



Trans Himalayan Journey

Discovery Tour | 23 Days | Active

Delhi – Agra – Shimla – Manali – Jispa – Sarchu – Leh – Hunder – Uletokpo

Travel through the mighty Himalayas to the state of Ladakh. Explore the mountains and monasteries of this former-Buddhist kingdom in the ultimate Himalayan adventure.

- Marvel at the Taj Mahal
- Explore colonial Shimla
- Cross magnificent mountain passes
- Experience the Hemis Festival
- Take a camel safari across the sand dunes



Trans Himalayan Journey tour inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- Meals as stated on your itinerary
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers) and Local Guides
- Visa fees for UK and EU passport holders
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Safe and secure with ABTA, ATOL and IATA

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, meals not stated in the itinerary, insurance of any kind, tipping and early check in or late checkout. These are all payable locally.

Discovery Tours:

Designed for those who wish to be further immersed in the authentic charm of Asia; our Discovery Tours include more cultural and active experiences. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts and local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience. Our Discovery tours include:

- Walking through classic sites
- Unique cultural experiences and encounters
- Off the beaten track destinations
- More evenings at leisure for independent exploration

Active Tours:

'Trans Himalayan Journey' is an **Active** tour. This is one of the most demanding trips Wendy Wu Tours offers. As a whole, this itinerary requires a high level of fitness. This tour is physically demanding, it involves hiking and travelling to remote areas where tourist facilities are less developed. This itinerary visits several areas of high altitude. If you have an existing respiratory, vascular or coronary condition, we recommend checking with your doctor before undertaking this itinerary. Tanglang La Pass reaches an altitude of approximately 5,360m.

AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness) occurs in some people when they travel to altitudes over 3,000m [9,840 feet]. Mild symptoms of AMS include dizziness, fatigue, nausea or loss of appetite, breathlessness or headache. AMS symptoms are experienced by people of varying ages and levels of fitness, and usually the symptoms will subside after a day or so. If symptoms worsen, you should seek medical advice and descend in altitude immediately. It is recommended to drink more water, non-alcoholic and non-caffeinated drinks and avoid exertion at altitudes over 3,000m.

Of course, our National Escorts and local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary. If you require any more information about the pace of our Discovery Tours, please contact our reservations team who will be happy to answer your questions.

Itinerary – Trans Himalayan Journey

Days 1-2: Arrive Delhi

Fly to Delhi for your overnight stay. Your National Escort/Local Guide from Wendy Wu Tours will meet you at the Delhi International Airport in the Arrivals Hall. Together with other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer (45 minute drive) to your hotel and check-in.



Destination Information

Delhi - As the capital of India, Delhi is the third largest city with a population of approximately 18 million. Its strategic location along the north-south, east-west route has given it a focal position in Indian history and many great empires have been ruled from here. The monuments and ruins of these are scattered throughout the city, often side-by-side with modern structures and high-rise towers.

Day 3: Delhi - Agra

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

After an early breakfast this morning, transfer to Hazrat Nizamuddin railway station to board the express train to Agra (duration approximately 1.5 hours). Tour the tomb of Itmad-Ud-Daulah, a Mughal mausoleum. Proceed to your hotel for an overnight stay. In the afternoon, visit the impressive Agra Fort. Today's sightseeing will include 3 to 4 hours on foot.



Destination Information

Agra - Home to the world famous Taj Mahal. Agra rose to fame in the mediaeval period as the capital of the Mughal Empire and was beautified with gardens, waterfalls, bathhouses and canals. In modern times, the city of Agra houses a thriving carpet industry.

Tomb of Itmad-Ud-Daulah - A Mughal mausoleum, often described as 'jewel box', and sometimes called 'Baby Taj' as it is regarded as a draft of the Taj Mahal.

Agra Fort - Situated on the west bank of the Yamuna River and built by Emperor Akbar between 1565 and 1573. Its imposing red sandstone ramparts form a crescent along the riverfront and encompass an enormous complex of courtly buildings, ranging in style from the early eclecticism of Akbar to the sublime elegance of Shah Jahan. The barracks to the north are British additions from the 19th century. A deep moat, once filled with water from the Yamuna River, surrounds the fort.

