

RAJASTHAN (09 DAYS)

DAY 01: JAIPUR Arrival

Arrive at Jaipur and transfer to your hotel. The capital of Rajasthan Jaipur - popularly known as the "Pink City" as the Pink sandstone was used to construct the buildings in the old walled city. Jaipur owes its name; its foundation and its planning to the Great-Warrior-Astronomer Maharaja Jai Singh II (1699–1744 AD). Jaipur (City of Victory) was founded by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II in 1727. It is the only city in the world symbolising the nine divisions of the Universe through nine rectangular sectors sub-dividing it. The architect who formalised the city's plans on the Shilpa Shastra, the epic Hindu treatise on architecture, mixed it with the sublimity of the Mughal and Jain influences of those times. The city was painted pink in 1853 in honour of the visit by Prince Albert. Except for the busy traffic of bicycles, cars, and buses, little seems to have changed.

After Lunch Visit the City of Jaipur. Among the highlights to be seen while touring Jaipur include the City Palace, which is an overwhelming complex of exquisite palaces, gardens and courtyards, decorative art, and carved doorways. The palace museum houses collections of rare manuscripts, armours, costumes, carpets, and miniature paintings. Walk to the adjacent Jantar Mantar or Astronomical Observatory made by the Maharaja of Jaipur, built in 1726 and is one of the five such astronomical wonders built by Sawai Jai Singh and makes accurate predictions even to this day. An observatory equipped with instruments of astonishing size and precision, including a 90-foot-high sun dial. See the Hawa Mahal or Palace of Winds, a major Rajput landmark built in 1799. This five-story building in the old city is a pink sandstone masterpiece with semi octagonal and delicately honeycombed windows. The monument was originally conceived to enable ladies of the royal household to watch the city's everyday life and royal processions in absolute privacy. Jaipur is a shopper's paradise. Most of the bazaars are in an old city with a wide range of things to buy, Afternoon is free to walk around in the colorful and bustling bazaars for personal exploration or shopping. Overnight stay at your Hotel.

DAY 02: JAIPUR

After breakfast proceed for full day city tour of Jaipur – visiting Amer Fort located at a distance of 11 kilometers from Jaipur and was the old fort of the Kachhwaha clan of Amber. It used to be the capital, till it was moved to Jaipur. The fort is built with white marble and red sandstone and looks even more attractive because of the Maota Lake in the foreground. The fort in itself is a beautiful sight to behold but as one looks on the fort with its clear reflection on the lake in the front; one cannot help but wonder if it is a dream or a beautiful illusion. An elephant [Subject to availability/alternatively by jeep] will spare you the trouble of climbing up to the fortress. Once on top, stroll through the sprawling complex of courtyards and halls with a well-informed and well-spoken guide who would regale you with tales of yore. Continue past through the Jalmahal, a photo stop and drive to Ram Niwas Gardens and architecturally impressive Albert Hall. Ram Niwas Bagh & Albert Hall Central Museum Built by Sawai Ram Singh II in the 1868 A.D, Ram Nivas Bagh is a lush sprawling garden with a zoo, an aviary, a greenhouse, an herbarium, a museum, and sports ground in the premises. Albert Hall This fine example of example of Indo Saracenic style of architecture, in the Ram Nivas Bagh was designed by Sir Swinton Jacob. The Hall is home to an exquisite collection of sculptures, paintings, objects d'art, natural history specimens, an Egyptian mummy, and a beautiful Persian carpet. Recently, the Rabindra Manch with an auditorium, a modern art gallery and an open-air theatre, has been added to promote cultural events. Later on, pass through the Moti Doongri Palace – a privately owned hilltop fort built like a Scottish castle and Birla Temple. Evening drive to Chokhi Dhani village– Rest of the day is free to explore the colorful town independently. Overnight stay at your hotel

DAY 03: JAIPUR - MANDAWA - BIKANER (330 KMS)

