



Grand tour of India (Jan - May)

29 days

Fully Inclusive from the UK

This tour combines the best that India has to offer, from the deserts of Rajasthan in the north, to the tranquil backwaters of Kerala in the South. Also included is the 'Bollywood' city of Mumbai and the historic caves at Ajanta and Ellora. India is a land of extraordinary contrast and this tour will leave you with a strong sense of history, culture and geography of this diverse country.

Fully Inclusive price includes:

- International flights and current taxes
- Domestic transportation
- Accommodation
- All meals (excluding drinks)
- Touring with guides and entrance fees
- Visa fees for UK passport holders

Welcome to Wendy Wu Tours

India continues to amaze, fascinate and thrill our passengers, many of whom have travelled to one country in Asia with us, then another, year after year. We urge you to keep in mind all the rewards, as well as challenges of travelling in a country with a history, culture and attitude so unlike your own.

A typical day's sightseeing may include the bustle and noise of a city street, sights and smells of a local market and interacting with the locals. Travelling in India requires patience as potential delays are to be expected due to standards of service. There is a low level of English spoken throughout India, so your local guides or National Escort will be indispensable during your trip.

Almost everything will be different to what you may be used to. We have found that our passengers who embark with a sense of humour and adventure, who accept that things do not always go to plan, are those who find their experience most rewarding. It is essential that all passengers recognise the demands of factors such as basic facilities and cultural differences they may encounter in some areas.

Book now on **0844 499 3899** visit www.wendywutours.co.uk or see your preferred travel agent.



Your Tour Dossier

This document is designed to be read in conjunction with the other pre-departure information provided by Wendy Wu Tours including the tour itinerary as described in our brochure and/or website. It aims to provide a straightforward description of the physical activities involved in sightseeing or travelling during the tour.

If there are any particular challenges, from the length of time spent on your feet, the length of drives and flights, to the standard of remote accommodation; they will be explained here.

All passengers must read this document to ensure the itinerary is suitable for their interests and physical capabilities. This is not your final itinerary and therefore does not mention all the sites visited.

Grand Tour of India - Medium Paced Tour

These tours are not strenuous but do require higher levels of fitness. A typical tour may include longer periods of sightseeing on foot, climbing of stairs and getting on and off boats will be necessary. These tours may involve longer periods of driving; sometimes on poorly maintained roads, and overnight train journeys; as well as some easy hiking. Some Medium Paced Tours may involve several days at altitude.

Anyone with a good level of fitness should be able to complete this itinerary. Of course our local guides always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance, but they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary. If you do have mobility difficulties, please contact us for our range of private tours which are more flexible and can better cater for individual needs.

NB: Please note that times and distances listed in the tour dossier are approximate.

Day 1-2: UK/Delhi

You will depart the UK and arrive in Delhi on Day 2. You will be met in the airport arrivals hall, by your Local Guide/National Escort together with any other passengers from your group who may be arriving at a similar time, then transfer approx. 45 minutes to your hotel and check-in.

Day 3: Delhi

Today is a full day of sightseeing around Old and New Delhi, involving approx. 4 hours of sightseeing on foot. The days' activities include visits to a mosque and Hindu temple – refer to Appropriate Dress section below. Please note that women are only allowed to enter the mosque outside prayer session times.

Day 4: Delhi/Varanasi

Check-out of your hotel this morning before easy sightseeing, involving approx. 1 hour of walking. In the afternoon fly to Varanasi (flight duration 1 hour and 20 minutes).

Day 5: Varanasi

While here, you will be visiting Buddhist sacred sites – refer to Appropriate Dress section below. In Varanasi, it would be unwise to wander around without your Guide/National Escort at night as there have been several reports of pickpockets, etc.

Day 6: Varanasi/Khajuraho

An early rise this morning to take a boat ride on the River Ganges for approx. 2 to 3 hours. Please note that you should never take photos of any burning ghats, as this is a funeral ceremony. Later there will be easy city sightseeing. Afterwards transfer approx. 45 minutes to the airport for the early afternoon flight to Khajuraho (flight duration 40 minutes). Transfer to hotel to check-in.

