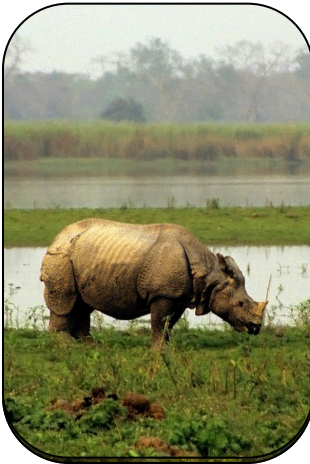


INDIA SAFARI

Wild animal parks, famous monuments, and great cities
February 28, 2016 ~ 22 Days



a world to experience



Fares Per Person:

\$10,375 double/twin

\$12,515 single



tour
a more intimate travel experience

- > Please add 0.2% GST
- > **Early Bookers:** \$400 discount on first 8 seats; \$200 on next 4
- > **Experience Points:** Earn 150 points from this tour
Redeem **150 points** if you book by **November 27**

Includes

- Transportation to/from Vancouver Airport
- Flight from Vancouver to Delhi, India
- Air transport tax and security fees
- 19 nights accommodation and hotel taxes
- All airport transfers
- Coach transportation in India for 12 days
- 11 jeep safaris for wildlife viewing
- Knowledgeable Indian guide for 18 days
- Flight from Delhi to Guwahati
- Kaziranga National Park
- Gibbon National Park
- Hoollongapar Gibbon Sanctuary
- Flight from Kolkata to Mumbai
- Gateway of India
- Crawford Market
- Prince of Wales Museum
- Flight from Mumbai to Diu
- Gir National Park
- Hathee Singh Jain Temple
- Gandhi Ashram
- Adalaj Step Well
- Flight from Ahmedabad to Nagpur
- Pench National Park
- Village tour of Pench
- Flight from Nagpur to Delhi
- Tour of Old Delhi with rickshaw ride
- Visit to an Indian family home with lunch
- Tour of New Delhi
- Raj Ghat and Jama Masjid
- Humayun's Tomb
- Qutub Minar
- Agra Fort
- Taj Mahal
- Imperial city of Fatehpur Sikri
- Tour of Jaipur with Amber Fort
- City Palace Museum and Jantar Mantar
- Flight from Delhi to Vancouver
- Gratuities for Indian guide, driver & local guides
- Luggage handling at hotels
- Wells Gray tour director throughout tour
- **38 meals:** 19 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 11 dinners

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Experience wildlife safaris, the famous monuments, and great cities!

Explore five national parks during 11 jeep safaris, and view an amazing variety of wildlife such as rhinoceros, water buffalo, elephants, Asiatic lions, tigers, gibbons, slow loris, panthers, sambar, chital, antelope, wild boars, chousingha, and chinkara. Some creatures are endangered or were nearly extinct and their numbers have been restored by these sanctuaries. Hundreds of species of birds also inhabit these protected areas. These visits are made possible by jeep safaris, accompanied by expert naturalists, and are a thrilling experience for anyone who loves wildlife and bird watching. Contrasted with these wild sanctuaries are stays in the bustling cities of Mumbai and Delhi, resplendent with monuments, fortresses, and palaces. One of the icons of India, the fabulous Taj Mahal, is visited near sunset.

This tour flies to and from Delhi via Toronto. There are also five domestic flights which minimize the time spent driving. We spend three nights in Kaziranga National Park, three nights in Gir National Park, and three nights in Pench National Park, in either luxury tents or cottages. Mingled with these remote camps are stays at five-star hotels such as Hyatt Regency in Kolkata and Ahmedabad, and Le Meridien in Delhi.

The tour will be accompanied from British Columbia by a Wells Gray tour director. A thoroughly experienced multilingual guide travels with us throughout the tour in India. Local naturalists lead the wildlife-viewing safaris and local guides conduct sightseeing tours in several cities. You will be expertly guided and well looked after!

Tour Notes:

- Although many meals have been included, beverages are seldom included with meals. Bottled water is served, but any other beverage is at your expense.
- A passport is required for this tour and must be valid for 6 months after March 21, the tour's return date. A visa is also required and application is made on a website within a month before arrival.
- Rooms for singles are often a different style or smaller size than twin rooms. Many hotels also limit the number of single rooms allocated to a group, so please book early if you prefer to travel single. Rooms for triples are not available.
- You may need a vaccination. Please visit a travel clinic two or three months before departure. Bring this itinerary and your personal vaccination record for advice.



