



# TourMagination

discovery+community

## Culture and Community in India

October 28 – November 6, 2020

Leader: Jim Pankratz



Taj Mahal. Photo credit: Ahmad Dalloul



Indian woman. Photo credit: Al Doerksen

*Experience the vitality and wonder of India with a group of cultural adventurers and spiritual travellers. Engage with people and religions. Explore cultures, history, art, and landscapes. Marvel at the beauty of the Taj Mahal in Agra, the serenity of nature in the Keoladeo National Park, and the grandeur of the forts and palaces in Delhi and Jaipur. Delight in the tapestries of colour and intermingling fragrances in markets, train stations, and temple courtyards. Tour leader Jim Pankratz will guide this unique adventure. Jim was the Dean, and later Interim President, of Conrad Grebel University College. Jim did research in Calcutta for 2 years, has led several tours of India, and taught Indian history, culture, and religion.*

## Itinerary

### **Wednesday, October 28 Delhi**

Arrive in Delhi, a city with a vibrant mix of old and new—teeming with bazaars, stately British boulevards, Mughal palaces, and more. Transfer to your hotel and meet your travelling companions. If time allows, take a walking tour of the nearby area.

### **Thursday, October 29 Delhi**

Visit the Raj Ghat, a cremation site for major Indian leaders including Mahatma Gandhi. Then tour the National Gandhi Museum and attend a presentation about Gandhi, to learn more about this prominent leader's use of nonviolent action. Wind through the alleys of Chandni Chowk, one of India's oldest and busiest bazaars, by bicycle rickshaw and on foot. Visit the Jama Masjid, one of India's largest mosques, and learn from an expert about Muslim worship and its history in India.

### **Friday, October 30 Delhi**

See Delhi's Parliament Buildings and take a short walk through the lush Mughal Gardens. Visit the Sri Bangla Sahib Gurudwara, a Sikh place of worship, to learn about the Sikh faith. The langar, or Sikh community kitchen, provides a free meal to anyone who enters—expressing the Sikh ethics of equality, community, and peace. Next, learn about the

Baha'i faith at the Lotus Temple, one of only ten Baha'i houses of worship in the world. Shop for beautiful regional crafts during free time at the Connaught Place craft emporiums. Stop at Jantar Mantar, an 18<sup>th</sup> c. astronomical observatory.

### **Saturday, October 31 Vrindavan / Mathura**

Depart Delhi to visit Vrindavan and Mathura, two neighbouring towns where, in Hindu belief, Krishna was born and grew up. These towns are important pilgrimage destinations for Hindus. Learn about Hinduism from a local expert. Visit the Mathura Museum and admire ancient art from Mathura's past, reaching back 3,000 years. Stroll along the Yamuna River, a sacred tributary of the Ganges.

### **Sunday, November 1 Agra**

On an early-morning boat ride along the Yamuna River, see devotees in the water along the river banks. Continue to Agra, where you may stop at the striking tombs of the Mughal emperor Akbar and of Itmad-ud-Daulah. The tomb of Itmad-ud-Daulah is sometimes called a first draft of the Taj Mahal, as it represents a transition away from the older style of Akbar's tomb. Visit Agra Fort, a massive complex enclosing the 16<sup>th</sup> century Mughal imperial city. Finally, arrive at the famed Taj

Mahal—a structure of incredible beauty that will not disappoint! Take a guided tour, then enjoy free time to further admire the Taj and its surroundings.

**Monday, November 2 Keoladeo National Park**  
Travel from Agra to the Keoladeo National Park, a protected park with diverse ecology which acts as a sanctuary to many birds, animals, and flowering plants. It is one of the richest bird habitats in the world and is a World Heritage Site. Explore the park on guided walks where you're sure to see many natural wonders.

**Tuesday, November 3 Abhaneri / Jaipur**  
If you're a dedicated birder who can't get enough of this park, rise for an early morning guided walk to catch sight of a few more of the 366 bird species who make their home here. Then you're on the road again travelling further into the desert province of Rajasthan. In Abhaneri, visit a thousand-year-old step well—Chand Baori, considered one of the most beautiful step wells in India. Wells like this were built to provide water in the arid climate. Continue to Jaipur, India's first planned city—also known as the Pink City due to its strikingly coloured buildings. After a brief city tour, visit a local family and get to know more about Indian culture and

#### Fare per person:

CAD: Double Occupancy \$3,339; Single Supplement \$757

USD: Double Occupancy \$2,569; Single Supplement \$549

#### Fare includes

- Hotel accommodations
- Group airport transfers
- All land transportation within the tour
- All breakfasts, all dinners
- Expert local tour leader & local guides
- All entrance fees included in itinerary
- Gratuities for drivers, guides, and group meals

#### Fare excludes

- International airfare
- Airport transfers if separate from group
- Lunches
- Beverages with meals (other than water)
- Tourist visa
- Travel medical (out-of-country emergency) and cancellation/interruption insurance

diversity. As dinner is prepared, learn about the staples of Indian cuisine, then share a meal together in the family home.

**Wednesday, November 4 Jaipur**  
The Amber Fort, perched on a hill outside of Jaipur, combines impressive fortifications with beauty and charm. As you tour the structure and surrounding ruins, learn about its history. Back in Jaipur, spend time shopping and people watching as you visit the oldest and busiest of markets in the walled city at Johori Bazaar, a true feast for the senses. Then you'll have free time to explore further on your own.

**Thursday, November 5 Delhi**  
After driving back to Delhi, visit the Gandhi Smriti, a memorial and information centre at the site of Gandhi's death. Explore the Lodhi Garden with its beautiful landscaping surrounding ancient tombs, or perhaps visit the nearby Khan Market—a popular shopping destination. Over dinner together, reminisce and reflect on your experiences.

**Friday, November 6**  
Say farewell to your travelling companions as you depart for home, filled with memories of all you've seen in the incredible land of India.

#### Insurance

Travel medical (out-of-country emergency) and cancellation/interruption insurance are not mandatory but are highly recommended.

#### Payments

Rates shown are in effect 06/19. Though every effort is made to maintain established prices, TM reserves the right to adjust prices should it become necessary. The price is guaranteed when paid in full. We accept cheque and credit card payments. Credit card payments are charged a 3% fee.

Important note: Costs could increase if you sign up less than 90 days before a tour begins

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