

ESSENCE OF NORTH INDIA

Delhi, Agra, Ranthambore National Park & Jaipur



Travelling from Delhi to Agra, then Jaipur, this 10 day, 8 night tour of the Golden Triangle and the exotic Ranthambore National Park takes you through India's most famous sights. Ride a rickshaw around Old Delhi, marvel at the Taj Mahal and discover the Pink City. You'll also spend 2 nights in Ranthambore where you can spot the Royal Bengal Tigers.

This document aims to give you all the information that you require for a smooth and comfortable trip to India. Please take the time to read this dossier and to familiarise yourself with all the aspects of our tour. It includes important information such as flight details, visa requirements and travel insurance.

Your included meal guide:

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

DAY 1: UK to Delhi

Depart London on your scheduled, overnight flight to Delhi International Airport.

DAY 2: Delhi L/D

On arrival in Delhi, you will be met by your local guide and transferred to your hotel. After settling in, a short tour of the beautifully planned city of New Delhi will follow. Offering you a taste of its imperial glory, you'll drive past the India Gate, President's House, Parliament Building and visit the Birla Temple, made purely out of 2,000 tons of Rajasthani white marble.

DAY 3: Delhi B/L/D

A full day tour of Delhi commences after breakfast, beginning with the historic Old Delhi in the morning. Lying side by side, Old Delhi dates back to the Mughal period, whilst New Delhi was built just over a hundred years ago. Travelling through the narrow and crowded streets on a rickshaw will transport you back in time, passing vibrant food markets of Old Delhi where bread makers bake delicious scented naan from the tandoor ovens and chai wallahs brew their sweet tea. A visit to the regal Red Fort gives you a sense of the lavish life once led by the former rulers before stopping for lunch in a local restaurant. Your tour will continue on to New Delhi to see the Mahatma Gandhi memorial and the 12th century Qutab Minar. Built on the foundations of Jain and Hindu temples, the complex was built in 1193 after the defeat of Delhi's last Hindu kingdom and displays fine examples of Indo-Islamic architecture as well as the tallest stone tower in India.

DAY 4: Delhi to Agra B/L/D

After breakfast you will be driven to Agra arriving at your hotel in time for lunch. Despite being a small city, Agra was once the capital of the mighty Mughal dynasty whose strength manifested itself in the huge forts and buildings built to maintain its power. During the afternoon, you will visit the vast red sandstone Agra Fort. The colossal walled city is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, built by the Mughals in 1573 and boasts gigantic pavilions, grand palaces and spectacular courtyards.

DAY 5: Agra to Ranthambore B/L/D

This magical day starts after breakfast with a tour of one of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Taj Mahal. Words do not do this remarkable palace justice; it really must be seen to appreciate its stupendous beauty. Taking 17 years and 20,000 men to build, the heartbroken Mughal Emperor Shahjahan dedicated this stunning white marble monument of love to his deceased wife to enshrine her mortal remains. Following this, you will begin your journey to Ranthambore National Park where you will spend the night.

DAY 6: Ranthambore B/L/D

Spread over 1,344 square kilometers, Ranthambore National Park is one of the biggest and most renowned national parks in Northern India. Once a famous hunting ground for the gallant rulers of Jaipur, today it is home to a variety of species including tigers, leopards, striped hyenas, jackals, jungle cats and many more. Depart your hotel for an early morning jungle safari where you may even be able to spot the elusive tiger. You will return to your hotel for breakfast and lunch with some leisure time where you can take advantage of the hotel's outdoor swimming pool. A second safari trip will follow in the afternoon to visit further areas of the park.

DAY 7: Ranthambore to Jaipur B/L/D

Today you will journey to the Pink City of Jaipur, which got its name from the distinctive earthy red coloured

buildings, painted to emulate the red sandstone architecture of the ancient Mughal cities. Lunch and dinner will be served at your hotel with the rest of the day as free time to relax or explore the largest city in Rajasthan.