Day 7: Khajuraho

Drive approx. 15 minutes to the Khajuraho temples. We spend approx. 2 hours here; sightseeing involves quite a lot of walking and there is little shade, so make sure you bring adequate sun protection.

Day 8: Khajuraho/Agra

Rise early this morning and drive approx. 4 to 5 hours (178kms) to Jhansi via Orchha. Board the early afternoon train and travel 220kms to Agra (journey takes approx. 2.5 hours). Transfer a short distance to the hotel and check-in. There is no sightseeing scheduled for today as it is quite a long day of travelling.

N.B: As our train is a day train, our seats will be in an AC Chair Car. More than likely you will not be able to purchase any food or drink on the train, so please make sure to pre-purchase them before boarding. There will be local travellers in the same carriages, so be aware of your belongings.

Day 9: Agra

This morning you will rise early to visit the Taj Mahal. Sightseeing here will involve approx. 2 hours of walking. Sightseeing is easy with almost no stairs. This afternoon, visit Agra Fort, sightseeing here involves approx. 1.5 hours of walking.

Day 10: Agra/Ranthambore

Drive to Bharatpur to board our day train to Ranthambore. Upon arrival we drive to Ranthambore National Park and check-in to your hotel. In the afternoon there will be a safari ride in a canter (jeep like vehicle) through the National Park. There are no toilets available during the park excursions.

Day 11: Ranthambore/Jaipur

Option of early morning safari by canter before driving to Jaipur and check-in at your hotel. Sightseeing at Maharaja's City Palace is easy and pleasant. Jaipur is a larger city where it would be unwise to wander around without your Guide/National Escort at night as there have been several reports of pickpockets, etc.

Day 12: Jaipur

Sightseeing this morning involves approx. 2 to 3 hours on foot. At Amer Fort, you will ride jeeps to and from the bus park and palace entrance. We have not included the elephant ride up to the palace in your itinerary because of the unreliability of this service; visitors usually need to queue for approx. 2 to 3 hours and the service is often shut down without notice by local tourism authority due to safety concerns.

Day 13: Jaipur/Alsisar

Drive approx. 5 hours (220kms) to Alsisar and commence sightseeing; involving approx. 3 hours of leisurely walking. Check-in at your hotel.

Day 14: Alsisar/Bikaner

Drive approx. 4 to 5 hours (190 kms) to Bikaner and check-in at the hotel. Drive a short distance to the Junagarh Fort and have lunch then commence sightseeing, which involves approx. 2 hours on foot.

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Day 15: Bikaner/Jaisalmer

Drive approx. 4 to 5 hours (180kms) to Jaisalmer and check-in at your hotel. In the early afternoon you will drive out of town to Sunset Point for leisurely sightseeing.

Day 16: Jaisalmer

This morning, sightseeing at Jaisalmer Fort and surrounding havellis involves approx. 2 to 3 hours of walking and few stairs. After lunch, drive approx. 1.5 hours (42kms) to Sam Village. Sightseeing here involves a camel ride in Thar Desert National Park – tourist numbers can be high, as camel rides have become very popular.

Day 17: Jaisalmer/Jodhpur

Drive approx. 6 hours (308kms) to Jodhpur and check-in at your hotel. After lunch, visit the Meherangarh Fort which involves approx. 2 hours walking and many stairs. Drive approx. 30 minutes to Umaid Bhawan Palace (also called Chittar Palace); sightseeing here involves approx. 1 hour easy walking around the palace and museum.

Day 18: Jodhpur

Enjoy a jeep safari to Rohetgarh to visit a local Bishnoi Village – refer to Your Travel Guide's transport section for more information.

