

ITINERARY

Destination Covered:-Delhi – Mandawa- Bikaner– Jaisalmer- Jodhpur- Udaipur – Ajmer- Pushkar- Jaipur- Agra – Delhi

Duration:-15nights/16days

Day 01: Arrive Delhi

Assistance on arrival & transfer to your hotel and **overnight stay at hotel.**

Day 02: Delhi – Mandawa

Morning proceeds to Mandawa in the heart of the semi-arid Shekhawati region. Shekhawati owes its name to Rao Shekha who ruled this area in the 14th century. The Fort of Mandawa was built in the year 1755 by Thakur Nawal Singh, the founder of the town. These were the times when Mandawa was settled & fortified by the rich & dominant Silk Route merchants of the region, who constructed many Havelis (Mansions), Chhatris (Cenotaphs), and Temples & Baolis (Step-wells) with ornate frescoes adorning their walls & now aptly given the epithet - Open-Air Gallery. With the migration of these merchant families, their old settlements remained in total obscurity with no one to look after them. Mandawa still retains the charm & aura of a bygone era & coming here is like stepping into a different world. **Overnight stay at hotel.**

Day 03: Mandawa - Bikaner

Morning enjoy half day city tour visiting **Mandawa Fort**, located in the very heart of Mandawa & a classic example of the famed Rajput style of architecture. It houses many beautiful paintings & frescoes that dazzle the eyes & now been converted into a heritage hotel. **Gulab Rai Haveli** built in the year 1870 that has some of the best murals in Shekhawati on both the exterior & interior walls with elephants & camels on its façade. **Goenka Double Haveli** built in the year 1890, with monumental frescoes of elephants & horses decorating its façade. **Bansidhar Newatia Haveli** built in the year 1921 combine's traditional frescoes of horses & elephants with those depicting a young boy using a phone plus opulent touring cars & the Wright Brothers' plane. If time permits we may visit more Havelis of the region & observe the colorful village life in Rajasthan.



Later proceeds to **Bikaner**, founded by Rao Bikaji (1465-1504 AD) in the year 1488 AD. He was a Raj put prince, descendent of the founder of neighboring Jodhpur. It lies in the north-western part of Rajasthan & has a stark beauty of the desert landscape with wide-spread sand dunes & thorny shrubs growing around. It is a royal city surrounded by a mammoth fortification wall, more than 5 km in circumference & about 5 to 9m high. Fort, Palaces & people with colorful traditional costumes are the chief attractions of the city. The Camel Breeding Farm in Bikaner is only one of its kinds in the whole Asia & so is the illustrious Camel Festival. **Overnight stay at hotel.**

Day 04: Bikaner – Jaisalmer

Morning enjoy city tour visiting **Junagarh Fort**, built in the year 1593 AD by Raja Rai Singh (1571-1612 AD), the 6th ruler of Bikaner. The Fort is a formidable structure & largely remained unconquered during its eventful history. It houses number of beautiful Palaces, Temples & Pavilions, which are richly decorated the beautifully maintained rooms of **Anup Mahal** now display the treasures of the Royal family. The **Fort Museum** has an extensive collection of illuminated manuscripts, jewellery, jars, carpets, weapons, treaties, decorations & Farman's (King's Orders).

Later proceeds to **Jaisalmer**, founded in the year 1156 by Bhatti Rajput ruler Rawal Jaisal. Often described as Golden City & rising from the heart of the Thar Desert like a golden mirage the commanding Fort etched in yellow sandstone, dominates the amber-hued city with its entire awesome splendor. Because of its strategic location it was an important ancient trading centre & camel caravans laden with precious spices & silk crossed the territory en-route India, Sindh, and Arabia & Europe. The merchants of the 19th century built Havelis (Mansions) that are exquisitely carved from golden-yellow sandstone & are still in a beautiful condition. The life within the Fortified town conjures up images of medieval majesty visible in its narrow lanes strewn with magnificent palace, havelis, temples, & of course skilled artisans & ubiquitous camels. **Overnight stay at hotel.**

Day 05: Jaisalmer

Morning enjoy city tour visiting **Jaisalmer Fort**, built in the year 1156 by Rawal Jaisal. Perched on 80m high hill, housing the entire township within its ramparts, the golden hued Fort is standing like a sentinel in the bleak desert landscape. It is the only "Living Fort" in India & within its ramparts has an enchanting cow-web of narrow lanes dotted with some lovely **Havelis (Mansions)**, **Palaces** & beautifully sculptured **Jain Temples** of the 12th-15th century AD & of course skilled artisans & ubiquitous camels.