DAY 8: Jaipur B/L/D

Begin your first day in Jaipur with a visit to the spectacular Amber Fort, the ancient capital of the royal family until 1728, located just 11km from Jaipur. Spanning over four huge courtyards, you will travel to the centre of the fort by either elephant or jeep, passing snake charmers, harems of the Maharajah and the Palace of Mirrors along the way which all make for a truly unforgettable morning. An afternoon city tour of Jaipur takes in the major sights including the home of the royal family of Jaipur – The City Palace and the Jantar Mantar, an astronomical observatory. Lastly, marvel at the hundreds of tiny windows on the façade of the Hawa Mahal, known to many as the Palace of Winds, where it is said that the women of the royal family could once watch the streets below without being seen.

DAY 9: Jaipur to Delhi B/L/D

The morning is left free so that after breakfast you can visit some of the local bazaars and stalls for some last minute shopping. Try the M1 Road and Chaemeliwala market for jewellery, handicrafts, textile and more, or wander the streets and sample the delicious and unique Rajasthani street food that Jaipur has to offer. You will then commence your return journey to Delhi, stopping for lunch on the way. A final farewell dinner in Delhi will bring your tour to a close, celebrated by a cultural dance show to round off this unforgettable trip.

DAY 10: Delhi to the UK or Extension B

After breakfast you will have some free time before transferring to Delhi International airport for your return flight to the UK in the afternoon, or continue on to your chosen extension.

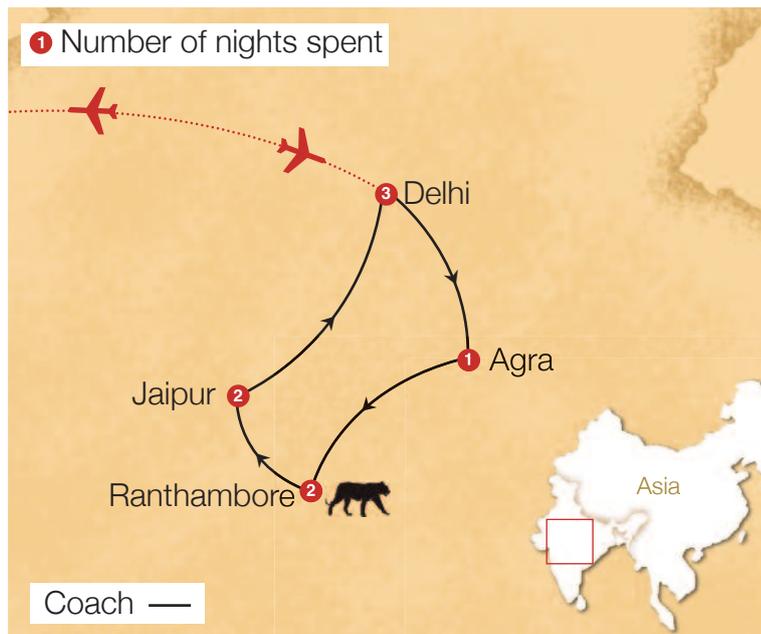
Hotel Information

Delhi (3 nights): 5★ The Park Hotel - 15 Parliament Street, New Delhi - 110 001, India, Contact number: +91 (0)11 2374 3000
Agra (1 night): 4★ Mansingh Palace - Fatehabad Road, Vibhav Nagar, Tajgana Agra, Contact number: +91 562 233 1771
Ranthambhore (2 nights): 4★ The Ranthambhore Regency - Ranthambore Road, Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan, Contact number: +91 746 222 3456
Jaipur (2 nights): 4★ Mansingh Towers - Sansar Chandra Road, Jaipur Contact number: +91 141 237 8771

All accommodation is 4★ or 5★ and features an en suite bathroom, heating, air-conditioning, satellite TV, safety deposit box and tea and coffee making facilities. Mercury Holidays has visited and inspected all of the hotels to ensure that they meet the high standards of service which we require for our clients. The hotels listed are a guide only and if the hotels detailed are not available alternatives will be used of a similar standard. Final confirmation of your hotels will be sent in a document approximately two weeks before you travel.

Meals

Breakfast is always western style and served in the hotel each morning. Lunch and dinner will be taken in local Indian restaurants. A variety of restaurants are visited giving you the chance to experience a range of dishes and flavours.