Day 19: Jodhpur/Udaipur

Drive approx. 4 hours (180kms) to Ranakpur and visit the Jain Temple. Sightseeing here involves approx. 30 minutes of easy walking - refer to Appropriate Dress section below. Drive a approx. 3 to 4 hours (90kms) to Udaipur and check-in at your hotel. Before sunset, drive approx. 30 minutes to Lake Pichola for a boat ride. Please note that the Lake Palace (now an exclusive hotel) does not allow visitors.

Day 20: Udaipur

This morning involves approx. 1 to 2 hours of leisurely sightseeing. After lunch, visit the City Palace, which involves approx. 2 hours of sightseeing on foot. Some stairs at this location are without handrails, so please be cautious. The group will exit at a different gate to that which they entered (entry gate will be Fatehpole Gate while the exit gate will be Tripolia Gate), so any passengers who choose not to complete this activity have the option to transfer to the lunch venue and wait for the group there. After lunch you will take an auto rickshaw back to the bus.

Day 21: Udaipur/Aurangabad

There is an afternoon flight to Aurangabad (flight duration 1 hour, and 30 minutes). Check-in at your hotel upon arrival.

Day 22: Aurangabad/Ajanta

Today drive to Ajanta Caves – approx. 3.5 hours (100kms) drive. Sightseeing here involves climbing a short but steep hill to enter the first cave, then approx. 2 to 3 hours walking

with few stairs. There are usually sedan chairs* available at additional cost to passengers. Please note that flash photography is not allowed here so it is good idea to bring a flashlight. Return to Aurangabad.

** A chair borne on two poles carried by two or four people.*

Day 23: Aurangabad/Mumbai

Check-out from your hotel and drive approx. 2 hours (30kms) to the Ellora Caves. Sightseeing here involves approx. 2 hours walking with some stairs. After lunch nearby, transfer back to the airport to catch the evening flight to Mumbai (flight duration 1 hour). Transfer to your hotel and check-in for an overnight stay.

Day 24: Mumbai/Kochi

Morning at leisure. After lunch there will be easy sightseeing in Mumbai. Transfer to the airport for a flight to Kochi (flight duration 1 hour and 40 minutes). Transfer approx. 1.5 hours to Kochi and check-in to your hotel.

Day 25: Kochi

Sightseeing in the Fort Cochin area involves approx. 2 to 3 hours walking and shopping time.

Day 26: Kochi /Nedumudy (Houseboat).

Check-out from your hotel early this morning, and after some touring in Kochi drive approx. 90 minutes (85kms) to the small town of Nedumudy, which is another houseboat boarding point near Kumarakom. Board your houseboats for an overnight stay.

Day 27: Alleppey/Kovalam

Continue cruising until approx. 9am then disembark at Alleppey. Drive approx. 3 to 4 hours (190kms) to Kovalam and check-in at your hotel. After a late lunch, the afternoon is at leisure.

Day 28: Kovalam

You will have sightseeing during the morning and afternoon. Sightseeing today involves approx. 3 to 4 hours walking.

Day 29: Depart Kovalam/UK

Today you will checkout of the hotel and transfer to the airport for your flight home.

If you are travelling on a land only basis, then you will need to make your own way to the starting hotel in Delhi on Day 2. On Day 29, you will checkout from your Trivandrum hotel, and continue as per your own arrangements.

Please refer to the Wendy Wu Tours brochure and/or website for details on departure dates, prices, itineraries, inclusions and tour extensions available as well as full booking conditions.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Before You Leave

Itinerary Changes - The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. The schedules of the domestic airlines in India are subject to frequent changes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your Local Guide or National Escort will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Roads in India have generally been improved over recent years, but some road construction and/or weather conditions may still lengthen the driving times.