Day 4: Agra - Delhi

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

Begin the day by viewing the Taj Mahal in all its glory as the sun is rising. Firstly, 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. You will spend approximately two hours 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). Return to the hotel for breakfast.

Commence the 4.5 hours drive (206km) back to Delhi and upon arrival, visit some of the sites of New Delhi. Begin at India Gate before driving past the President's house and visiting Connaught Place. Sightseeing today will include approximately 2-3 hours on foot.

Please note: The Taj Mahal is currently undergoing renovations to its exterior. The work is estimated to be completed by March 2018 and will be done in phases so that visitors to the Taj will still be able to experience the beauty of this architectural wonder.

Destination Information

Taj Mahal - One of the most recognisable monuments in the world, the Taj Mahal is a white marble monument found on the southern bank of the Yamuna River. The Taj Mahal was built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan between the years 1631 -1648 in memory of his favourite wife, Mumtaz Mahal, who died in 1631.

Delhi - Delhi is split into two main sections; Old Delhi and New Delhi. Old Delhi is the area defined by the old city wall and is a maze of small alleyways and side streets. Old Delhi's bazaars are legendary; today the great wholesale bazaars of Chandni Chowk retain a souk-like quality. Their narrow streets are lined with shops, whose goods spill out onto the pavements. New Delhi grew under British colonial rule and is characterised by the grandeur of 19th-century buildings and wide, tree-lined boulevards.

India Gate - Located at the end of the Rajpath, India Gate is a moving memorial to the 90,000 Indian servicemen who died in World War 1.

Connaught Place Markets - As coaches are not allowed to enter this area, the group will be dropped off on Janpath, one of the main roads in Delhi. From here, it will be a 10-15 minute walk to the main section of Connaught Market where tourist shops sell traditional home wares, jewellery, books, clothing, saris and beads.

Day 5: Delhi - Shimla

Meals Included: Breakfast, Dinner

Shimla altitude – 2,196m

Depart Delhi today to begin your Himalayan adventure. Transfer early in the morning to New Delhi railway station to board the train to Chandigarh (train duration approximately 3 hours), where you will continue by road a further 3.5 hours (110km) to Shimla, the capital city of the state of Himachal Pradesh. The rest of the day is free at leisure.



Destination Information

Shimla - The picturesque capital of Himachal Pradesh was once the summer capital of British India. Spread across 12kms along a ridge that overlooks terraced hillsides and cultivations, Shimla is magnificently covered in dense forests of oak and pine, fir and rhododendron.

Day 6: Shimla

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

Today you will explore Shimla, nicknamed the 'Queen of the Hillstations'. Stroll along Mall Road before embarking on a light trek to Jakhoo Temple. The trek will take approximately 1 hour and is mostly uphill. Explore the Glen to see Chadwick Falls and visit the fascinating Himachal State Museum and the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, as well as Sankat Mochan and Taradevi Temples. Today's sightseeing includes 2-3 hours on foot.

Destination Information

Mall Road - The main shopping street in Shimla, the Mall Road is lined with restaurants and shops and is located in the heart of Shimla.

Jakhoo Hill - The highest point in Shimla, this ancient temple is dedicated to the monkey god Hanuman and offers stunning panoramic views of the city.

The Glen and Chadwick Falls - The Glen is a protected forest located in Summer Hill, a particularly picturesque area of Shimla. A favorite picnic spot for the locals, who also visit to see the nearby Chadwick Waterfalls,

Himachal State Museum - An interesting museum that houses a large collection of paintings, sculptures, handicrafts and photos collected from all over the Himachal state.

Indian Institute of Advanced Studies - Originally built in 1888 as the summer residence of the British viceroys. The viceroys ruled the Indian subcontinent from Shimla for half of the year every year from 1888 until World War II. After the India's independence in 1947, the building became part of the estate of the President of India until 1965 when it was established as a residential centre for research in the humanities and social studies.

