya Pradesh toward Bhopal, making a stop in Jabalpur. Nestled in the Vindhya Mountains, Jabalpur lies near the sacred Narmada River and offers a blend of history and natural beauty. Continue onward to Bhopal for an overnight stay.

Day 11 - Ancient Caves and Sacred Stupas on the Road to Bhopal

Depart early for Bhopal, stopping first at the ancient Udayagiri Caves, which house some of India's oldest Hindu carvings. Then visit Sanchi, where Buddhist stupas dating back to Emperor Ashoka await. These UNESCO-listed monuments reflect the spiritual legacy of early Buddhism. Continue to Bhopal. Overnight stay.

Day 12 - From Central India to the Coast: Welcome to Mumbai

Fly to Mumbai and discover Kotachi Wadi, a quaint neighborhood showcasing Portuguese-influenced homes and vibrant street life. This artistic enclave is a preserved relic of old Bombay's cultural diversity. After a heritage walk, settle into your hotel and enjoy the buzzing energy of India's financial capital.

Day 13 - Lunchbox Logistics and Colonial Mumbai

Experience the legendary dabbawala lunch delivery system before heading north by local train to visit Dhobi Ghat, the world's largest open-air laundry. Later, explore Mumbai's

colonial heart on foot—passing the Gateway of India, Prince of Wales Museum, Sassoon Library, and Victoria Station. Conclude with a classic Thali dinner.

Day 14 - Munnar's Emerald Slopes and Colonial Charm

Fly to Kochi and drive through Kerala's countryside to the serene hill station of Munnar. Surrounded by lush tea plantations and mist-covered peaks, this retreat offers cool weather, colonial charm, and stunning views. Relax and breathe in the aroma of cardamom-laced mountain air. Overnight stay.

Day 15 - Tea Trails to Kolukkumalai and Journey to Madurai

Take a thrilling off-road journey to Kolukkumalai, the world's highest tea plantation. Enjoy a guided walk through tea gardens and forests. After soaking in panoramic views, continue to Madurai—Tamil Nadu's temple town famed for its vibrant spiritual life and historical significance. Overnight stay.

Day 16 - Sacred Rituals and Fragrant Fields

Visit the awe-inspiring Meenakshi Temple, a spiritual epicenter of South India. Observe ancient rituals and temple life in its vast corridors. Then, journey to Kerala's Periyar National Park. En route, enjoy an authentic Tamil meal. Upon arrival, explore a spice plantation with a naturalist guide. Overnight stay.

Day 17 - Forest Trails and Waterworlds of Kerala

Embark on a nature trek through Periyar's biodiverse forest. After the hike, head down to the famous backwaters of Alleppey. These tropical canals and lakes are the lifeblood of coastal Kerala, offering lush views and a peaceful rhythm. Overnight stay at a lakeside resort.

Day 18 - Floating through a Green Wonderland

Board your private houseboat and drift through Kerala's intricate network of canals and rice paddies. Enjoy freshly cooked meals onboard while glimpsing everyday life along the

shores. Later, return to the resort and experience a sunset canoe ride and local village visit. Overnight in Alleppey.

Day 19 - Colonial Kochi and Coastal Farewell

Travel to Kochi and explore its historic Fort Kochi district. Visit the Dutch Palace, Paradesi Synagogue, and the famous Chinese fishing nets. Stroll past spice markets and colonial churches. In the evening, celebrate your journey with a special farewell dinner by the waterfront. Overnight stay.

Day 20 - Goodbye India - Departure

After breakfast, transfer to Kochi airport for your onward flight. Carry with you the colors, flavors, and memories of a richly woven journey through India's spiritual heartlands, royal palaces, and lush landscapes. Safe travels and farewell!

Accommodation Used