Visas - A visa is required for entry into India. A standard visa processing service is included in your tour cost. You will need to complete the visa application form online at: <http://in.vfsglobal.co.uk/onlineapplication.html>. Once completed you will need to print the completed form, and send it to our office along with your passport and 2 passport photos per person, taken within the last 6 months, in order for our office to process your visa with the embassy. We will require all this information 8 weeks prior to departure. As per our standard visa processing service, we will have your passport for at least 4 weeks. Any passports and visa applications that require an express service, or that are received in our office less than 6 weeks prior to departure will incur a £50 per passport express fee.

In rare cases, you may be required to provide further information or documentation to the Indian embassy and/or be required to attend an interview at the embassy. If this is the case we will notify you as soon as we are advised.

Vaccinations and Your Health - We recommend that you contact either your local GP or a travel doctor for advice on vaccinations and travel health. www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk is a comprehensive website that you may also find useful.

Climate - Please refer to our website or brochure for detailed temperature charts.

Insurance - It is a condition of booking with us that you take out suitable travel insurance. You must provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number when you book with us or as soon as possible thereafter. Wendy Wu Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

Suggested Packing List - A complete list will be provided with deposit documentation and your final documentation pack.

What to Expect on Tour

Group Size – All our group tours are guaranteed to run subject to a minimum number of 8 travellers and a National Escort will accompany each group of over 10. The maximum group size varies depending on the tour, but is usually no more than 18 passengers.

Your accommodation - All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty please speak to your National Escort/Local Guide.

Alternative accommodation - In Kerala, you will be staying overnight on board a traditional style houseboat called a kettuvallam – refer to Your Travel Guide's accommodation section for more information. The supply of electricity is limited on board the kettavallum houseboat.

Rail journeys - This trip involves 1 day journey in AC class cars - refer to Your Travel Guide's Transport and Eating in India sections for more information. Getting on and off the trains in India can be quite disordered and amusing as passengers will start boarding well before people have finished getting off! If your group is disembarking at a stop that is not the end of the line, the train will only stop for 10mins and you must have your luggage ready and by your side a few minutes before the train pulls into the station.

Meals - All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from the groups' arrival until the day of departure. Our schedule of meals is designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as the different ways they are prepared and cooked throughout India.

Tipping - As with most countries, tipping is a recognised part of life in India. For our passengers' convenience we ask for a specified amount to be paid at the beginning of our group tours to cover tipping for guides, drivers, restaurant staff etc. Approximate tipping amounts can be found in our brochure and/or website. Exact tipping amounts will be stated in your final documentation, approx. 2 weeks before departure.

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Optional Extras - A number of optional extra programmes/activities may be offered by your National Escort/Local Guide whilst on tour, time permitting. Please feel free to ask your National Escort/Local Guide about any optional touring they may be planning over the next few days and the approximate cost so you can ensure you have the appropriate funds. All the optional extras must be paid for in local currency. If you do not wish to take part in any optional extras, you will have the option of enjoying some free time at leisure or to return to the hotel.

Personal Expenses - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of £150 per week should be sufficient; however for those that can't resist a bargain consider allocating a higher amount.

Climbing steps - Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves the climbing of stairs. These palaces were built to provide defence against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steep steps to slow down the advance of the enemy once they were inside. The stairs tend to be large, uneven and sometimes without handrails. Hindu and Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk a distance uphill from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb stairs once inside.

Appropriate dress – The locals dress conservatively and you should make every effort to do this too. According to their culture, wearing brief shorts or shirts, revealing shoulders and legs, or going without a shirt is offensive no matter if you are a man or woman, and no matter the weather. For men, full-length cotton trousers are preferable, while shorts that cover the knees are acceptable. For women, skirts or trousers that reach below the knee are ideal, worn with tops that cover the shoulders. Women will find a modesty shawl (such as a large shawl or sarong) is useful to carry in your daypack while sightseeing, so that you can cover up when required. Please refer to your Your Travel Guide's 'dress appropriately' section for more information.

After Your Booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form, help sheet, and an Indian travel guide. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approx. 2 weeks prior to departure, and will include a travel wallet, badge, lanyard, suggested packing list and a phrase book, along with your final itinerary and international etickets.

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