Sankat Mochan - A peaceful temple located on a lush green hill located outside of Shimla, where pilgrims travel to meditate or pay obeisance to the Hindu gods.

Taradevi Temple - Built over 250 years ago, the Taradevi Temple is dedicated to the Goddess Tara and holds great spiritual meaning to the devotees.

Day 7: Shimla - Manali

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

Manali altitude – 2,050m

Today will be a long driving day as you say goodbye to Shimla and travel approximately 8-9 hours (260km) through breath-taking scenery to the scenic hillstation of Manali. Upon arrival in Manali check into your hotel for a two-night stay. The remainder of the day is at leisure.

Destination Information

Manali - Named after the sage Manu, who is thought to have meditated in the area. One of the most popular hillstations in India, Manali is located in the beautiful valley of the Beas River, surrounded by unbelievably striking scenery. Admire the lush greenery and rolling mountains and relax in the cooler mountain climate, the perfect escape from the Indian summers.

Day 8: Manali

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

This morning discover the nearby village of Naggar, approximately 1 hour (25km) drive from Manali. Visit the Roerich Art Gallery, Naggar Castle and some local temples. In the afternoon, tour the city of Manali, visiting the Hadimba Temple, Old Manali and the Vashist Hot Water Springs. There springs are divided into two sections, one for males and one for females, and are quite popular amongst the locals. If you would like to take the opportunity to soak in the springs, it is suggested to wear conservative clothing ie t-shirt and shorts/pants over your swimwear. Enjoy the evening at leisure. Driving today includes approximately 7-8 hours of driving and approximately 2 hours on foot.



Destination Information

Naggar - One of the most charming villages in Kullu Valley, Naggar was once the ancient capital of the Kullu kingdom. The town is home to Naggar Castle, built in 1460 and converted into a hotel in 1978, and stone temples. Admire the superb views over the Beas Valley.

Roerich Art Gallery - The Russian painter, writer and explorer Nicholas Roerich settled in Naggar in 1928 with his family and stayed until his death in 1947. Their former home has been converted into a gallery; the lower rooms display some of his landscape paintings, many featuring the surrounding Himalayas.

Hadimba Temple - Built in 1553, the Hadimba Temple is dedicated to the goddess Halima. The four storey wooden temple is 24m high and features intricate carvings on the doorframes and wooden façade.

Vashist Hot Water Springs - Located in the small town of Vashist, the hot springs are said to cure skin and joint ailments.

Old Manali Village - Step back in time as you enter Old Manali, which has the timeless feel of an Indian mountain village with houses of wood and stone.

Day 9: Manali – Jispa

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Jispa – 3,440m

Begin your travels along one of the most spectacular road journeys in the world, the Manali to Leh highway. As you drive to the small village of Jispa, you will travel over the first mountain pass, the Rohtang Pass, which reaches the height of 3,950m above sea level. Stop en route at Keylong village, where you will visit a local market and have the option to partake in a short hike to Khardong Monastery. The trek is approximately 2-3 hours, however this will depend on what time you arrive. During the trek you will have amazing views over Bara Shigri Glacier.

Due to the remote location of Jispa, tonight's accommodation will be at a simple hotel, which is the best in the area. Tonight is the first night that we will be staying over an altitude of over 3,000m. Please take today's touring at an easy pace, stay well hydrated and rest this evening.

Destination Information

Keylong village - A picturesque village that lies on the banks of the Bhaga River, where the valleys of Chandra, Bhaga and Chenab intersect.

Keylong Monastery - The monastery, believed to be built in 12th century, has a large library of Kangyur and Tangyur volumes of Buddhist scriptures in Bhoti. It is the largest and most important monastery in the Lahaul region and belongs to the Drukpa sect of Tibetan Buddhism.

Jispa - A pretty village located between Manali and Leh, dotted with mud houses and chortens and located on the banks of the Bhaga River.

Day 10: Jispa - Sarchu

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Sarchu – 4,290m

Continue on your journey to Sarchu, travelling a further 5-6 hours (98km). The road follows the Bhaga River up to the Baralacha la Pass (4,892m), a meeting point of three different mountain ranges (the Pir Panjal, Zaskar and the Great Himalayas). Along the way, there will be short photo stops at Baralacha la Pass and Sun Lake and lunch today will be a packed lunch.



