

ITINERARY

Destinations Covered: -Delhi-Agra-Varanasi-Bodhgaya-Patna-Gorakhpur- Lumbini--
Balrampur-Lucknow-Delhi

Duration: -12 Nights / 13 Days

Day 01: Arrive Delhi-Arrive Delhi.

Meeting and transfer to Hotel Park or similar. Afternoon, lunch followed by city tour, visiting Laxmi Narayan Temple, Hanuman Mandir, India Gate. National Museum, Humayun's Tomb and Qutub Minar. Dinner and overnight at hotel.

Day 02: Delhi/Agra

Transfer to railway station for train to Agra Shatabdi Express. Breakfast on train. Transfer to Hotel Clarks Shiraz or similar. After check-in and lunch, city tour visiting Taj Mahal built in 1652 by the Moghul Emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal. Agra Fort - built by four successive emperors. Within its walls is the Moti Masjid - the largest pure marble mosque in the world; the Tomb of Itmad-Ud-Daullah, father of Empress Noor Jahon and a noted general in Emperor Akbar's army. Dinner and overnight at hotel.

Day 03: Agra/Varanasi

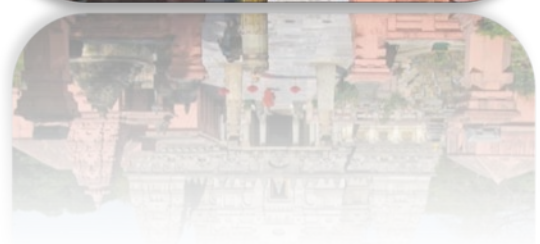
After breakfast depart by air Varanasi and you will meet our representative at airport . After lunch at hotel an excursion to Sarnath (10kms/0.25hr). At the sacred Buddhist Centre, the Dhamek Stupa marks the spot of Buddha's first sermon and Chakrama, where Buddha walked in meditation. Dinner & overnight at Varanasi hotel.

Day 04: Varanasi

Early morning, a boat-ride on the River Ganges to see the sunrise and visit the bathing Ghats. Return to hotel for breakfast. Half-day city tour visiting Kashi Vishwanath Temple - the most sacred shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva, New Vishwanath temple - with the whole Gita engraved on its marble walls, Tulsi Manas Mandir - with text of Ram Charit Manas engraved on its walls and Banaras Hindu University. Dinner & overnight at Varanasi hotel.

Day 05: Varanasi/Gaya

After breakfast, depart by car/coach to Gaya, carrying our packed lunch. Check-in at Hotel Siddhartha International. Dinner and overnight at hotel.



Day 06: Gaya/Bodhgaya/Gaya

After breakfast, drive by car/coach to Bodhgaya, the Mecca of Buddhism (10kms/1/2 hrs.). Full-day religious activities at the Mahabodhi Temple - where Gautama Buddha got the supreme enlightenment under a Bodhi tree 25 centuries ago. The 55m high temple is substantially the same temple that existed in the 7th century, if not earlier and has a pyramidal structure, capped by beautiful stupas. Inside the temple is a colossal gilded image of seated Buddha. Lunch at the temple. Return to Gaya for dinner and overnight at hotel.

Day 07: Gaya/Patna

After breakfast, drive to Patna by car/coach carrying packed lunch, enroute visiting Nalanda - the great Buddhist University which came-up much after Buddha passed into Mahaparinirvana; Rajgir - the town where Buddha meditated and preached. Here at Giridharakuta Hill we shall see the monastery Venuvna Vihar, built by King Bimbisara as an offering to Buddha. Also visit Karanda Tank - where Buddha used to bathe. Evening arrive Patna, visit museum & check-in at Hotel Maurya Patna or similar. Dinner and overnight at hotel.

Day 08: Patna/Gorakhpur

After breakfast, drive by car/coach to Gorakhpur carrying packed lunch. In route visit Vaishali - the town Buddha visited on three occasions and where he announced his approaching Nirvana; continuing onto Kushinagar - where Buddha passed into Mahaparinirvana. Arrive Gorakhpur, check-in at Hotel Avantika or similar. Dinner and overnight at hotel.



Day 09: Gorakhpur/Bhairawan

After breakfast, leave for Bhairawan by car/coach. On arrival, check-in and lunch at Hotel Yeti or similar. Excursion to Lumbini (45kms/1hr) - the birth place of Lord Buddha. Return to Bhairawan for dinner and overnight at hotel.

Day 10: Bhairawan/Balrampur

After breakfast, leave by car/coach for Balrampur. Inroute visit Kapilvastu - the ancient capital city of the mighty Sankya clan, where his father King Suddhodana ruled. Arrive Balrampur, check-in and lunch at Hotel Pathik or similar. Excursion to Sravasthi (6kms/0.5hr) - where Buddha confounded his critics with a million fold manifestation of himself seated on a thousand petaled lotus while fire and water emanated from his body. Back to Balrampur for dinner and overnight at hotel.

Day 11: Balrampur/Lucknow

After breakfast, leave by car/coach for Lucknow. The 18th century capital of the Nawab -Wazirs, Lucknow created by Asaf-Ud-Daullah - a great patron of art and of beautiful courtesans. On arrival, check-in at Hotel Clarks Avadh or similar. Lunch, dinner and overnight at hotel.

Day 12: Lucknow/Delhi

After breakfast, half-day city tour of Lucknow, visiting Bada Imambara - one of the most imposing of India's buildings built by Nawab Asaf-Ud-Daullah in 1784 and of great elegance where the main hall (50ft high) is the largest vaulted apartment in the world; Chhota Imambara - built some sixty years later than Bada Imambara and also known as Husainabad, is less ouster in design and contains the throne amid coloured stucco and gilt-edged mirrors; the adjoining Husainabad market famous for its gold/silver brocades and silverware; Museum and Clock Tower. After lunch, transfer to railway station for train to Delhi (Shatabdi Express), dinner on the train. Arrive Delhi and transfer to Hotel Park or similar.



Day 13: Delhi/Back Home

After breakfast, transfer to airport for flight to onward journey/back home.

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