Activity Level: This tour is rated as Activity Level 3 because tour members should be able to walk up to 3 km at an easy pace, climb many stairs without assistance, or walk on sidewalks or streets with uneven pavement. There are walking tours in the historic districts of some cities. In the safari camps, there may be a short walk from your cottage or tent to the restaurant. Jeep trips may be off-road and rough-riding, and you may need to stand in the jeep for best wildlife viewing. The round trip international flights and five domestic flights require some longer walks in the airports, and carts may not be available in some airports. This tour is not appropriate for people with canes or walkers. Prior to accepting your booking, you will be required to sign a declaration that you are capable of travelling on an Activity Level 3 tour. The tour director, Indian guide, local guides, and drivers have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance.

Itinerary

Sunday, February 28:

Meals: D

After pickups in Greater Victoria, transportation is provided to Vancouver. We stay overnight at the luxurious Fairmont Hotel in Vancouver Airport. A get-acquainted dinner is included at Globe@YVR in the hotel. Note: While it may seem unnecessary to go to Vancouver a day before the flight, delays with ferries or planes leaving the Island can occur and cause you to miss the international flight.

Monday, February 29:

Meals: B

After enjoying the Fairmont's breakfast buffet, we go downstairs and check in at Air Canada for our 10 am flight. We change planes in Toronto and continue on a non-stop flight to Delhi.

Tuesday, March 1:

We arrive in Delhi about 9 pm (12.5 hours ahead of Pacific Daylight Time). **Welcome to India!** We meet our bilingual Indian guide who accompanies us for the next 18 days. We stay at the JW Marriott Aerocity Hotel next to the airport.

Wednesday, March 2:*Meals: B,D*

Most domestic flights are on Jet Airways, India's second largest domestic carrier. This morning, we have a two-hour flight to **Guwahati** in the north-east, then continue by road about four hours to **Kaziranga National Park**. We stay three nights in cottages at Diphlu River Lodge.

Thursday, March 3:*Meals: B,L,D***Friday, March 4:***Meals: B,L,D*

Kaziranga is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, lying on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra River. More than 75% of the world's **Greater One-Horned Rhinoceros** can be found in this sanctuary. A century ago there were only 200 rhinos left and today with successful breeding there are over 2,500 in Kaziranga. Other animals that can be seen are the Asiatic Water Buffalo, Elephants, Tigers, Swamp deer, Barking deer and Hog deer, plus about 400 species of birds such as Swamp Francolin, Great Hornbill, Pallas's Fish Eagle, Pied Falconets, Greater Adjutant Stork, Long Billed Vulture, and the unique Blue-naped Pitta. We spend both days in jeeps with morning and afternoon excursions to view wildlife in their natural settings. One of the half-day safaris is devoted to **watching elephants**.

Saturday, March 5:*Meals: B,L*

The **Hoollongapar Gibbon Sanctuary** is an isolated protected area of evergreen forest located in Assam State. The sanctuary was set aside initially in 1881, then officially proclaimed in 1997 to protect India's only gibbons, the **Hoolock Gibbon**, and northeastern India's only nocturnal primate, the Bengal Slow Loris. The upper canopy of the forest is dominated by the Hollong tree while the middle canopy consists of the Nahar tree. The habitat is threatened by illegal logging, encroachment of human settlements, and habitat fragmentation. After lunch in Jorhat, we fly to **Kolkata** in West Bengal State and stay overnight at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

Sunday, March 6:*Meals: B*

The flight continues, this time across the Indian continent to the west coast and the vibrant city of **Mumbai**. With a population of 20 million, it is the largest city in India. Mumbai is a cluster of seven Islands and derives its name from Mumbadevi, the patron goddess of the koli fisher folk, its oldest inhabitants. The islands were transferred between kings and emperors for 2,000 years until the maritime trade empire of the British decided to develop the natural harbour into a city called Bombay.

In the 400 years since then, the city has grown with land reclamations which now link the original islands. Today, Mumbai is India's financial powerhouse, the nation's industrial heartland, its economic nerve centre, and a major tourist attraction for shopping, sports, theatres, and restaurants. A sightseeing tour this afternoon includes **Gateway of India** and the **Crawford Market**. The Prince of Wales Museum displays Indus Valley artifacts dating to 2000 BC, priceless Tibetan and Nepali Art, Buddhist tankha scrolls, and 2,000 miniature paintings from the various art schools of India. We stay overnight at Trident Nariman Point Hotel. It soars 35 storeys above Mumbai's waterfront and is one of the city's finest.