Due to the remoteness of Sarchu, tonight we will be staying at a simple outdoor camp, in temporary tents with attached en-suites with running cold water. Hot water will be delivered on demand in buckets.

The remainder of the day is free at leisure to allow us to acclimatise to the high altitude and prepare for our further explorations into the Himalayas. Please rest and stay well hydrated.

Destination Information

Sun Lake - The beautiful emerald lake located just below the Baralachala Pass and the water source of the River Bhaga.

Sarchu - Once an important trading point in the ancient Silk Route, Sarchu is located on the border to Ladakh and has a similar stark landscape.

Day 11: Sarchu - Leh

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Leh – 3,500m

Today is another long driving day, as we depart Sarchu and travel 9-10 hours (253km) to Leh. We pass through the Zaskar range, travelling over two more spectacular passes; La Chung La Pass (5,065m) and Tanglang La Pass (5,360m). This evening is at leisure to relax after the drive.

Destination Information

Leh - Only opening to foreigners in 1974, Leh is a popular entry point to the Ladakh region. Cut off from the rest of the world for most of the year as the road to Leh, the Manali to Leh Highway, is only open a few months (June to October), when the snow has melted. Leh itself is mesmerising, surrounded by two of the world's largest mountain ranges and alpine desert.

Day 12: Leh

Meals Included: Breakfast, Dinner

Today you will explore several of the historic monasteries of Leh, Spituk Gompa, Sankar Gompa and Phyang Monastery.



Destination Information

Spituk Gompa - Located 7kms to southwest of Leh on the hilltop near Indus, Spituk Gompa was founded in 11th century. It houses a collection of ancient masks, antique arms, icons and numerous thankas. Higher up the hill is the Mahakal Temple, containing the shrine of Vajrabhairava. This terrifying face is unveiled only at the annual festival in January.

Sankar Gompa - Belonging to the Gelukspa school of Tibetan Buddhism, this small Gompa is a branch of the Spituk Monastery, founded by the first incarnation of Skyabje Bakula (head monk of Spituk).

Phyang Monastery - Remarkably built on the hilltop, similar to the Likir monastery. This monastery belongs to the Degunpa Order. It was the first monastery to introduce the Degunpa teaching of 'Skyob Jigsten Gonbo' in Ladakh. It has about 50 monks in residence.

Day 13: Hemis Festival

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Rise early this morning and travel 1.5 hours (40km) to Hemis Monastery, where you will witness the vibrant and colourful Hemis Festival. The festival will be crowded today so please watch your valuables, and shade may be limited so remember to bring a water bottle, hat and sunglasses. Lunch today will be a packed lunch from the hotel. Spend the day at the festival before making our way back to Leh this afternoon.



Destination Information

Hemis Festival - Hemis Monastery is one of the most famous monasteries of the Ladakh region and was founded in 17th century. The Hemis Festival is held yearly here, a 2-day festival celebrated on the 10th day of the Tibetan lunar month and remembered as the birth of Padmasambhava, the founder of Tibetan Buddhism. The celebrations begin at 9am in the courtyard, which is filled with local and Buddhist pilgrims. During the festival, the locals get dressed-up in traditional clothes; wear vibrant headgears and lots of jewellery. The resident Lamas perform sacred masked dances leading to the destruction of the sacrificial offerings. Masks worn by the Lamas represent various guardian divinities of the Druggpa order, of which Hemis is the leading establishment in the region. The Gompa has well preserved Thankas and a copper gild statue of the Lord Buddha, various stupas made of gold, silver, and many auspicious objects. The festival celebrates the victory of good over evil, which is highlighted by the Lamas as they perform the sacred masked dance, known as Chaam, while they are accompanied by musical drums, long horns and cymbals. The chaam depicts a fight between good spirits and evil demons, and ends when the leader of the black hat dancers destroys the idol of evil.

