



Rajasthan Panorama

Rajasthan Panorama

22 days

Fully Inclusive from the UK

Rajasthan is one of India's most colourful and vibrant states. Starting with a brief visit to Delhi and Agra, the tour combines true Indian village life with a camel safari across the sand dunes in the Thar Desert, tiger spotting in Ranthambore National Park and a visit to some of the most opulent palaces and majestic fortresses that India has to offer.

Fully Inclusive price includes:

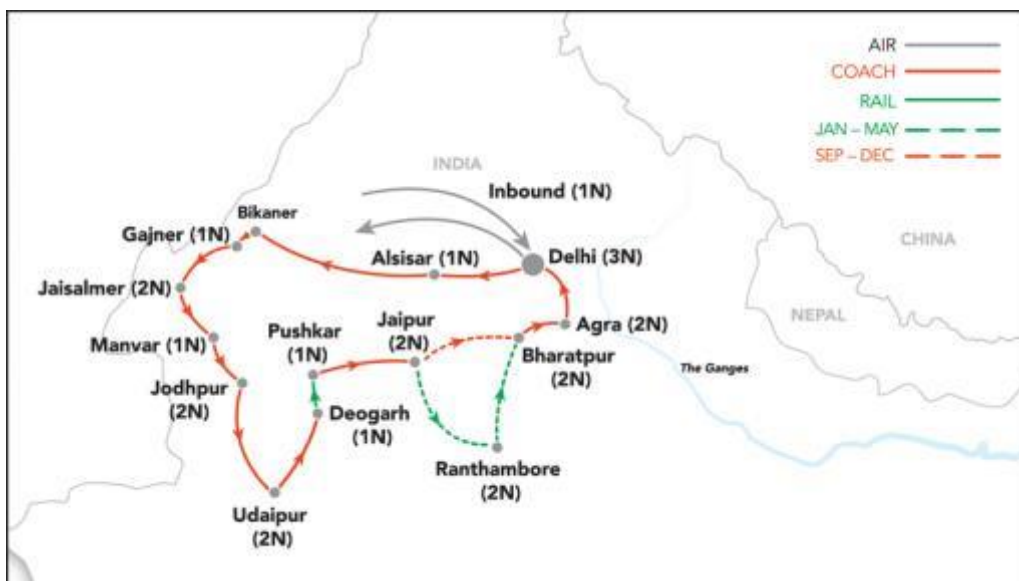
- International flights and current taxes
- Domestic transportation
- Accommodation
- All meals (excluding drinks)
- Touring with guides and entrance fees
- Visa fees for UK & EU passport holders

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.



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.

Rajasthan Panorama - 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, getting on and off boats will be necessary and longer periods of driving; sometimes on poorly maintained roads.

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.

Days 1-2: UK/Delhi

You will be met in the airport arrivals hall tonight by your Local Guide/National Escort together with any other passengers from your group who may be arriving at a similar time. Transfer (approx. 45mins) to your hotel and check-in.

Day 3: Delhi to Alsisar

This morning a tour introduction will either be held in the hotel or on the coach. Food and drinks will not be served at this meeting. It is simply an opportunity for your group to meet and learn more about travelling in India. Drive 7-8hrs (260km) to Alsisar and have lunch en route. There is no sightseeing on arrival in Alsisar so the rest of the day is free at your leisure.

Day 4: Alsisar to Gajner via Bikaner

Drive approx. 7-8hrs (300 km) to Bikaner and stop at Junagarh Fort to commence easy sightseeing including a 'tonga' ride through medieval streets. The various palaces at Junagarh Fort include the Chandra Mahal (Moon Palace) with mirror work, carvings and marble decorations and the Phool Mahal (Flower Palace). The royal chapel is Har Mandir, where royal weddings and births were once celebrated. Afterwards drive a short distance approx. 32km (approx. 45 mins) to Gajner and check-in at your hotel.

