



SPLENDOURS OF RAJASTHAN

Step back into a bygone era of emperors and princes in royal Rajasthan. Discover Delhi's colonial grandeur and delectable cuisine. Be awestruck by the perfect symmetry and marbled elegance of the iconic Taj Mahal.

Tailor-Made Journeys, Suggested Itineraries



India, Indian Subcontinent



9 days from AU\$6,610 pp



Private

Journey Overview

Step back into a bygone era of emperors and princes in royal Rajasthan. Discover Delhi's colonial grandeur and delectable cuisine. Be awestruck by the perfect symmetry and marbled elegance of the iconic Taj Mahal. Drink in the dusky magnificence of Jaipur's City Palace and hillside Amber Fort. Savour a sunset across the exquisite lake palaces of Udaipur, India's most romantic city. Live like a maharaja in India's most regal hotels. This is an enchanting encounter with India at its most majestic.

Journey Highlights

- See the resplendent Taj Mahal at sunset and sunrise
- Ride a cycle rickshaw through the colourful bazaars of Old Delhi
- Savour the sunset on a lake cruise in Udaipur, the 'Venice of the East'
- Discover the lesser-known wonders of Jaipur, the 'Pink City'
- Explore Udaipur's Taj Lake Palace after dark with a local historian



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Delhi

Namaste and welcome to Delhi, India's northern gateway. The city brings India's rich cultural contrasts sharply into focus, with its ruin-studded gardens, a growing contemporary art scene and world-class cuisine. On arrival enjoy a warm A&K welcome and private transfer to your hotel.

The Imperial New Delhi

Day 2: Delhi

Today, take in the sights of Old and New Delhi. Join a local expert and navigate the narrow streets of Old Delhi abuzz with daily life, visiting the Turkman Gate and the towering minarets of India's largest mosque, Jama Masjid. Weave through the colourful streets, alleyways and market stalls of Chandni Chowk on a cycle rickshaw to witness a mishmash of cultures. Take a photo stop at the Red Fort, residence of the Mughal Emperors and the seat of the Mughal capital till 1857. Gaze at the ramparts, the stage for some of India's most momentous cultural and historical events.

In New Delhi, drive down the tree-lined Rajpath (the royal path) to the 42-metre-high stone arch of India Gate, a majestic monument commemorating the contribution of Indian soldiers who laid down their lives in World War I. At the far end of the boulevard, glimpse the sprawling President's Residence, Rashtrapati Bhavan. Finish your tour at the jaw-dropping Humayun's Tomb, built in 1570 for a Mughal emperor, it was the first garden-tomb on the Indian subcontinent.

The Imperial New Delhi | Meals: B

Day 3: Delhi - Agra

Bid farewell to India's resplendent capital and travel overland to Agra, home of the Taj Mahal. Standing proud in the heart of the city, the Taj Mahal was built by Emperor Shah Jahan for his wife Mumtaz and is now the world's pre-eminent expression of passionate mourning. Check in to your hotel before heading to the former imperial city of the Mughal rulers, the heritage-listed Agra Fort. Venture within its red sandstone walls to discover a labyrinth of highly decorated palaces and ornate marble mosques built by the great Mughal emperor Akbar I. As sunset nears, watch in awe as the ivory-white marble of the Taj Mahal glistens in dramatic contrast with the changing colours of the sky. Marvel at the uninterrupted views of the Taj from your room, or from the private dining terrace.

The Oberoi Amarvilas / Meals: B

Day 4: Agra - Jaipur

Rise early to marvel at the breathtaking Taj in dawn's tranquillity. Return to your hotel for breakfast before embarking on your overland journey to Jaipur. Stop at the heritage-listed city of Fatehpur Sikri. Founded in the 16th century, its iconic fortified red sandstone buildings are regarded as Mughal Emperor Akbar's crowning architectural legacy. Enjoy lunch before a quick photo stop at the majestic Chand Baori stepwells, built over a thousand years ago and one of the largest in the world. A royal welcome awaits you at your hotel, Rambagh Palace, once a royal hunting lodge for the Maharajah of Jaipur.

