

MAHARAJAS EXPRESS

DAY 1

Welcome aboard the Maharajas' Express.

This afternoon, assemble at 1400 hours at The Taj Mahal Palace and Tower, Mumbai. Here, you will complete your registration and check in formalities for the Maharajas' Express.

After, proceed to the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus.

On arrival you will board the Maharajas' Express and will be greeted with a welcome drink.

The Maharajas' Express departs Mumbai at 1640 hours and you will be travelling to Ajanta.

Overnight on the Maharajas' Express.

DAY 2

AJANTA

Today you will reach Ajanta Caves near Aurangabad.

The Ajanta caves consist of 30 Caves including the unfinished ones, which date from 200 BC to 650 AD. These caves are situated about 104 km away from Aurangabad.

These Buddhist cave temples and monasteries are cut from the rocks and volcanic lava of the Deccan in the forest ravines of the Sahyadri hills and are set in beautiful sylvan surroundings.

They were discovered accidentally by a British Captain, John Smith in 1819, on a hunting expedition.

The Ajanta caves provide a unique combination of architecture, sculpture and paintings. The caves are mainly known for their exquisite frescoes and sculptures, depicting scenes from life of Buddha.

Return onboard for the Maharajas' hospitality and the train will continue for Udaipur.

Breakfast, lunch & dinner onboard.

Overnight on the Maharajas' Express.

DAY 3

UDAIPUR

This morning wake up with a view of the picturesque region of Mewar from your window, admiring the magnificent landscape of the Aravali Hills.

Udaipur is popularly referred to as the Venice of the East with an enchanting image of white marble palaces, placid lakes and green hills.

Udaipur is one of the India's greatest destination with the Picturesque havelis, ghats and temples along Lake Pichola and the lively bazaars.

Begin your day with a visit to the City Palace, the largest palace complex in Rajasthan, with its scalloped arches, fretted balconies, and cupolas. The building is a unique depiction of the architectural and artistic evolution of Mewar through centuries. The City Palace has always been a self-sufficient developing centre within itself and shall continue to grow into an ideal prototype of a living palace complex.

Later visit the Crystal Gallery. The Udaipur Collection of crystal is one of the largest and most complete collections of Osler cut glass in existence. In both diversity of objects and in the quality and grandeur of the included pieces, it holds a unique place in the decorative art world. The highlight of the gallery is a jewel studded carpet, embodying peerless class.

Experience the Royal hospitality at Durbar Hall and relish sumptuous lunch over a spread of International cuisine.

Following lunch, you can either:

- Return to the train for a relaxed afternoon on board
- Enjoy spa facilities in a five star hotel
- Visit the Vintage Car collection of the Royal Family
- Go on a private shopping tour

Later in the afternoon, you may if you wish, proceed for a 'Walking Tour' through the Old Market of Udaipur.

Return to the Maharajas' Express and continue journey towards Jodhpur.

Breakfast and dinner on board.

Overnight on the Maharajas' Express.

DAY 4

JODHPUR

This morning, the Maharajas' Express enters the Marwar region.

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast on board as your train passes through some of the picturesque landscapes of the Thar Desert, arriving into the Blue City of Jodhpur.

This morning, you can either:

- Have a morning at leisure on board
- Participate in an optional village safari, where you will have the opportunity to visit a Bishnoi village, considered to be the oldest living environmentalists in the world
- Enjoy spa facilities at a five star hotel

Lunch will be on board.

After lunch, disembark to explore the erstwhile capital of Marwar, Jodhpur. Jodhpur is famous for its magnificent forts and palaces and, is home to some of the finest architectural wonders.

Proceed on a walking tour of the Old Clock Tower market to experience the hustle and bustle of the market.

Continue to the magnificent Meherangarh Fort. The fort with the intricate latticed windows, elaborately carved panels and elegantly curved porches. Mehrangarh Fort inherits priceless jewels and a dazzling collection of arms.

Enjoy a royal evening at a Hanwant Mahal with folk dance and music and with cocktail dinner.

Return to the train and continue your journey to Bikaner.

Overnight on the Maharajas' Express.

DAY 5

BIKANER

Continue your journey through the desert. Enjoy observing the desert while having breakfast onboard as you enter Bikaner region.

Bikaner was once a major centre in the cross-desert caravan trade. Also known as Camel Country, Bikaner has the best riding camels in the world.

Bikaner's forts, palaces and temples made in red and yellow sandstone and are living reflections of its rich historical and architectural legacy.

Late morning, arrive into the desert citadel of Bikaner.