On your arrival

On your arrival in Delhi you will be met by a representative from our local agent, **Jayasree**, holding a sign displaying: "Mercury Holidays". The Mercury Holidays/India Travel Service representative will show you to your transfer vehicle. Your guide will be able to answer any queries. However, if you need to contact Jayasree during your stay the details are:

Jayasree Travels and Tours
 P.O Box 5236
 Pettah
 Thiruvananthapuram
 Kerala
 India

Emergency contact information

Please find below the emergency contact details for **Jayasree Travel and Tours**

Contact	Telephone number
Mr Pankaj Sharma	0091 995 898 8772
Mr Jagdish Nair	0091 956 208 9699
Ms Samitha	0091 974 471 3380

Visas

A visa is required for entry into India. British Citizen Passport Holders will need to obtain an e-Tourist Visa (eTV) for travel to India. We work closely with The Travel Visa Company who will be able to arrange your visa on your behalf. Please call them on 01270 250 590 and quote "Mercury Holidays". The cost of the visa is approximately £72 per person. The Travel Visa Company can only apply for this 30 days before your proposed travel date and takes around 10 working days to issue. It is only valid for a 30 day single entry stay from the date of arrival. When calling the Travel Visa Company they will advise you of any changes to the fees or the procedure, they will also advise you of all information they will require in order to apply for the visa. Alternatively you can visit The Indian Visa Application Centre in London: 142-148 Goswell Road, London, EC1B 7DU.

Insurance

You must obtain suitable travel insurance prior to departure. Mercury Holidays is partnered with Holiday Extras which offer insurance at the following prices:

Age in years	Up to 64	65-74	75-85
Up to 10 days cover	£37	£72	£104
Up to 17 days cover	£42	£79	£135

Worldwide (excluding USA)

For all persons 86 years and over, please contact us for insurance prices. Please ensure you provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number as soon as possible. Mercury Holidays will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

Health and Vaccinations

It is strongly recommended that you check the latest health recommendations for travel to India with your GP at least 4-6 weeks before travel. Alternatively up to date information can be obtained by telephoning the MASTA Travel health line on 09068 224100. Any medicines you

may need during your journey should be packed in your hand luggage. We suggest it is worth taking a few first aid supplies such as travel pills, rehydration powder, plasters, stomach settlers, mosquito repellent, antiseptic cream, aspirin etc, because these products can be more expensive abroad and familiar brands are not always available. It is not advisable to drink the tap water.

Physical Accessibility

This tour is accessible to most people with an average level of fitness and normal mobility. It involves full days of sightseeing, often on foot, and includes some climbing of stairs and getting on and off coaches. This tour is not suitable for anyone with walking difficulties.

Group Size

The minimum number of travellers in your group will be 10, and the maximum will be 40. If in the unlikely event there are less than 10 people booked on your tour date then you may be asked to change to a different date. A full refund will be made available to you should this alternative not be suitable.

Tour Guides

This is a fully escorted tour, meaning that you will be met on arrival by your national guide who will remain with you for the duration of your trip. You will also be joined by a local guide in each of the cities which you visit, ensuring that you have first-hand knowledge at all times.

Tippling

Tippling is not compulsory and is at your discretion. Should you wish to tip, this will be collected by your guide at the end of your tour for your convenience. It is asked that if you do not tip in the local currency, please do not give coins as these are difficult to exchange.

Travel Plug Adaptor

The voltage in India is 220 Volts with plugs and sockets having either grounded 3 pin connections or ungrounded 2 pin connections. Should you plan to use your own hairdryer, travel iron, video camera, battery charger, electric shaver etc, it is advisable to bring a multi-adaptor.

Currency Exchange

The currency in India is the Rupee or Rs. The Rupee is a closed currency and officially you are not allowed to take any cash out of India. US Dollars and GBP are also widely accepted in India should you wish to keep an alternative currency on you.

Personal Expenses

You will need to take some extra money with you to cover any personal purchases, such as souvenirs, laundry and extra drinks and snacks. Approximately £100-£200 per person will be sufficient for the duration of the tour.

Credit Card Information

As normal practice you will be asked for your credit card details on check-in at the hotel in order to cover any extras incurred during your stay. If you do not have a credit card you may be asked for a cash deposit. American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted in hotels.