Monday, March 7:*Meals: B,D*

The morning is leisure time, then we go to the airport. It is an hour's flight across the Gulf of Khambhat to Diu, then we drive to **Gir National Park**. We stay three nights at the Lion Safari Camp in luxury tents which have bedroom, full bathroom, comfortable furniture, air-conditioning, electricity, and a deck.

Tuesday, March 8:*Meals: B,L,D***Wednesday, March 9:***Meals: B,L,D*

A tapestry of dry deciduous forests, acacia scrub and grassland, fed by rivers and lakes, Gir is the last abode of the **Asiatic lion** and has a thriving population of Panther (leopard), Sambar, Chital (spotted deer), Nilgai (blue bull antelope), and wild boar. Gir is also one of the major habitats of **Chousingha**, the world's only four-horned antelope, and Chinkara (Indian gazelle) that are hard to spot in the teak forests along the game drive trails. During these two days, we have four jeep safaris for awesome viewing of animals and birds.

Thursday, March 10:*Meals: B*

We drive northeast to **Ahmedabad**, arriving in early afternoon. A sightseeing tour includes the Hathee Singh Jain Temple, the Gandhi Ashram which was Gandhi's headquarters during the long struggle for Indian independence; and the Adalaj Step Well, an intricately carved Hindu 'water building' built in 1499 by Muslim King Mohammed Begda. Accommodation is at the Hyatt Regency.

Friday, March 11:*Meals: B,D*

We fly back to Mumbai at noon, then continue to **Nagpur**, and drive from there into Pench National Park. We stay three nights at Tuli Tiger Corridor in luxury cottages.

Saturday, March 12:*Meals: B,L,D***Sunday, March 13:***Meals: B,L,D*

The **Pench Tiger Reserve and Pench National Park** are nestled in the southern part of the Satpura Hills and named after the Pench River that flows through it. In addition to Tigers, the sanctuaries are famous for large herds of Gaur (Indian Bison), Chital, Sambar, Nilgai, Wild Dog and Wild Pig. The parks are the original setting of Rudyard Kipling's most famous work, *The Jungle Book*. Three jeep safaris during these two days are devoted to wildlife viewing and a tour of the nearby village of Pench is offered.

Monday, March 14:*Meals: B*

The morning is free time around the lodge, then we drive back to Nagpur in the afternoon. An evening flight takes us to Delhi where we stay two nights at Le Meridien Hotel.

Tuesday, March 15:*Meals: B,L*

We start the day with a rickshaw ride through **Old Delhi**. The Red Fort was the opulent palace of the Mughal Empire, built in 1648 and the home of emperors for 200 years. Its gate faces Chandni Chowk, the congested avenue filled with twisting lanes, small streets and crowded bazaars. We also visit Raj Ghat, the memorial site of the Mahatma Gandhi, and **Jama Masjid**, the largest mosque in India. We explore the bustling bazaars of Old Delhi and the spice shops of Khari Baoli. Lunch is in a **private home** where you meet the owner and his wife, mother and children. In the afternoon, we tour **New Delhi**, a remarkable contrast to the ancient city. In 1911, King George V announced the transfer of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi. The King's architects, Lutyens and Baker, designed and built an "Imperial City" with palatial-sized buildings set amid broad tree-lined avenues punctuated by Mughal-style gardens, parks, fountains and pools. We visit two monuments from Delhi's past, Humayun's Tomb and Qutub Minar.

Wednesday, March 16:*Meals: B*

During the morning, we drive to Agra. In the afternoon, we visit **Agra Fort**, a walled palatial city that dates from the 11th century and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The tour includes the chambers of this royal residence, occupied by the great Mughals Babur, Humayun, Akbar, Jehangir, Shah Jahan, and Aurangzeb. India was governed from Agra Fort, it contained the largest state treasury and mint, and it was visited by foreign ambassadors and the highest dignitaries. Then we check into the ITC Mughal, a five-star hotel which sprawls over 35 acres within view

of the Taj Mahal. Tonight, we have a sunset visit to that magnificent monument of love – **The Taj Mahal**. It was built by Emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his beloved queen, and was completed in 1643. What makes the Taj Mahal unique is its perfect proportions, distinct femininity, and ornamentation. Its marble exterior reflects rose and golden tints at sunrise and sunset, while it is dazzling white during the day.