Days 5-6: Gajner to Jaisalmer

Drive 6-7hrs (301km) to Jaisalmer and check-in at hotel. In the early afternoon, drive out of town to Sunset Point for

some leisurely sightseeing. . On the following day, there will be morning sightseeing at Jaisalmer Fort and surrounding havellis and temples involving 2-3 hours sightseeing on foot. After lunch, drive 1.5hrs (42km) to Sam Village. Sightseeing here involves a camel ride in the Thar Desert National Park. Tourist numbers can be high as camel rides have become very popular, which has led to tourists littering in the area. If time permits, your guide will try to lead the group away from the crowds.

Day 7: Jaisalmer to Manvar

Drive approx. 3-4hrs (190km) through Thar Desert to Manvar and check-in at the tented camp. Sightseeing this afternoon involves taking a jeep and camel ride through the desert.

Days 8-9: Manvar to Jodhpur

Drive up to 3hrs (110km) to Jodhpur and check into the hotel. On the next day, visit the Mehrangarh Fort which involves approx. 2hrs on foot and some steps. The group bus will drop off and collect passengers at the same place, so anyone unable to complete this activity may return and wait for the group. Drive 30mins to Umaid Bhawan Palace (now a luxury hotel), sightseeing here involves approx. 1hr of easy walking around the palace and museum.

Day 10: Jodhpur to Udaipur via Ranakpur

Drive approx. 4hrs (180km) to Ranakpur and visit Jain temple complex. Sightseeing here involves 30mins of easy walking – refer to **Appropriate Dress** section. Drive a further 3-4hrs

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

(90km) to Udaipur and check-in at hotel. Before sunset, drive 30mins to Lake Pichola for a cruise. Please note that the Lake Palace (now an exclusive hotel) does not allow visitors. There will be easy sightseeing at the Jagmandir Island Palace.

Day 11: Udaipur

There will be easy sightseeing this morning at a leisurely pace involving 1-2hrs. After lunch, visit the City Palace, which involves approx. 2hrs of sightseeing on foot. Some stairs at this location are without handrails, so please be cautious. At the palace there are many *Pol*s, also known as gateways. The group will exit at a different gate to that which they entered - entry gate will be Bara Pol (Great Gate) while the exit gate will be Tripolia Pol (a triple arched gate), so any passengers who choose to not complete this activity have the option of waiting for the group outside. After lunch, you can walk through the surrounding streets and take an auto rickshaw back to the bus.

Day 12: Udaipur to Deogarh

Drive 4hrs (180km) to Deogarh via Kumbalgarh and check-in at the hotel. This evening's walk through the village is leisurely.

Day 13: Deogarh to Pushkar

Check-out from the hotel and transfer a short distance to the station to board the morning train to Phulad. This is a rural train, built in the 1930's and the ride takes around 2hrs. Disembark at Phulad and drive 5-6hrs (158 km) to Pushkar and check-in at the hotel. This afternoon, sightseeing involves 2hrs of leisurely walking around the local market and lake. You will be visiting a temple – refer to **Appropriate Dress** section below. Please note that Pushkar observes religious laws against alcohol and non-vegetarian food.

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 if you need snacks make sure to pre-purchase them before boarding. The train carriages are shared, so at all times please be aware of your belongings.

Day 14: Pushkar to Jaipur

Spend more time at the fair, visiting a market and touring the Brahma Temple – refer to **Appropriate Dress** section above. Drive approx. 3hrs (160km) to Jaipur and check-in at hotel. Afterwards there will be leisurely sightseeing on foot at the Maharaja's City Palace. Jaipur is a larger city where we recommend you do not wander around without your Guide/Escort at night. Always speak to your National Escort/Local Guide before making own arrangements in the city.

Day 15: Jaipur

Sightseeing this morning involves 2-3hrs on foot. Hawa Mahal (Palace of the Winds) is viewed from the street side opposite, as entrance is not granted to tour groups. At Amber 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 2-3hrs and the service is often shut down without notice by local tourism authority due to safety concerns. There are a number of steps within the fort. Afterwards, visit Choti Choper bazaar and a printing and carpet weaving textile workshop. Sightseeing this afternoon involves approx. 2hrs on foot and climbing of steps.