Also visit magnificent **Patwon Ki Haveli** in the heart of the town. It was built by the rich merchant Guman Chand Patwa & his sons, whose business stretched between Afghanistan & China. It is the most elaborate & magnificent of all the Jaisalmer Havelis & is virtually the showpiece of Jaisalmer's legendary architectural wealth. The carving on stone far surpasses in beauty the work on brocade & gold. Later in evening visit Sam to take the **Camel ride on the Sand Dunes**. **Overnight stay at hotel.**

Day 06: Jaisalmer - Jodhpur

Morning proceeds to **Jodhpur**, bustling desert city are the second largest city in Rajasthan & has landscape dominated by the massive Mehrangarh Fort topping a sheer rocky ridge. Rao

Jodha, a chief of the Rathore clan, founded the city in the year 1459 & it is named after him. It was formerly the seat of a Princely state, also known as Marwar. **Overnight stay at hotel.**

Day 07: Jodhpur

Morning enjoy city tour of Jodhpur, visiting the **Mehrangarh Fort** (Majestic Fort), one of the most impressive & formidable structures anywhere in India. Built by Rao Jodha, this 5km long Fort is on a 125m high hill & has some magnificent palaces with marvelously carved panels' latticed window. The **Fort Museum** houses an exquisite collection of palanquins, howdahs (Elephant saddles), royal cradles, miniatures paintings, musical instruments, costumes & furniture.

Also visit **Jaswant Thada**, a cluster of royal cenotaphs in white marble built in the year 1899 AD in memory of Maharaja Jaswant Singh II. Within the main cenotaph are the portraits of various Jodhpur rulers. It is an architectural landmark of Jodhpur. **Overnight stay at hotel.**

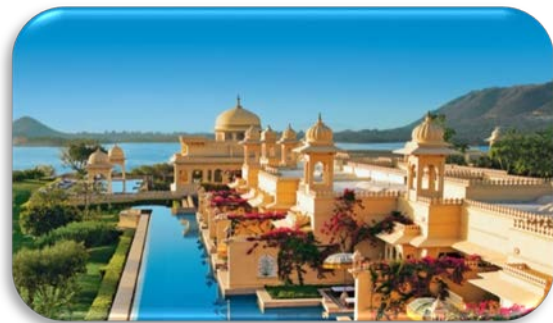
Day 08: Jodhpur - Udaipur via Ranakpur

Morning proceeds to **Udaipur**, founded in the year 1568 by Maharana Udai Singh after his final unsuccessful attempt to defend the Mewar capital, Chittorgarh from the invading Mughals under Emperor Akbar. The Kingdom of Mewar was considered the most respectable among all Princely states in Rajasthan & still remembered for the courage to protect the Kingdom. The site for Udaipur was chosen for its natural beauty, abundant water & natural protection afforded by the surrounding forests & Aravali mountains. It is set on the edge of three lakes & also known as the "City of Lakes & Palaces". Undoubtedly one of the most romantic cities in India, its beautiful Palaces are mirrored in the calm waters of Lake Pichola & the city is a brilliant kaleidoscope of narrow lanes flanked by bright stalls, gardens, lakes, palaces & temples.

En route visit **Ranakpur**, renowned for some marvelously carved Jain temples in marble, created in the 15th century AD during the reign of Rana Kumbha. **Overnight stay at hotel.**

Day 09: Udaipur

After spending a comfortable night in the hotel, we get ready to explore Udaipur and its vicinities. Termed as one of the most romantic cities of India, Udaipur is rich in every sense. Its City Palace gives you an opportunity to unearth beauty in its entirety. There remains much more on travelling charts such as Jagdish Temple, Saheliyon ki Bari, and Shilpgram Art Fair.



Day 10: Udaipur – Ajmer

The city of Ajmer surrounds the gorgeous lake of Ana Sagar, which is visible from almost everywhere in the city. Since it's a place of terrific Islamic history and heritage, you will come across a flurry of shops selling religious souvenirs or just fresh meat. You can park your vehicle by the main entrance of the lake and go inside to relax for a while. There is also a public boat that takes you till a small island in the middle of the lake and back for a meagre ticket price. Later you can also visit the magnificent Jain Temple, which is royal golden in colour. Here you

can experience the life and times of a completely different religious sect compared to the one you would have visited in the morning. Also, Ajmer's *paani puri* is famous far and wide, so you know what you need to try while loitering around. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 11: Ajmer-Pushkar

After breakfast, drive to Pushkar (283 kms)

Arrive Pushkar by the evening. You can enjoy the beautiful markets of Pushkar in the evening. Pushkar is one city in India that everybody is cognizant of and wishes to visit someday. This sacred city of Hindus is only 10 km from the city of Ajmer in Rajasthan.

