

"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes."

Marcel Proust



UNIQUE RETREATS

DEPARTURE DATE: **JANUARY 31, 2025** | RETURN DATE: **FEBRUARY 20, 2025**

PRICE: **AUD 8600**

MUMBAI/JAISALMER/SAMSARA/JODHPUR/DELHI/BANGALORE/KABINI/
CHIKMAGALUR/HAMPI/HUBLI/GOA/MUMBAI



Terms & Conditions Apply. Land content only based on Twin Share. Single Supplement per person
Price: AUD 2500. International Air Fare out of Australia to India and Return not included.





Mesmerising, intoxicating, intriguing, enchanting, exasperating, chaotic India! I will leave you to decide which is the most apt description. It is a country that once experienced leaves you yearning for more; like more than ten of my past clients who have returned anywhere between 3 to 5 times. Join me on this inspiring journey; see it through the eyes of someone who is proud to call it her birth country. You will not be disappointed.

DAY 1 – 31 Jan. Sydney-Mumbai. By Air

Arrive Mumbai by International flight and check in to the hotel. Trident Bandra Kurla.

Mumbai formerly known as Bombay. It comprises of seven islands ceded to the Portuguese in 1534 AD. The Portuguese never gave “Bom Baim” or “Good Harbour” much importance and left it in charge of the religious orders – The Franciscans and the Jesuits. It is the land of opportunity and millions of people come to this city every year in search of a better future. It is a bustling city and the industrial capital of India.

DAY 2 – 1 Feb. Mumbai

Proceed on a sightseeing tour of Mumbai after breakfast. Some of the places we will visit are, The Dhobi Ghats, Prince of Wales Museum, Mani Bhavan where Mahatma Gandhi resided, Chowpatty Beach, Gateway of India.

Lunch at Leopold Café (own arrangements), a rather historic site. Leopold Café has been in existence since 1871. It was the first point of attack by the terrorists in 2008, ten people were killed here. The café has also featured in the novel “Shantaram” written by Gregory Roberts.

Overnight at the Trident, Bandra Kurla. Meals B & D.

**DAY 3 – 2 Feb. Mumbai – Jaisalmer. By Air: 6E-5142
Departure 0920hrs/Arrival 1120 hrs. Jaisalmer-Samsara – Surface**

A fairly early start to the day. Transferred to the airport for a flight to Jaisalmer. On arrival in Jaisalmer, proceed on a brief city tour.

Jaisalmer, also known as “The Golden City” was founded in 1156. It is situated in the heart of the Thar Desert. On completion of the city tour, we drive (approx. 3 hrs) to Samsara, an oasis located in the sand dune region of Rajasthan. Overnight Samsara Resort and Camp. Meals: D

DAY 4 – 3 Feb. Samsara

Proceed on a morning safari by Jeep to get a glimpse of rural Rajasthan (approx. 1-1.30 hrs) In the evening, join a village walk (1 hr approx.), followed by a campsite dinner. Overnight Samsara. Meals: B, L, D.

DAY 5 – 4 Feb. Samsara-Jodhpur. Surface.

After breakfast, leave by coach for Jodhpur.

Jodhpur, also known as the “Blue City” is the gateway to the Thar Desert. It is dubbed “The Blue City as most of the houses are painted a shade of indigo. It is home to one of the largest forts in India, the 15th century Mehrangarh Fort. Overnight Hotel Daspan Meals; B & D

DAY 6 – 5 Feb. Jodhpur

After breakfast, attend an interactive workshop on Bandhani, the art of tie and dye. Bandhani is a very old art and dates back to the Indus Valley Civilisation. Get an opportunity to meet the family involved with this art for more than 400 years.

Learn about the traditional and colourful methods and the skill that is required to excel in the decorating technique.

This will be followed by a city tour that includes a visit to Mehrangarh Fort (Citadel of the Sun). After lunch, do a walking tour of the market. This will include a visit to Bibaji Churiwala, a speciality crystal bangle shop. Overnight Hotel Daspan Meals B & D

DAY 7 – 6 Feb. Jodhpur – Delhi by air: AI 476 Departure 1500 hrs Arrival 1610 hrs.