Day 14: Leh

Meals Included: Breakfast, Dinner

Explore more of the remarkable buildings in Leh today, discovering the imposing Thiksey Monastery and Shey Palace. Sightseeing today will include approximately 2-3 hours on foot.

Destination Information

Thiksey Monastery - One of the finest examples of Ladakhi architecture. This Gompa is situated on the top of the hill and part of Gelukpa order, the disciple of Jangon Tsongkhapa. Sherab Zangpo of Stok first built the temple of Stagmo Lakchung at the top of the Thiksey valley, and then Paldan Sherab, nephew of Sherb Zangpo, founded Thiksey Monastery. The 12-storey monastery complex contains numerous stupas, statues, thankas, wall paintings, swords and a large pillar engraved with the Buddha's teachings, The main prayer hall has a 15m high seated Buddha figure and is home to approximately 120 monks and nuns.

Shey Palace - Situated on a hillock located 15km south of Leh, Shey Palace once the residence of the royal family and was constructed by King Deldan Namgyal in 1655. It houses the largest victory stupa in Leh, the top of which is made from pure gold.

Day 15: Leh - Uletopko

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Uletopko – 3,040m

After breakfast drive 3 hours (65km) to Uletopko, stopping en route to explore Likir Monastery. Arrive at the resort style accommodation at midday for a two-night stay and later enjoy an easy walk (duration approximately one hour) through woodlands to Ridzong Monastery, one of the less frequented monasteries of Ladakh. Sightseeing today will include approximately 3-3.5 hours on foot.



Destination Information

Likir Monastery - Originally founded in the 11th century, the monastery was destroyed in a fire in the 15th century. The present building dates back to the 18th century and contains huge clay images of Buddha and various old manuscripts. It also houses an interesting collection of thankas.

Uletopko - A charming village located in central Ladakh, an area that has the greatest concentration of major Buddhist monasteries or gompas.

Ridzong Monastery - One of the most impressive monasteries of Ladakh, it is also one of the less visited. Relatively new (founded in 1840), the monastery is perched on a striking spot in a side valley and has a wonderful collection of Thankas. It is beautifully set in the valley, deep inside a gorge and is the most isolated monastery in Ladakh. The nunnery, known as Chulichan, is also located nearby. Approximately 20 nuns reside at Chulichan, and they provide food and clothes to the monks as well as perform prayers in the morning and evening.

Day 16: Uletopko

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today drive 1-2 hours (48km) to Lamayru Monastery, the most ancient monastery of Ladakh. Spend 1-2 hours exploring the monastery on foot before returning to Uletopko. This afternoon enjoy some free time to relax or enjoy the resort facilities.

Destination Information

Lamayru Monastery - It is believed that the site of the monastery was once a lake, until a lama blessed it. The water then receded into the mountains leaving a place for the monastery to be built. It is also the 'free zone' of Ladakh, since not even a criminal can be apprehended in this place. Now mostly in ruins only the main hall exists today and houses a number of 'Tankhyas'.

Day 17: Uletopko – Leh

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

Say goodbye to Uletopko today as you return to Leh. Stop en route to visit Alchi Monastery, believed to be one of the oldest monasteries in the Ladakh region. Upon arrival in Leh, proceed to your hotel for an overnight stay. Sightseeing at Alchi will include approximately 1-2 hours on foot.

Destination Information

Alchi Monastery - Alchi is the most famous and largest of all the monasteries built by Lotsava Rinchen Zangpo in the middle of the 12th century. Distinctive from other monasteries in Ladakh, it is built on flat ground by a riverbank, unlike the other monasteries that are built on hilltop. The monastery is more like a monastic complex of temples. Please note that in the Alchi Monastery, you will not be allowed to take photos from inside the monastery.

Day 18: Leh - Hunder

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hunder – 3,048m

Depart Leh and travel 4.5-5 hours (129km) to Hunder, located in the Nubra Valley. To travel to Hunder, an Inner Line Permit (a stamped piece of paper that is added to your passport) is required that can be issued in Leh only. The National Escort will collect your passports prior to departure and organise this for you. For the permit, you will need to have 4 passport size photos and photocopies of your passport and visa, which the guide will also collect.