Thursday, March 17:*Meals: B*

Leaving Agra, we stop at **Fatehpur Sikri**, the imperial city of the Mughal dynasty between 1571 and 1584. Admire the architectural grandeur of this deserted city with its magnificent edifices, nine imposing gateways, the palace complex, and the vast Diwan-I-Aam courtyard where petitions were heard, proclamations made, ambassadors received, and entertainment staged. We continue to Jaipur and stay two nights at Lebua Lodge.

Friday, March 18:*Meals: B*

Known as the "Pink City", **Jaipur** is the capital of the colourful state of Rajasthan and was founded in 1727. Today, Jaipur has spread far beyond the pink crenellated walls that once bounded it, and it is a fascinating city where growth, evolution and change are sustained by tradition. First, we tour the inspiring **Amber Fort**, a marvellous example of Rajput architecture with its terraces and ramparts reflected in the Maota Lake below. This afternoon, we visit City Palace Museum to see an imposing blend of traditional Rajasthani and Mughal Art, and the Jantar Mantar observatory built in 1726. Also included is a photo visit at the Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds) - a five-storey wonder with a spectacular pyramidal facade and overhanging windows with latticed screens, domes and spires.

Saturday, March 19:*Meals: B,D*

We drive back to Delhi and the afternoon is free time. A farewell dinner is a chance to reminisce about the amazing natural and city sights we have enjoyed for the past three weeks. The flight on Air Canada leaves near midnight and is non-stop to Toronto.

Sunday, March 20:

We change planes in Toronto and continue to Vancouver. Transportation is provided to your pickup point in the Victoria area.

Options

The following options will enhance your India visit. Please book by final payment:

Mohabbat The Taj show in Agra — \$70

"Mohabbat The Taj Show" is a musical extravaganza depicting the saga of the love story of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan and his most beloved wife Mumtaz, and how he immortalized his love by building Taj Mahal. The show enthralls the audience with its heart rending dialogues and dance performances. Although the dialogue is in Indian, there is simultaneous audio translation into English (and 11 other languages).

Cooking class & dinner with a local family in Jaipur — \$100

The hospitality of Indians is legendary. In Sanskrit literature, the words 'Atithi Devo Bhava' or 'the guest is truly your god' are a dictum of hospitality in India. Indians believe that they are honoured if they share their mealtimes with guests. Sai Niwas is the home of Inder Vijai and Usha Singh in Jaipur. Inder Vijai is a scion of the Rohet family, an estate of the erstwhile Marwar Jodhpur state. The family has been horse lovers for generations. Late Col. Rajendra Singhji served the Indian Cavalry and retired as the Commanding Officer of the 61st Cavalry based in Jaipur. His son Inder Vijai became a horse polo commentator and sports critic. The cuisine of the house is an interesting mix of Rajasthan and Central India. While visiting Sai Niwas, you have a cooking demonstration and hands-on experience of two dishes and chappati (Indian bread) making. The rest of the meal is prepared ahead of time, so the hosts can spend time chatting with the guests.

Tour Policies

Payments: A deposit of \$1,000 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due November 27, 2015.

Discounts: Early bookers receive \$400 discount on first 8 seats and \$200 on next 4 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after November 27.

Cancellation Policy: Up to October 26, 2015, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of \$50 per person. From October 27 to November 27, the cancellation charge is \$300 per person. From November 28 to December 29, the cancellation charge is 50% of the tour fare. From December 30 to January 18, 2016, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After January 18, there is no refund.

Fare and hotel changes: Fluctuations of the Indian currency, changes to taxes, and surcharges from airlines and other tour suppliers can occur at any time and are beyond the control of Wells Gray Tours, therefore Wells Gray Tours reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes up until the time of departure. Hotels may also change to equivalent ones.

Tour 25: This is a Tour 25 departure, meaning capacity of the tour is limited to 25 participants or less, a more intimate travel experience.

Photo Credit: Great One-Horned Rhinoceros in Kaziranga National Park (Wikipedia)

Travel Insurance: A Comprehensive Insurance policy is available through Wells Gray Tours and coverage is provided by Travel Guard. Policies purchased at deposit include a waiver of the pre-existing condition clause, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

Home pickups and dropoffs may be offered in Greater Victoria, depending on the number of people booked and the size of the chartered vehicle. Decision is made about 2 weeks before departure and you will be contacted about your pickup point and time.

E-points: This tour earns 150 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. One e-point equals \$1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until November 27.

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