After breakfast, transferred by coach to Jodhpur Airport. On arrival in Delhi, met and travel by coach to your hotel. Overnight: Hotel Suryaa. Meals: B & D. Alternate Hotel Udman. Delhi is India’s capital and a major gateway to the country. It combines the ancient with the modern. Amidst the skyscrapers spiralling above the city, the remnants of a bygone era, in the form of its many monuments, stand as silent reminders to the city’s ancient legacy. The first impression of any visitor is of a spacious garden city, tree-lined with several parks.

DAY 8 – 7 Feb. Delhi

Start the day with a Laughter Yoga session in Lodhi Garden. Laughter Yoga originated in India in 1995 with just five people. Today it is a global phenomenon with over 6000 clubs in 60 countries.

This will be followed by city tour of Delhi. Some of the sites to be visited will be Humayun’s Tomb, the Qutb Minar. Also included will be a visit to Khan Market. Overnight Hotel Suryaa. Meals: B & D.

DAY 9 – 8 Feb. Delhi

Today you have a choice of two options – a visit to the Taj Mahal in Agra or joining a Five Senses Tour of Delhi.

You will need to advise us prior to making your final payment in Australia, as you will be charged accordingly.

The 5 Senses Tour acquaints you with the true heart of Delhi. It includes a selection of experiences that will familiarise you with Delhi’s rich cultural history.

Day trip to Agra to see the Taj Mahal and Agra Fort: Board a coach for the drive to Agra (approx.. 4 hours). On arrival in Agra, visit the Taj Mahal and the Agra Fort. This will be followed by lunch (own arrangements). After the sightseeing, drive back to Delhi. Overnight Hotel Suryaa. Meals B & D

DAY 10 – 9 Feb. Delhi – Bangalore. By air. 6E-6608 departure 0930hrs/Arrival 1220 hrs

Board a coach for the airport. On arrival met and transferred to Hotel Fortune Select JP Cosmos.

Bangalore or Bengaluru which means “Town of Boiled Beans” derived its name from a legend where an old woman served beans to a lost Hoysala King. It has a pleasant climate the year round. As the hub of India’s IT industry, it is often called ‘India’s Silicon Valley’. It is also known as the “Garden City”.

In the afternoon, proceed on a city tour of Bangalore visiting the brilliantly painted and carved summer palace of Tipu Sultan, the Bull Temple with its monolithic bull statue and drive past the magnificent Neo-Dravidian structure, Vidhana Soudha, the government secretariat and legislative assembly. Overnight Fortune Select JP Cosmos. Meals: B & D

DAY 11 – 10 Feb. Bangalore – Kabini. Surface (approx. 5 hrs)

After breakfast proceed to visit the Lalbagh Botanical Gardens. The Gardens were commissioned by Hyder Ali in 1760 and finished by his son Tipu Sultan. Return to the hotel and then proceed to Kabini. Lunch enroute at own cost.

Resting on the banks of the mighty River Kabini, the Kabini Forest Reserve (or the Kabini Wildlife Sanctuary) is a vast expanse of unspoiled wilderness. Encompassing forestland, waterbodies, and steep fertile valleys, this extraordinary reserve forms the south-eastern section of the Nagarhole National Park and is home to the world's largest population of Asiatic elephants (estimated at around 6,000). Visitors are also likely to spot a number of endangered and rare animal species including, among others, leopard, tiger, panther, sambhar, spotted deer, python, sloth bear, cheetah, crocodile, and over 250 species of birds. Overnight: Red Earth. Meals B & D

DAY 12 – 11 Feb. Kabini

Start the day with an early morning boat safari on the River Kabini. Breakfast will follow on completion of the boat ride. There will be a Jeep Safari in the evening through the Nagarhole National Park. Overnight Red Earth. Meals B, L & D.

DAY 13 – 12 Feb. Kabini – Chikmagalur. Surface (Approx. 5 hrs)

On completion of breakfast, board the coach for the drive to Chikmagalur. Enroute visit Belur and Halebidu.

Belur - Situated on the banks of River Yagachi. It once served as the capital of the mighty Hoysala Empire. Its most famous landmark is the intricately carved Chennakeshava temple that exemplifies the perfection of Hoysala artistry.

Halebidu - located about 17km from Belur, was the ancient capital of the Hoysalas (1006 AD-1346 AD) who ruled over much of South India for over two centuries. It is home to the bewitchingly adorned Hoysaleswara temple that ranks amongst the largest Shiva temples in the country and is one of the few remaining reminders of the once glorious empire that the marauding armies from north razed to the ground.