Experience the thrill of travelling on the highest drivable road in the world when travel over Khardung Pass (5,260m). From the pass, you can see all the way south over the Indus valley to seemingly endless peaks and ridges of the Zaskar range, and north to the giants of the Sase massif.

Upon arrival in Nubra Valley, visit the village of Sumur to explore Samstanling Gompa. Continue to the town of Hunder, where you will stay in a tented camp for two nights.

Destination Information

Nubra Valley - Also known as Ldorma, or Valley of Flowers. It is located to the north of Ladakh, between the Karakoram and Ladakh ranges of the Himalayas. Famous for its striking scenery, sand dunes, Bactrian camels and the high altitude desert that surrounds the Valley.

Samstanling Gompa - Founded in 1841 by Lama Tsultim Nima, Samstanling Gompa is currently home to 50 monks. The picturesque monastery is surrounded by traditional hues of gold, red ochre and white.

Hunder - A small but beautiful village that sits like an oasis in the high altitude desert of Nubra Valley.

Day 19: Hunder

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

After breakfast today travel to the sand dunes where you will participate in a camel safari. Bactrian camels (the 2-humped camel native to the steppes of central Asia) are used and the safari will take approximately 30 minutes. In the afternoon, visit Diskit Monastery, the oldest and largest monastery in Nubra Valley.

Destination Information

Diskit Monastery - Founded in the 14th century, Diskit is located on the hillside and contains many tangkas, images of Buddha, deities and frescos.

Day 20: Hunder - Leh

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

After breakfast this morning begin the drive back over Khardung Pass to Leh, where you will continue to your hotel for an overnight stay. The remainder of the day is at leisure to rest and relax or explore Leh independently.



Day 21: Leh

Meals Included: Breakfast, Dinner

Spend the morning at leisure. Later, embark on a walking tour of Leh. Beginning at the historic bazaar, you will see Joshing, the historic Leh Mosque, Chang Gali and the Tibetan markets where you can purchase anything from yak-horn boxes to jewellery. Stroll the alleyways and gain a glimpse in the local's everyday life.

Destination Information

Jokhang Temple - Built for the duration of the supremacy of King Songtsän Gampo.

Leh Mosque - A striking green and white mosque that stands in the main bazaar in Leh, built in 1667.

Chang Gali - A less bustling trading centre located outside the main bazaar.

Day 22: Leh - Delhi

Meals Included: Breakfast, Dinner

Say goodbye to Leh this morning as you transfer to the airport for your flight to Delhi (flight duration 3 hours). In the afternoon, embark on a city tour of Old and New Delhi. Your exploration of Delhi begins with a drive past the Red Fort, before strolling through the fascinating Chandni Chowk Bazaar to Jama Masjid. End the tour with a visit to Qutab Minar. This evening, visit a family home in Delhi where you will enjoy a traditional Indian dinner. You will have the opportunity to interact with the family and learn more about the Indian culture and traditions.

Destination Information

Red Fort - Home of the Mughal emperor for many years, the fort is located in the centre of Delhi and houses a number of museums. View the fort as you drive past.

Chandni Chowk Bazaar - Built in the 17th century, Chandni Chowk is the oldest and most lively bazaar in Old Delhi. Built by the Mughal Emperor of India Shah Jahan and designed by his daughter, you can find stores selling everything from saris, Nehru suits, souvenirs to spices.

Jama Masjid - Jama Masjid is the largest mosque in India, with a courtyard capable of holding 25,000 devotees. Built between 1644 and 1658, the mosque was Shah Jahan's final architectural achievement

Qutab Minar - Built in the 12th century, this tower of victory is gracefully hand-carved along its entire height of 73m. We also visit the Iron Pillar, which has withstood the ravages of time and has not rusted after 1,500 years.

Day 23: Depart Delhi

Meals Included: Breakfast

After breakfast, travel to Delhi, depending on your flight time transfer to the airport for your return flight to the UK.