Rambagh Palace / Meals: BL

Day 5: Jaipur

After a sumptuous breakfast, embark on a tour of the Amber Fort, with its distinctive Mughal architecture. Then, immerse yourself in the wonderful artworks and block prints of Anokhi Museum of Hand Printing, housed in a beautifully restored haveli (mansion), and learn the intricacies of this traditional Rajasthan craft.

Visit the City Palace and its museum which has a superb collection of Rajasthani costumes and armoury of the Mughals and Rajputs, including swords, antiques and artifacts. Then, learn about the heavens from within the Jantar Mantar Observatory packed with enormous astronomical and astrological instruments dating back to the 16th century.

Later, set out to discover the lesser-known wonders of the Pink City. Step inside lively temples to witness traditional customs, take part in a Hindu prayer ceremony, if you wish, and sip tea with the locals. Visit the ancient Vishnu temple decorated with fine frescos and mythological paintings. Enjoy a quick photo stop at Jaipur's famous, Hawa Mahal ('Palace of Winds'), with its distinctive red and pink facade with the afternoon free to explore the city at your leisure.

Rambagh Palace / Meals: B

Day 6: Jaipur

Spend your day exploring at your own pace or choose from a range of activities (additional charge).

Leave the hustle and bustle far behind as you soar above Jaipur's yawning horizons and rolling hills in an enchanting early-morning hot-air balloon flight. Spend time in the home of a noble Rajput family for an intimate cooking demonstration. Step inside Clay Botik studio for a hands-on pottery lesson with a local artist. Enjoy a delicious afternoon High Tea on the terraces and manicured lawns of your luxury property; or pay a visit to Digantar, a local school supported by A&K Philanthropy.

Rambagh Palace / Meals: B

Day 7: Jaipur - Udaipur

Transfer to the airport for your flight to Udaipur, India's most romantic city. Discover a place where cascading, whitewashed mansions sit alongside deep blue lakes and the undulating Aravalli Hills. Enjoy a regal welcome to the Taj Lake Palace, originally built on a man-made island in 1746 as the pleasure palace of Maharana Jagat Singh II.

As the sun begins to set, take a private boat ride on the shimmering waters of Lake Pichola and see the city rising majestically above the lake in the middle of the Rajasthan desert.

Taj Lake Palace / Meals: B**Day 8: Udaipur**

This morning set out on a discovery of Udaipur's distinctive palaces and architecture. Your first stop is the enormous City Palace, a flamboyant fusion of Rajasthani and Mughal styles towering over the lake. Gleaming walls, marble balconies and the spectacular Peacock Courtyard will leave you mesmerised. Then study the beautifully carved pillars and painted walls of the three-storey Jagdish Temple. Continue to Saheliyon-ki-Bari ('The Garden of the Maids of Honour') to see a lavish tribute to the 48 ladies in waiting who formed part of a royal dowry.

Spend your afternoon at leisure. This evening, let a local historian regale you with stories over a glass of wine in the Taj Lake Palace.

Taj Lake Palace / Meals: B**Day 9: Depart Udaipur**

Enjoy your final morning before transferring privately to the airport for your onwards journey.

Meals: B

Map



Accommodation

The Imperial, New Delhi



Built in 1931 by Blomfield, one of Sir Edwin Lutyen's associates, and inaugurated by Lord Willingdon in 1936, The Imperial Hotel is known for its contemporary colonial style. A New Delhi landmark, it is located on Janpath, the erstwhile Queensway, steps away from the renowned shopping district and major attractions of the city.

Magnificent in white, The Imperial Hotel is a unique blend of old and new, a successful renovation having preserved its historic features and aura. Today it is a wonderful *mélange* of Victorian, colonial and Art Deco styles. 232 beautifully appointed and spacious rooms and suites are decorated with Neo-Victorian furnishings and paintings with high ceilings and décor and design themed around the building's own contrasting architectural styles.

In the public areas stunning crystal chandeliers, sparkling marble floors, large mahogany tables and the impressive wealth of original 18th and 19th century art are a constant reminder of the elegance of the colonial era.