Morning Drive to Bikaner enroute visit Mandawa Village drive 180 kms to Mandawa, often referred to as Rajasthan's open art gallery. Mandawa is a sleepy little typical Rajasthani town, which is deep rooted with culture. Stay here in your heritage hotel, Castle Mandawa. Later enjoy a walking tour of Mandawa, which includes the medieval fort that gradually rises on the horizon like a mirage. A painted arched gateway adorned with Lord Krishna and his cows leads to the bazaar. A breathtaking

view of the town can be seen from the terrace of Castle Mandawa. The Mandawa family has a collection of traditional ceremonial costumes. After Lunch, explore the surroundings of Mandawa and later leave for BIKANER, (190 km), which was once a major trading post between Africa, West Asia, and the Far East. The arts prospered receiving the patronage of a wealthy merchant community. The city is renowned for the best riding camels in the world. This afternoon during your tour you will visit Camel Breeding Farms; Junagarh Fort, a formidable structure encircled by a moat and having some beautiful palaces within. Situated at a height of above seven hundred feet above sea level, it towers over the city and can be seen from a distance. The fort and its palaces are profusely decorated with magnificent stone carvings. 30 kms south of Bikaner is the village of Deshnoke, where the famous Mata Karni Temple is situated. The 600-year-old temple is dedicated to Karni Mata, an incarnation of Goddess Durga. The temple plays host to thousands of rats that form the major attraction here. The rats are considered sacred and worshipped accordingly. You have to be very careful while entering the inner sanctum, because it is believed that if you accidentally step on a rat, a gold replica has to be made to compensate for the lost life. Evening is free to walk around in the colorful and bustling bazaars for personal exploration or shopping. Overnight stay at your Hotel.

DAY 04 - BIKANER – JAISALMER (350 KMS)

After breakfast, drive 350 km to Jaisalmer - a fairy-tale town in the Thar Desert founded about 800 years ago by Rajah Jaisal. Unlike any other city, this desert fortress is one of Rajasthan's most exotic and unusual towns. Jaisalmer, an important ancient trading center because of its strategic location on the camel trade routes, is often described as the 'golden city'. The havelis, built by merchants of the 19th century, are exquisitely carved from golden-yellow sandstone and are still in beautiful condition. The fort built by Rawal Jaisal in the 12th century, stands on the 80-meter high Trikuta hill, with beautifully carved Jain temples. The annual desert festival takes place in January and February each year and is a riot of color and activity. Jaisalmer is also famous for its embroidery, Rajasthani mirror work, rugs, blankets, antique, stonework and camel safaris into the barren sand-dunes desert. Before Arrival in Jaisalmer 15 KMS BEFORE you will visit the War museum to showcase bravery of Army - 'Jaisalmer War Museum' has been established in the military station of Jaisalmer to showcase the traditional bravery of the Indian Army and also to commemorate the sacrifice of its heroes' displaying valour and courage of exceptional order during India's wars. The Indian Army has set up a historical war museum in Jaisalmer. This war museum, which is the first-of its-kind on the western front, traces the evolution of the Indian Army and covers in detail its inspiring contribution in mainly 1965 Indo-Pak War and 1971 Longewala battle including all combat operations and other nation building activities. The war museum is located 10 km short of Jaisalmer on the Jaisalmer-Jodhpur highway. This historical war museum could become a new tourist spot for all Indian and foreigner tourists coming to Jaisalmer. Arrival and check in at Hotel Late Lunch and you will visit the Gadsisar Lake - The beautiful arched gateway across the road down to the tank A scenic rainwater lake with numerous beautiful shrines around. The lake is an idyllic spot for outings. Bada Bagh, cenotaphs of the Jaisalmer Rawal's, has some magnificent chhatris (canopies) set amidst an oasis of greenery. It is indeed a great place for a stopover and photography. Another beautiful place is the Gadi Sagar Tank, the main source of the city's water supply. Evening is free to walk around in the colorful and bustling bazaars for personal exploration or shopping. Overnight stay at your Hotel.