Days 16-18 below apply only to Jan-May departures:

Day 16: Jaipur to Ranthambore National Park

Drive approx. 4hrs (180km) south to Ranthambore National Park and check-in. 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. Please note that photo ID is required when visiting the park.

Day 17: Ranthambore National Park

You will have morning and afternoon excursions into the park, involving 2-3hrs of driving through the park in canters, on uneven and unsealed tracks, returning to the hotel for lunch. There are no toilets available during the park excursions. Please remember to bring your passport to allow entry.

Day 18: Ranthambore National Park to Agra

Early this morning transfer 10km to the train station in the nearby town of Sawai Madhopur to catch the train to Bharatpur (journey takes approximately 2.5 hours). After lunch, drive 30mins (22km) to Fatehpur Sikri and visit the ancient capital city. Sightseeing involves up to 1hr of easy walking. Continue driving 1hr and 30mins (40km) to Agra and check-in at the hotel.

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 if you need snacks make sure to pre-purchase them before boarding. The train carriages are shared, so at all times please be aware of your belongings.

Days 16-18 below apply only to Sep-Dec departures:

Day 16: Jaipur to Bharatpur

Drive approx. 4-5hrs (184km) east to Bharatpur and check-in to the hotel to relax. Upon reaching the hotel you will have the remainder of the day free at your leisure.

Day 17: Bharatpur –Keoladeo National Park

Visit Keoladeo National Park, a well-known bird sanctuary and famous for Siberian cranes. Enjoy a morning rickshaw safari for 3-4hrs (rickshaws are used so the birds aren't scared off by noise). During the rickshaw safari there are no bathrooms, please keep this in mind. Visit a nearby village this afternoon to see the everyday life of the local people.

Day 18: Bharatpur to Agra

Leave Bharatpur and drive 45 minutes (25km) to Fatehpur Sikri and visit the ancient capital city. Sightseeing involves up to 1 hour of easy walking. Then, drive 40km to Agra (approximately 1-2 hours). Upon arrival, check into the hotel.

Day 19: Agra

You will have a very early rise this morning. Board your group coach and drive through the awakening streets of Agra (an early start means that we can avoid the heat and crowds at the Taj Mahal later in the day).

No polluting vehicles are allowed within a 500m radius of the Taj Mahal complex. At a designated point the group will disembark the coach and board smaller electric carts to continue to the entrance gate. After clearing security and baggage checks you will be admitted to the complex.

Usually 2 hours is spent here; sightseeing is easy with almost no steps. For admission to the main mausoleum area, you are required to wear shoe covers (this may be provided on site – be prepared to bring an additional pair of socks).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Before You Leave

Itinerary Changes - Our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however 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, especially whilst driving between Jaipur and Ranthambore.

Safari Bookings in Ranthambore National Park (Jan – May departures)

To ensure your safari booking at Ranthambore National Park we will require a scanned copy or photocopy of the photo page in your passport along with your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot confirm your safari arrangements without this information.

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: <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/>. Once completed you will need to print the completed form, and send it to our office along with your passport and 2 photos per person. The photos should be 2 x 2 in size 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. Your passport must be valid for 6 months from your date of return from India, and should have at least 2 blank pages for your Indian visa.

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 have been advised.

This afternoon, visit Agra Fort. Sightseeing here involves approx. 1.5 hours on foot and climbing of stairs.

Day 20: Agra to Delhi

Drive 4-5hrs (200km) to Delhi. Sightseeing in the afternoon involves approx. 2-3hrs of easy walking and shopping time. Transfer to the hotel and check-in for an overnight stay.

Day 21: Delhi

Sightseeing today involves a visit to the Red Fort and walk through Chandni Chowk Bazaar to Jama Masjid, which is India's largest mosque. We also have a brief stop at India Gate and Parliament House.