Itinerary Changes

The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your local guide will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Some road construction and/or weather conditions may lengthen the driving times. Our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions.

What to Pack

- Sunscreen and hat in summer
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Warm clothing and thermals in winter
- Camera and charger
- An electric plug converter
- Loo paper for public WCs
- Binoculars

Flight and Airport Information

Your flight is to Delhi International Airport with Jet Airways (9W), departing from London Heathrow Terminal 4.

Route	Depart	Arrive	Flight Duration	Flight Number
London Heathrow - Delhi	20:50	10:40	8 hours 30 mins	9W121
Delhi - London Heathrow	13:30	17:40	9 hours 15 mins	9W122

IMPORTANT: Please note that all flight times/numbers are given for guidance and are subject to change. Final flight details will be confirmed on your e-ticket and final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

Baggage Allowance

Each passenger is entitled to 23kg of hold luggage, however weight restrictions will be finalised on your e-ticket receipt. Should you wish to take additional luggage you will need to pay extra at check-in. Check-in should be at least 3 hours before departure. Checked baggage allowance may vary. Please refer to the bottom right of your E-ticket receipt for the correct baggage allowance. For example, if it shows "20k" this means your allowance is 20kg; or "1PC" means One Piece not exceeding 23Kg. Important note: For handling purposes the maximum weight of any single piece of baggage must not exceed 32 Kgs. Please refer to the Airline's website for further details and the most up-to-date information. Hand Luggage: One piece of hand luggage with maximum total dimensions not exceeding a total of 115cm in size and 7kg in weight. IMPORTANT NOTE: If you are taking a Kerala beach stay extension, your baggage allowance on the internal flight will be 15kg, your additional allowance up to 23kg must be purchased at a cost of 300 INR (approx £3) per kilo and can only be done at the domestic ticket counter before your flight to/from Delhi.

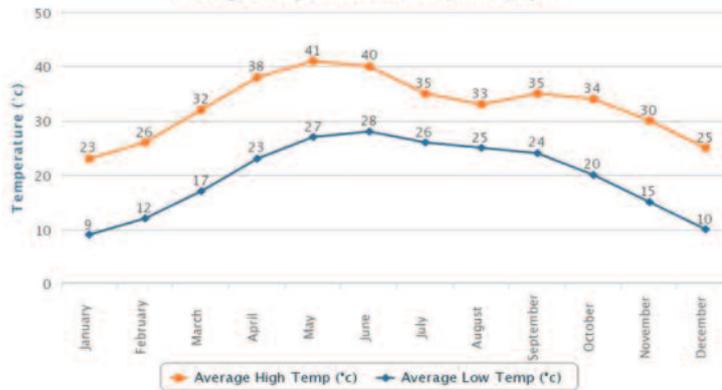
Airport Extras

If you wish to arrange Airport car parking or accommodation at preferential rates, we recommend you book this in advance with Holiday Extras on 0871 360 2000, quoting HX313.

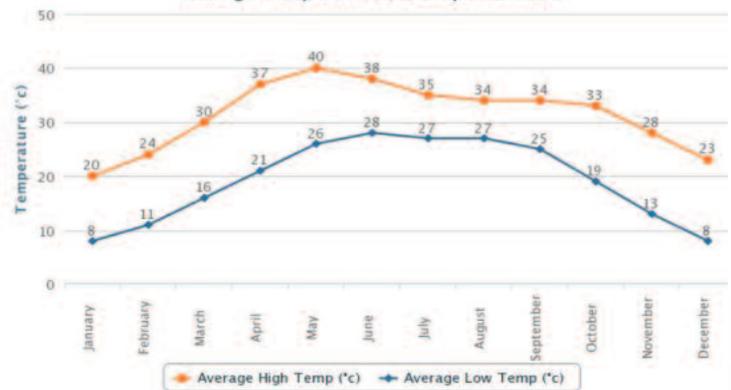
Weather and Climate

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.