DAY 05: IN JAISALMER

After breakfast, leave for the city tour of Jaisalmer. Visit the famous Havelis (mansions) known for their frescoes. Jaisalmer's strategic position on the camel terrain route bought it great wealth. The merchants grew prosperous and commissioned great havelis, or mansions, to flaunt their ever-growing status in society. Made of local golden-yellow sandstone and wood, some of the havelis are still in excellent condition. The most elaborate and magnificent of all the Jaisalmer havelis is the Patwaon Ki Haveli. Five Jain brothers-built Haveli between 1800 and 1860. Salim Singh Ki Haveli and Nathmal Ki Haveli are the other two havelis that are open to visitors. Built in 1156 by the

Bhatti ruler, Jaisal, THE FORT here stands atop the 80 m high Trikuta hill. 3 walls and 99 bastions surround the fort. Over the centuries, the golden sandstone fortress witnessed many battles between the Bhatti's, the Mughals, and the Rathore's of Jodhpur. Within the fort complex lie the beautifully carved Jain Temples built between the 12th and 15th centuries. The Maharawals (rulers) of Jaisalmer were devout Hindus but were tolerant of Jainism and encouraged art and religion. There are 7 temples in the complex - Chandraprabhu, Parasnath, Shitalnath, Sambhavnath, Shantinath, Kunthunath and Rikhabdev Temple. The temples are all connected by a series of corridors and walkways. Close by is the Gyan Bhandar, a library founded in 1500 A.D. This house is priceless ancient manuscripts and other exhibits like astrological charts, besides the Jain equivalent of the Christian Shroud of Turin. In the evening, proceed for the excursion to Sam Sand dunes. Located at a distance of 42 kilometers from Jaisalmer, Sam Sand Dunes is the closest point to witnessing the total sandy desert. You can also see the patterns and motifs created by the shifting sands and air. Moreover, Sam Sand Dunes also provide you with an unforgettable experience of camel rides and the sunset. Return to your hotel for an overnight stay.

DAY 06: JAISALMER – JODHPUR (305 KMS)

After breakfast, today we will drive to Jodhpur, call it by its many names and they will not do Jodhpur justice. An oasis in the arid Thar Desert, Jodhpur is the second largest city in the state of Rajasthan. Representing this colorful city with shades of blue, Jodhpur has a history that is rich and a present that beckons strongly to the discerning tourist. Forts and palaces, temples and havelis, culture and tradition, spices and fabrics, color and texture, Jodhpur has them all and in plenty. Situated in western Rajasthan, Jodhpur has long attracted both the domestic and outside tourist. It not only offers tangibles, in terms of what you can see and buy, but also fills one with a sense of history and the splendors of an era gone forever. The hospitality of the locals, the demure women, the colorful turbans -all set against the unmerciful desert is something to feel, not just see. Every pore of Jodhpur tells its own tales of heroic tales that made legends out of kings and soldiers, romances that continue to warm the heart and a time when epics were lived out on the streets by everyday man. Visit the MEHRANGARH FORT in the afternoon. Considered one of India's best forts, this invincible stronghold of the Marwar sits on a steep hill lording over a wonderful view of its surroundings. It is also a beautiful fort and undoubtedly, the jewel of Jodhpur. Intricate latticed windows, elaborately carved panels and elegantly curved porches speak of beauty and taste. No matter what part of the fort you are in, its ambience will leave you in awe and your senses reeling. Take in the sight high up on the rampart where the second largest cannon in Asia rests, the recoil of which requires an area as large as a football field! Also visit Jaswant Thada - a white marble memorial built in memory of Maharaja Jaswant II in 1899. A story goes that Maharaja Jaswant succumbed to injuries in this place while fighting the Mughal king Jehangir. Also visit Sardar Bazaar and Clock Tower markets where you can see the vegetable, spice, Indian sweets, and textile and silver markets. These colourful markets with tiny shops dot the narrow lanes replete with woodcarvings, wrought iron, lacquer work, silver and ivory ornamentation and leather handicrafts. Evening is free to walk around in the colorful and bustling bazaars for personal exploration or shopping. Overnight stay at your Hotel.