Trans Himalayan Journey Travel 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 following the instructions on the visa help sheet. Once completed you will need to email or post the appropriate documents to our office in order for us to process your visa with the embassy. Once your visa has been approved we will send you a copy of the completed visa by email for you to print out and take with you when you travel to India. Any passports and visa applications that require an express service will incur an extra 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.

A Inner Line Permit is required to travel to Hunder on day 17. This permit can only be issued in Leh and so your National Escort will arrange this for you. You will need to bring with you 4 passport-sized photos and copies of your passport and visa. Your National Escort will request your photos and your passport when required.

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. These details will be available to your national escort should they be required. 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.

Eating in India

Indian cuisine is one of the most influential, diverse and flavoursome culinary styles in the world. Indian dishes incorporate many spices and seasoning to create an explosion of flavors. Though Indian cuisine can vary greatly from the Indian food we get in the UK, it is important to keep an open mind and be adventurous. Meals as stated (excluding drinks) are included in our group tours. Please be aware that dishes selected for your meals reflect the cooking styles and signature dishes of the local area you are in.

Dishes served in restaurants on our group tours are varied. Some will be vegetable-based with meat mixed in, and a few will be meat-based. Our restaurants are well aware of the western palate – there are plenty of non-spiced options. When eating meals on group tours, you will be seated around a circular table with other tour members. Dishes will be served in the traditional ‘family style’; meaning that various dishes will be laid out in the centre of the table top. These dishes are intended to be shared amongst the group – there is always more than enough to feed everybody.

Please read your travel guide, which you will receive with your final documents for more information about eating in India. We recommend that when it comes to Indian food, you stay open minded and try to be adventurous!

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 Guide.

Your accommodation has been 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 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 are met.

In the Leh region, the hotel accommodation will be basic. In camps/tents, the electricity will be run on a generator in the evenings only; there will be cold-water available 24 hours a day, however hot water will only be available during a limited period in the morning and evening. If it is required outside those hours, it can be requested prior.

Transport

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used during touring in Delhi and Agra.

Transport in the Himalayas - Smaller non air conditioned vehicles (which would hold either 4 to 8 passengers plus driver and or guide) will be used from Chandigarh to Leh, due to the narrow road conditions in the Himalayas. 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 itinerary above are approximations only.

Planes: Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

Trains: This trip involves day journeys in AC class cars. 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 10 minutes and you must have your luggage ready and by your side a few minutes before the train pulls into the station.

Development in India

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/Local Guides.

Appropriate Dress

When visiting temples or mosques, both men and women should dress in conservative, non-revealing clothing. 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 your shoes, you will have to remain outside.

We recommend 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. The following itinerary will indicate when you need to consider this.

Optional activities

A list of optional activities and approximate costs will be provided with your final documents. These can be arranged by your guide and are paid for locally.

Souvenirs

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions which demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone so we aim to take you to places which hold local interest; for example, in Agra you will be able to see local artists creating stunning marble pieces, similar to what is used on the Taj Mahal. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

Group Size

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by both a national escort and local guides. There will usually be no more than 18 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with local guides only.

Tipping Policy

Tipping while on holiday is a firm and expected element in the tourism industry and India is no exception. To remove the uncertainty and stress of not knowing how much is appropriate to tip or to whom, Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy for our group tours where a nominated tipping amount is paid upon commencement of the programme by each tour member. This amount is stated in all group pricing; however, it is not collected in your final payment received by Wendy Wu Tours.

This nominated tipping amount is to be given to your National Escort at the beginning of your tour, who will then distribute it amongst your main service providers – guides, drivers and attendants – on your behalf during the tour. 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.

The tipping amount is determined based on the total number of passengers travelling in the group. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the National Escort. The final tipping amount will be outlined in your final documentation, which is distributed 2 weeks prior to your tours departure.

Climate

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

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 (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

Itinerary changes

It is our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate; in these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

Please note: The Taj Mahal is currently undergoing renovations to its exterior. The work is estimated to be completed by March 2018 and will be done in phases so that visitors to the Taj will still be able to experience the beauty of this architectural wonder.

Last updated: November 2016