The city of Pushkar is comfortably settled between hills from tri-directions and the magnificent golden desert form the remaining. Though the climatic variations border the extreme ranges as is the true for any desert the always city is abuzz with activities (Festivals, Fairs, Safaris, pilgrimages etc.) throughout the year. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 12: Pushkar - Jaipur

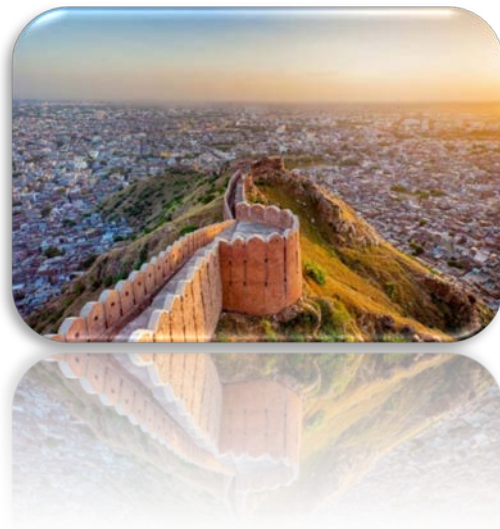
Breakfast at the hotel. After breakfast, explore the beautiful Brahma Temple.

After the visit, proceed to Jaipur & transfer to hotel.

Popularly known as **Pink City**, the flamboyant & colorful capital of Rajasthan. With its rich & colorful past, resplendent with tales of valour & bravery, it is now one of the most important heritage cities in India. The city was founded in 1728 by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II, the ruler of Amber. It remains the only city in the world symbolizing the nine divisions of the universe, through nine rectangular sectors. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 13: Jaipur

Morning enjoy full day guided city tour enjoy city tour visiting **Amber Fort with Elephant ride**; the palace complex which stands to this date was commenced under the reign of Raja Man Singh. The, **City Palace**, a perfect blend of Rajasthani & Mughal architecture. **Jantar Mantar**, the Solar Observatory, an astronomical treasure house, with solar devices that give accurate predictions till date. **Hawa Mahal** (Palace of Winds), a five-storied structure of pink sandstone. It was built in year 1799 so that veiled royal women could peer down unseen by the world through its 593 stone Jharokas (mini windows). **Overnight stay at hotel.**



Day 14: Jaipur - Agra via Fatehpur Sikri

Morning proceeds to **Agra**, en route visit **Fatehpur Sikri**, the political capital of India's Mughal Empire under Akbar's reign, from 1571 until 1585, when it was abandoned, ostensibly due to lack of water. **Overnight stay at hotel.**

Day 15: Agra – Delhi

Morning visit **Taj Mahal**, symbol of eternal love, which stands on the banks of River Yamuna. It was built by the 5th Mughal emperor, Shah Jehan in the year 1631 in memory of his wife, Mumtaz Mahal. It was completed in 22 years. Also visit **Agra Fort**, taken over from the Lodhis

by the Mughal Emperor Akbar in the late 16th century. The Fort can be more accurately described as a walled palatial city. It was built from red sandstone, often inlaid with white marble & intricate decorations. Later proceeds to Delhi & transfer to your hotel. **Overnight stay at hotel.**

Day 16 : Delhi

Morning enjoy full day city tour visiting **Old Delhi**, the 17th century walled city of Shah Jehanabad. **Jama Masjid**, the principal mosque of Old Delhi. Built in the year 1656 AD by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, it is the largest & best known mosque in India. Later enjoy **rickshaw ride** through Chandi Chowk, the old marketplace of Shah Jahanabad now a picturesque bazaar to reach **Red Fort**, built in the year 1648 by Shah Jahan. New Delhi visit includes **Raj Ghat, India Gate, and President House**. Also visit **Humayun's Tomb**, memorial of Mughal Emperor Humayun, built in the year 1562. The complex is a **World Heritage Site** & the first example of this type of Mughal architecture in India. **Qutub Minar**, built in the year 1206 by Qutub-ud-din Aybak. It is the tallest (72m) brick minaret in the world, an important example of Indo-Islamic Architecture, and after that in evening drop at Airport or Railway station for your next onward Journey.