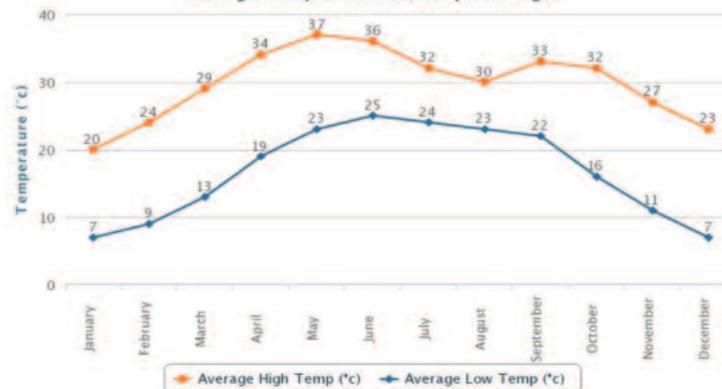
Average Temperature (°c) Graph for Jaipur



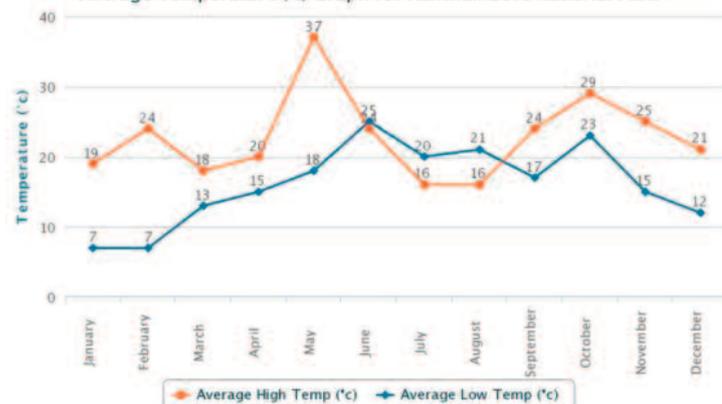
Average Temperature (°c) Graph for Delhi



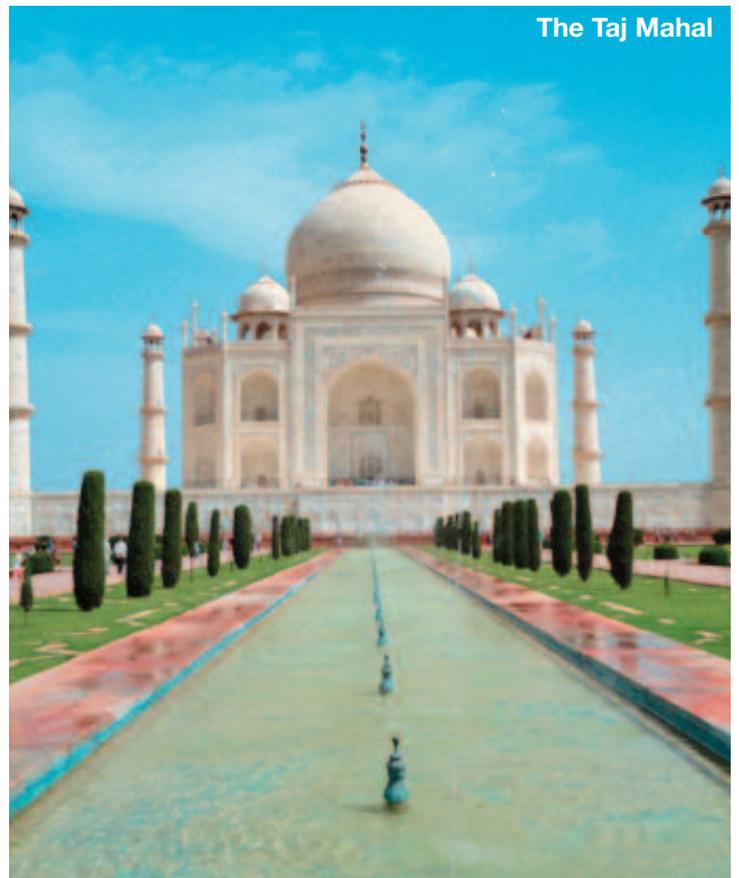
Average Temperature (°c) Graph for Agra



Average Temperature (°c) Graph for Ranthambore National Park



The Taj Mahal



KERALA BEACH STAY



Extend your trip to India with a 4 night stay on Kerala's beautiful coast. Famous for its extensive backwaters and stunning beaches, tropical Kerala is the perfect destination to relax, unwind and slip into the local rhythm of life.