Why we like it

- Old-style class and an elegant Raj atmosphere
- The hotel's restaurants offer some of the best dining in New Delhi
- The Imperial Spa offers aroma therapy, Swedish massage, Shiatsu massage, body

scrubs and foot reflexology

- Specially tailored Eliza programme with unique features and benefits for single female travellers
- The huge swimming pool nestles amidst extensive grounds dotted with Royal Palms

The Oberoi Amarvilas, Agra



The Oberoi Amarvilas is recognised as the leading luxury hotel in Agra. Built in a style inspired by Moorish and Mughal architecture, the resort is a splendid display of richly detailed interiors, terraced lawns, fountains, reflection pools and pavilions with rich interiors that take you back to an era of emperors and princes.

The rooms and suites are beautifully appointed. Most feature Burma Teak flooring, teak armoires and spacious marble bathrooms with both a bathtub and a separate shower cubicle, along with a basket of Ayurvedic toiletries. Some have the added benefit of a private balcony.

The hotel's Luxury Suites are a real treat. Located on the fifth floor, they have an entrance foyer, separate living and dining rooms and a spacious bedroom with a four-poster bed. Each suite has two private open-air terraces, both offering splendid views of the Taj Mahal.

Why we like it

- All rooms afford uninterrupted views of the Taj Mahal
- A deliciously eclectic choice of cuisine is served in the hotel's two restaurants
- The Oberoi Spa at Amarvilas offers an unmatched array of therapies, rituals and journeys designed to renew, refresh and replenish
- Set in the terraced garden, with an option of shade and open sky, the cobalt blue pool is straight from the pages of the Arabian nights

Rambagh Palace, Jaipur



This historic palace, having undergone an extensive refurbishment, exudes a regal elegance – from its antique chandeliers to the peacocks on the lawn. Rich textures, opulent furnishings and exquisite *objets d'art* abound, whilst the expansive, ornamental gardens are arranged in brilliant symmetry. The rooms were once the sanctuaries of kings, princes and their guests, and it shows. All have opulent interiors with unique themes, hand painted motif work on the walls, regal four-poster beds, walk-in wardrobes and luxurious bathrooms. The atmospheric Polo Bar serves up signature cocktails inspired by the royal sport while fine dining in Suvarna Mahal is an unforgettable experience. Signature treatments at the Jiva Spa await and there are two swimming pools to choose from.

Why we like it

- The Rambagh Palace is set in the heart of Jaipur
- Suvarna Mahal, with its gilded dining room setting and serving the finest Indian cuisine, is the pick of the five dining options
- Experience signature Jiva Spa therapies and ancient regal Indian treatments at the fairytale style spa for an impossibly lavish experience
- The hotel has both indoor and outdoor swimming pools

Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur



Wonderful in every detail, the Taj Lake Palace was built between 1743 and 1746, and was originally a lake island palace named Jag Niwas after his highness Maharana Jagat Singh II, 62nd successor to the royal dynasty of Mewar. Not surprisingly, it is a truly regal building, its gleaming, white marble façade rising from the surface of the lake topped by domes, arches and gilded detailing.

Inside, the public areas combine breathtaking views with eye-catching interiors. Intricately carved, pure white walls and ceilings stand above tiled floors - all punctuated by fountain courtyards, roof terraces and secluded corners.

The rooms too are utterly palatial. With frescoes and superb original features in abundance, they showcase the finest modern craftsmanship, yet never leave their heritage behind. In truth, they have to be seen to be believed - suffice to say that, with their beautiful décor, furniture and furnishings, they are fit for royalty.

Given its tranquil location and luxurious, personalised services, Taj Lake Palace is the ideal place to end a tour of Rajasthan – or an ideal base from which to explore the region.

Why we like it

- All rooms and suites enjoy stunning views
- This hotel appears to float on the tranquil waters of Udaipur's Lake Pichola
- Fantastic location complements sublime cuisine in the four restaurants, which serve Asian, Indian, contemporary Western and Italian dishes
- Rooftop pool surrounded by sun loungers

- Jiva Spa offers signature treatments, Indian therapies, Indian aromatherapy, scrubs, wraps and beauty service

Dates & Pricing

From \$6,610 per person twin share (low season) and from \$10,220 per person twin share (high season). Solo travellers on request.

As this Tailor Made Journey can be personalised to your specific requirements, it is not available for online booking. Depending on your preferred dates and arrangements, final pricing will vary.

Please call A&K on 1300 851 800, send us a **booking enquiry** to book this journey or contact your travel advisor.

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