Day 22: Delhi/UK

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

Land Only

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 22, you will checkout from your Delhi 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.

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 the travel guides on our website for detailed temperature charts.

Luggage - All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each; a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of 5kg. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that Indian authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

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.

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 22 passengers.

Your Accommodation - All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and a 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 Guides. Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town or a heritage type hotel. In remote areas accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four star-standard, but do please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between the UK and India. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

Manvar Desert Camp

This is classed as a “deluxe tented camp” by the Indian Tourism Authority. There are 30 permanent tents with simple but very comfortable accommodation. Each has two single beds, a private bathroom with western toilet and shower (hot and cold water) and a veranda. There is no air-conditioning. Meals are served in the nearby dining tent. Tents will have generator supplied electricity, usually restricted to a few hours in the evening and morning.

Alternative Accommodation

Throughout Rajasthan state you will get the opportunity to stay in heritage properties which are restored palaces or forts. As these properties were not originally designed to be hotels, the room sizes will vary in the same accommodation category, as will the décor and layout. This uniqueness only adds to your experience in India.

Development

Although India is developing quickly, it still lacks the international standards of civil infrastructure and tourist facilities. Concepts of personal responsibility are also different to those in the UK. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in the UK; for example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade. All of our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense, refer to notices and follow advice from you National Escort or Local Guides. Please note that seatbelts are not compulsory by law in India and Nepal and therefore the Indian and Nepalese people largely choose not to wear them. For this reason some vehicles may not be fitted with seatbelts or they may be hidden underneath protective seat covers. It is recommended that where seatbelts are available customers should use them and remain seated at all times while the vehicle is moving.

Traffic in India

Main and inner city roads in India have a reputation for being very congested. For this reason, it may not always be possible to return to your hotel after sightseeing to freshen up before going to the restaurant for dinner. Roads in India have generally been improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road – not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the sections below are approximations only.

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

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

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 on our website. Exact tipping amounts will be stated in your final documentation, approx. 2-3 weeks before departure. Any other tipping, such as tips for bathroom attendants or hotel porters that are taking luggage to your room, is at your discretion based on satisfaction of services received, as are gratuities for additional requested special services.

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. Please note that camera/video camera fees are not included in the cost of the tour. 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.

Optional Tours - Optional tours may be offered in each city you visit during your tour. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide.

Exchanging Cash - It is highly recommended that when travelling to cities outside of Delhi and other main cities that extra care and attention is paid when exchanging money. US Dollars are easily exchanged throughout India however, other currencies such as British Pounds can generally be exchanged in hotels and airports provided notes are new and undamaged. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited. Your National Escort will usually remind you to do this before departure.

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 - When visiting temples or mosques, both men and women should dress in non-revealing clothes. Full-length trousers with a shirt or t-shirt for men; and pants or skirts well below the knee with a top that covers the shoulders and upper arms for women. Women might also consider carrying a 'modesty shawl' in their daypack – this could be a sarong or light scarf – which they can wear over their shoulders and heads to feel more comfortable while sightseeing at mosques. When visiting Jain temples, you must not wear or take in any leather items such as belts, watches, camera straps, purses and shoes.

Religious sites and homes throughout India – for Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, Muslims or Buddhists to name a few – *require all visitors to remove their shoes to enter*. Even if you then need to walk outdoors, over hot or rough ground, you will not be allowed to wear shoes. You will often find shoe storage rooms near the entrance of a site where it is customary to leave your shoes near the entrance. Occasionally there are 'shoe minders' who will offer to keep your shoes safe for a 'tip' – this is not compulsory so each customer can choose to tip for this service or not. If you do not want to remove them, you will have to remain outside.

Bring some shoes that easily slip on and off, and carry a pair of thick, old socks in your daypack, which you can wear to protect your feet from any rough or hot surfaces.

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 with help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approx. 2-3 weeks prior to departure, and will include a travel wallet, badge, lanyard, feedback form, travel guide, along with your final itinerary and international e-tickets.

Last Updated November 2014