Chikmagalur is a town in Karnataka. The town is also known as 'coffee land' - being one of the largest coffee producers of the country. Overnight: The Gateway Hotel. Meals B & D.

DAY 14 – 13 Feb. Chikmagalur – Hampi. Surface (Approx. 5 hrs)

Breakfast. Commence the drive by coach to Hampi.

Hampi – a UNESCO world Heritage site is believed to be the "Kishkinda" of Ramayana times where the Monkey Kingdom existed. The place is traditionally linked with Lord Shiva and his consort Girija. The historical antiquity dates to the first and second centuries AD. Its fabulously rich princes built Dravidian temples and palaces which won the admiration of travellers between the 14th and 16th Centuries. Overnight: Royal Orchid Central Kireeti. Meals B & D.

DAY 15 – 14 Feb. Hampi

Embark on a sightseeing tour of Hampi. Explore the magical

landscape of what was once the second largest city in the world at the end of the 15th century. There is something magical about Hampi: atmospheric ruins, frozen in time, a surreal landscape of huge boulders stacked in impossible formations and emerald green paddy fields. Visit its stunning temples; listen to the myths and legends; take a coracle ride on the river Tungabhadra to arrive at hidden shrines. Enjoy the stunning sunsets and take some great photographs. Overnight Royal Orchid Central Kireeti. Meals B & D.

DAY 16 – 15 Feb. Hampi – Hubli. Surface (Approx. 3.30 hours)

Breakfast. For those thrill seekers, you do have the option of Hot Air Ballooning. Soar to 2000 feet and revel in a bird's-eye view of the Vijayanagara empire. Begin your day with the breathtaking sunrise, set against the backdrop of Hampi's magnificent monuments. If you decide on this option, payment for this will have to be made in Australia.

Hubli is a major city in the state of Karnataka in Southern India. This historic city was known as Raya Hubli and as Elaya Puravada Halli during ancient times. The city morphed into an important commercial centre for trade in cotton and iron during the reign of the Vijayanagara empire. Overnight: The Gateway Hotel Lakeside. Meals: B & D

DAY 17 – 16 Feb. Hubli-Goa. Surface (Approx. 4 hours)

Breakfast. Board the coach for the drive to Goa. Check into De Mandarin. Meals: B & D

Goa Dourado (Golden Goa), exotic and beautiful, where time stands still. The earliest historical reference to Goa comes in 300 BC as part of the Mauryan Empire. Goa was conquered by the Portuguese under Alfonso de Albuquerque in 1510 and remained under Portuguese rule until the year 1960.

DAY 18 – 17 Feb. Goa

Breakfast. Proceed on a sightseeing tour of Goa, starting with a visit in Old Goa to the Bom Jesu Basilica where the mortal remains of St Francis Xavier are enshrined in a silver casket. A few more churches and temples will be visited; the tour finishes with a visit to Panjim, Goa's capital. Overnight De Mandarin. Meals B & L

DAY 19 – 18 Feb. Goa

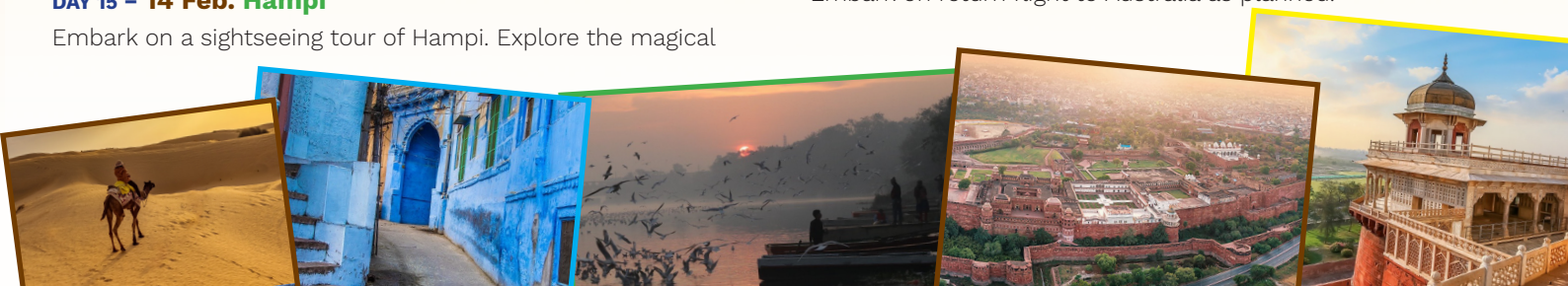
After breakfast proceed for Chorao Island Tour.