DAY 07: JODHPUR – RANAKPUR – UDAIPUR (300 KMS)

This morning we'll drive through valleys in the remote and peaceful Aravalli Range to RANAKPUR to visit one of the most important Jain temples in India. This marble complex is noted for the 29 halls supported by 1,444 pillars, each adorned with hundreds of carved figures, no two alike. We'll continue driving south, arriving Udaipur, described as the "City of Sunrise" in the evening.

Arrive in Udaipur and transfer to your hotel. Set on the shores of Lake Pichola and surrounded by hills, Udaipur grew in complete contrast to the harsh deserts of the rest of Rajasthan. As capital of the old Mewar State it was the only Rajput stronghold to uphold its Hindu allegiance in the face of Muslim invasion. This fairy – tale city, with its marble palaces and lakes surrounded by a ring of hills, was founded by Maharana Udai Singh in 1559. The city is dominated by the massive City Palace, which overlooks Lake Pichola

with its romantic island palaces. Picturesque havelis, ghats and temples line the lake front, with the lively bazaars of the old walled city stretching behind them. Later in the evening take a boat ride on the 4 km long and 3 km wide Lake Pichola, which is fringed with hills, palaces, havelis, ghats, embankments and temples and offers spectacular. Lake Pichola, the largest artificial freshwater lake in Udaipur, was built in the year 1362 AD. Around 30 feet deep, this beautiful lake boasts of four main islands - Jag Niwas, Jag Mandir, Mohan Mandir and Arsi Vilas. Jag Niwas is home to the beautiful Lake Palace, a well-known heritage hotel. Jag Mandir features the famous Lake Garden Palace. Mohan Mandir used to be where the King would witness the Gangaur celebrations while Arsi Vilas was built by the Maharanas to enjoy the beautiful views of the sunset. The best way to catch scintillating views of the lake is to take a boat ride, especially around sunset, and enjoy the tranquility. Evening is free to walk around in the colorful and bustling bazaars for personal exploration or shopping. Overnight stay at your Hotel.

DAY 08: UDAIPUR

After breakfast proceed for Full day city tour of Udaipur – visiting the City Palace and Museum. The largest palace complex in India, it is a blend of Mughal and Rajput influences. -The most impressive attraction in Udaipur is the magnificent City Palace which is now a museum and houses fine art works in glass mosaics, and miniature paintings, of which Udaipur is famous, depicting glories of an ancient past. The City Palace Built by the Maharana Udai in 1559, The City Palace is located on the east bank of Lake Pichola. Fused with Rajasthani and Mughal architectural styles, the Palace is considered the largest of its type in Rajasthan. The Palace has various towers, domes and arches which add to the flavour of the heritage site. It is a marvelous assortment of courtyards, pavilions, terraces, corridors, rooms and hanging gardens. Often distinguished as the largest palace complex in Rajasthan, this majestic piece of architecture is one of the most visited tourist attractions. Crystal Gallery -Situated at the Fateh Prakash Palace, the Crystal Gallery houses an extravagant collection of crystals. It is an unused collection that includes crystal chairs, sofas, tables and even beds. Other precious items include crystal dressing tables, chairs, crockery, table fountains and even the regal beds. In 1877, Maharaja Sajjan Singh ordered this rare crystal from F&C Osler & Co in England but died before the package arrived. JAGDISH TEMPLE -The Jagdish Temple is a great focal point for the Hindu people of Udaipur. The temple is dedicated to Vishnu, The Jagdish Mandir is an excellent example of Indo - Aryan architecture. One of the popular tourist attractions on the map of Rajasthan, the Jagdish Temple is a large Hindu temple located in the heart of Udaipur. It enshrines a black stone image of Lord Vishnu, considered as 'The Creator' in Hindu mythology. Sahelion Ki Bari -Sahelion Ki Bari, also known as 'Courtyard of the Maidens' is a popular tourist attraction in Udaipur, Rajasthan. Set below the embankment of the Fatah Sagar Lake, the gardens is decorated with beautiful lotus pools, elephant-shaped fountains, paintings, glass mosaics and marble pavilions. Legend says the king himself designed this garden and presented it to the queen. Shilpagram -Shilpagram in Udaipur can be literally translated as the 'Craftsmen's Village'. It depicts the lifestyle of the folk and tribal people of the West Zone. Udaipur Vintage collection of classic cars The collection comprises a variety of classic and interestingly rare and well-maintained vehicles. The Maharaja personally visits the museum weekly to ensure that the cars are in mint condition. Double up on the ticket with the Rajasthani Thali offered inside, and it will make for a memorable experience for both car and food enthusiasts. Evening is free to walk around in the colorful and bustling bazaars for personal exploration or shopping. Overnight stay at your Hotel