You can either:

- Relax on board
- Embark on one of the optional tours, where you will visit the Lalgarh Palace Museum displaying some fascinating exhibits on the royal heritage of Bikaner
- Take an excursion to the Karni Mata Temple in Deshnok also known as "Rat Temple"; a temple complex with hundreds of rats swarming the courtyard
- Visit the Camel Breeding Farm

Following an onboard lunch, you will disembark and proceed on a visit to the Junagarh Fort, an unassailable fortress built in 1593 AD by Raja Rai Singh.

Inside the Fort visit Diwan-i-Khas, Phool Mahal (Flower Palace), Hawa Mahal, Badal Mahal and Anup Mahal.

Participate in a camel-cart procession followed by sundowner cocktails, barbecue and a mesmerizing folk performance on the sand dunes.

After a great evening, return to the comfort of your train and embark on your onward journey to Jaipur.

Overnight on the Maharajas' Express.

DAY 6

JAIPUR

Arrive into the 'Pink City' of Jaipur. Jaipur was built by Raja Jai Singh in the 18th century and is renowned for its magnificent palaces, forts and temples.

Start your exciting tour of the pink city with a unique and enthralling experience, an Exhibition Elephant Polo Match and experience a Royal welcome at A Jai Mahal Palace hotel. You may choose to watch or participate in the exhibition game.

The match is followed by Champagne lunch at a Jai Mahal Palace hotel.

Following lunch continue on a visit to the Amber Fort. The Amber Fort set in picturesque and rugged hills is a fascinating blend of Hindu and Mughal architecture. Constructed by Raja Man Singh I in 1592 and completed by Mirja Raja Jai Singh the fort was made in red sand stone and white marble. The rugged forbidding exterior belies an inner paradise with a beautiful fusion of art and architecture. Amber is the classic and romantic fort-palace with a magnificent aura.

On completing the tour of Amber you will have the opportunity to shop for some of the finest jewellery, textiles and blue pottery for which the city is renowned.

After the tour, you may:

- Participate in one of the optional tours
- Enjoy spa facilities at a five star hotel
- Proceed on a private shopping tour
- Enjoy golfing at the Rambagh Golf Club
- Visit the City Palace and Jantar Mantar (The Observatory)

Dinner on board.

Overnight on the Maharajas' Express.

DAY 7

Early this morning, you will arrive in Sawai Madhopur.

Get ready for a safari to the Ranthambore National Park.

Ranthambore, the private hunting ground of the Maharajas, was declared a National Park in 1973. You may have the chance to see the wildlife that includes tigers, sambar, chital, nilgai, chinkara, wild boar, sloth bear, hyena, jackal and leopard.

The safari cannot be compared to that of Africa and you are indeed fortunate if you spot the elusive tiger or the shy leopard.

After breakfast at Vivanta By Taj, Sawai Madhopur, return to the train and continue your journey to the fabled deserted Mughal city of Fatehpur Sikri.

Admire the changing landscape as you savour a hearty lunch.

Arrive into Fatehpur Sikri, the first planned city of the Mughals.

The sloping levels of the city were connected into terraces which were utilised for various complexes such as Jami masjid, Buland-Darwazah and tomb of Sheikh Salim Chishti.

The efficient system of drainage and water-supply adopted here suggest an extremely intelligent town-planning by the Mughal emperor.

All these palaces were built of red sandstone in the trabeate beam-and-post order, and composed of pillars, ornamental arches, brackets-and-chhajjas, jharokhas, chhatris, chhaparkhats and chaukhandis. It is now a famous UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Return to the train to enjoy an 'Indian night'!

Overnight on the Maharajas' Express.

DAY 8

Arrive into the city of The Taj Mahal, the monument of Love. Besides being famous for the one of the seven wonders of the world, Agra is also known for its fabulous handicrafts, made of marble and softstone inlay work.

The Mughals were great patrons of arts and crafts. Empress Nur Jahan took personal interest and was an accomplished artist herself in zari embroidery work.

In the early morning, disembark and proceed to the world famous Taj Mahal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

It took the efforts of approx 20,000 craftsmen for 22 years and the passion of the by Shah Jahan to create this white marble masterpiece. The Taj Mahal was built by Shah Jahan in fond memories of her beloved queen Mumtaz Mahal.

The visit is followed by Champagne breakfast atop Taj Khema gazing at the magnificent Taj Mahal.

Following breakfast, return to the train.

Enjoy the lunch on board as you continue the last lap of this wonderful journey to Delhi.

Bid farewell to the Maharajas' Express as your journey comes to an end at approximately 1530 hours on arrival into Safdarjung Station.