This document aims to give you all the information which you will require during your Beach Stay add-on in Kerala.

Your Kerala beach stay

DAY 10: Delhi to Kovalam B/D

Depart Delhi in the morning for your flight to Trivandrum (via Mumbai) where you will be met and transferred to your chosen resort in Kovalam.

DAY 11-13: Kovalam

Enjoy three full days at your leisure, the perfect opportunity to unwind on the beach, bathe in the pool and reflect on your tour memories.

DAY 14: Kovalam to the UK

Depart after breakfast for your flight to the UK via Delhi.

Hotel Information

- **5★ Uday Samudra Beach Hotel on Half Board** - GV Raja Road, Sumdra Beach, Kovalam, Thiruvananthapuram, 695 527, +91 471 2481654
- **5★ Vivanta by Taj Kovalam on Bed & Breakfast** - 1/404, Kumarakom, Kottayam, 686563, +91 481 2525711
- **3★ Isola Di Cocco on Full Board** - Pozhiyur Post Office, Poovar, Kerala, +91 471 221 0008

Your chosen hotel and board basis will have been confirmed at booking. Please talk to our reservations department should you need any further information.

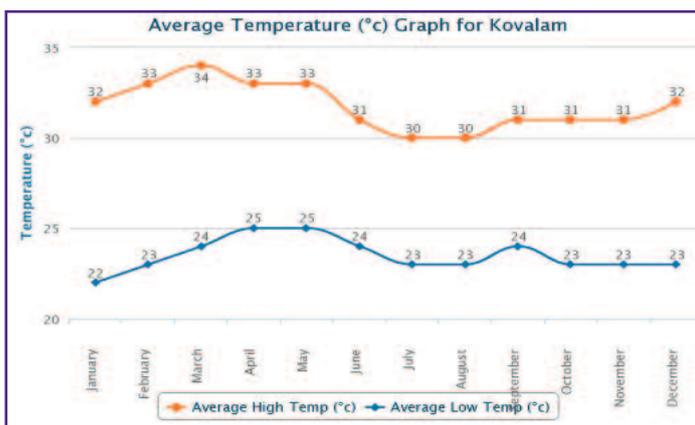
Tour Guides

You Beach Stay extension is **not escorted**. You will be transferred to your hotel after the Essence of North India tour and will receive transfers to the airport at the end of your stay.

Personal expenses

You will need to take some extra money with you to cover any personal purchases, such as souvenirs, laundry, drinks, snacks and any meals.

Weather and Climate



Flight Information

Route	Depart	Arrive	Flight Duration	Flight Number
Delhi-Mumbai	07:05	09:10	2 hours 5 mins	9W332
Mumbai-Trivandrum	10:20	12:30	2 hours 10 mins	9W388
Trivandrum-Delhi*	06:05	10:35	4 hours 30 mins	9W2824
Delhi-Heathrow	13:30	17:40	9 hours 40 mins	9W122

IMPORTANT: Flight times/numbers are for guidance only & are subject to change. Each passenger is entitled to 23kg of hold luggage, however weight restrictions will be finalised on your e-ticket receipt. Should you wish to take additional luggage you will need to pay extra at check-in. Check-in should be at least 3 hours before departure. Checked baggage allowance may vary. Please refer to the bottom right of your E-ticket receipt for the correct baggage allowance. For example, if it shows "20k" this means your allowance is 20kg; or "1PC" means One Piece not exceeding 23Kg. Important note: For handling purposes the maximum weight of any single piece of baggage must not exceed 32 Kgs. Please refer to the Airline's website for further details and the most up-to-date information. Hand Luggage: One piece of hand luggage with maximum total dimensions not exceeding a total of 115cm in size and 7kg in weight. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** your baggage allowance on the internal flight from/to Delhi will be 15kg, your additional allowance up to 23kg must be purchased at a cost of 300 INR (approx £3) per kilo and can only be done at the domestic ticket counter before your flight to/from Delhi. *Please note this flight will touch down in Bengaluru.