DAY 09: UDAIPUR DEPARTURE

After breakfast, the day is free until transferred to Airport for your onward journey to the next destination.

COST INCLUDES:

- 08 Nights' accommodation basis at the hotel.
- Meal Plan – Daily buffet breakfast at all the hotels.
- All applicable taxes.

- All transfers, city tours and transport services by AC VEHICLE All India Tourist permit vehicle as per the above itinerary. Road taxes, parking fee, fuel charges, interstate taxes.

COST EXCLUDES:

- MONUMENTS Entrance Fee. + Services of English Speaking Local Guide.
- Elephant Ride or Jeep Ride at Amber Fort in Jaipur. +Tonga Ride in Bikaner.
- Game Drive at Ranthambore National Park in Ranthambore +Camel Ride on Sand Dunes in Jaisalmer. +Jeep Safari in Jodhpur. +Common Boat Ride on Lake Pichola in Udaipur.
- Anything which is not mentioned under "INCLUDES" header.
- Expense of personal nature like tipping, laundry, telephone / fax calls, alcoholic beverages, camera/video camera fee at monuments, medical expenses, airport departure tax etc. Any other services not mentioned in the inclusions
- Airfare / Train Fare
- Any expenses caused by reasons beyond our control such as roadblocks, accidents & any medical evacuations. Any train delays, or re-scheduling etc. Any Visa fees, insurance fees, etc. Any tips to hotel staff, local guides, drivers etc. Any meals apart from the ones mentioned above. Any expenses apart from the ones above.

SPECIAL NOTES:

- Check-In time is 1400 hrs & Check-out time 1200 NOON at all hotels.
- KINDLY NOTE FOR GUESTS SAFETY & SECURITY, WE DON'T ALLOW NIGHT DRIVING, HENCE REQUEST GUESTS TO LEAVE IN TIME SO THEY CAN REACH NEXT DESTINATION BEFORE 2000 HRS.
- In case on any amendment in local Government taxes, or any fuel hike, we reserve the right to adjust the tour price accordingly.
- Above rates are Nett non commissionable.
- Please note, It is not to be construed that accommodation is confirmed at hotels until and unless we convey the confirmations to you on receipt of your acceptance. However, in the event of any of the hotels not becoming available at the time of initiating the reservations, we shall book alternate accommodation at a similar or next best available hotel and shall pass on the difference of rates (supplement/reduction whatever applicable) to you.

THE IMPORTANT POINTS: MONUMENT CLOSURE DAYS:

- All the Monuments will Remain Closed on Dhulandi (Next Day of HOLI FESTIVAL) in Rajasthan.
- Ranthambore Park & Sariska National Park will be CLOSED from 01 JULY to 30 SEPT Every Year