- Ferry ride to Chorao island – hop on a ferry to get to the Island
- Devaki Krishna Temple visit – visit one of the rarest temples of India
- Boat ride through the mangroves – the boat ride will introduce you to different bird species of the island
- Fishing and Crab catching experience – do it Goan style, fishing being one of the occupations
- Walk in the spice farm – get introduced to the beauty of the nature locals live in
- Cooking demo at a Local Goan House – taste a range of local Goan dishes at a Kulhaghar and Home
- Lunch Buffet at a Local Goan Home – Indulge in an exquisite spread of Goan food at a local Goan House!

Overnight De Mandarin. Meals: B & L

DAY 20 – 19 Feb. Goa – Mumbai. By AI 644 Departure 1525 hours. Arrival 1640 hours

Breakfast. Board a coach for the departure flight to Mumbai. Embark on return flight to Australia as planned.



OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS

Day Trip to Agra: AUD 214.00 (4-5 passengers) AUD240.00 (6-9 passengers)

5 Senses Tour Delhi: AUD 205.00

Kathika Dance Experience: AUD 75.00

Hot Air Ballooning Hampi: AUD 555.00

INCLUSIONS

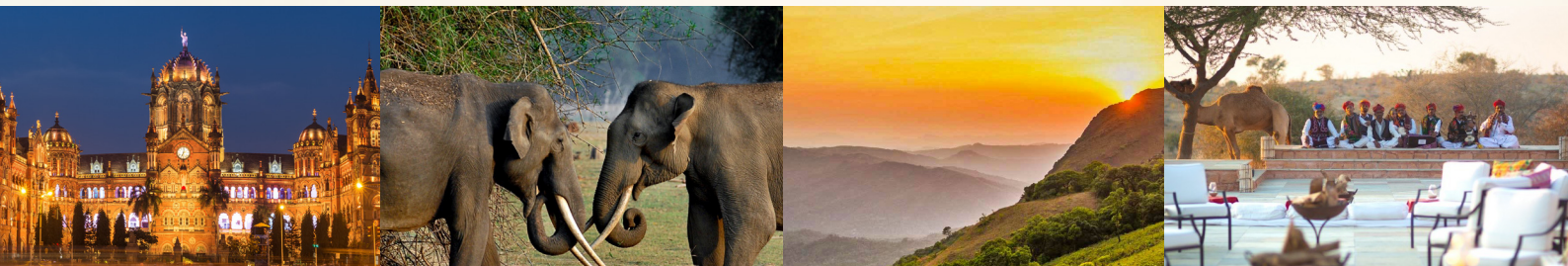
- Accommodation based on Twin Share
- Breakfast Daily
- Meals as mentioned in the itinerary
- Air-conditioned coach/car travel
- Domestic Fares/10 kgs excess baggage paid
- Tips/Porterage
- Sightseeing as mentioned

EXCLUSIONS

- Expenses of a personal nature such as visa fees, insurance
- Telephone bills, laundry
- Meals not mentioned
- Drinks – alcoholic/non alcoholic
- Medical Expenses
- Any service not included in this itinerary

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Travel insurance is compulsory. Contact the Travel Agent
- Pricing can change. Subject to currency fluctuations
- Booking early is strongly recommended
- Please check Terms and Conditions on the Travel Agent's Website
- In the event of hotels mentioned above not being available, similar category hotels will be provided
- Sightseeing programmes/Meal and domestic flights' schedule are governed by local conditions and are subject to change



CUSTOMER REVIEWS



CHRISTINE KHAN: Thank you, Marie, for the thought and effort of organizing this tour. It was an amazing experience which I will treasure.



MARIANA CAMPBELL: This journey was made extra special by Marie who attended to each of our needs and interests.



KYOKO COOPER: Entire tour was well planned and beautifully executed. I am so grateful that I was able to come with you to India, Marie.



ANNE CALDWELL: Marie knows India; she loves India. It is this love that drives her to ensure that all who come under her care will leave India with a positive experience.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND BOOKINGS CONTACT –

Spice Odyssey: Marie - Tel No: 0418265117 Email: info@spiceodyssey.net.au

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