

## Delhi to Kathmandu

**Country(ies):** India , Nepal

**Tour type:** Small Group

**Transport:** A/C minivan/minibus, train, jeep, internal flight

**Group size:** Min: 2 | Max: 12

**Days:** 16 days

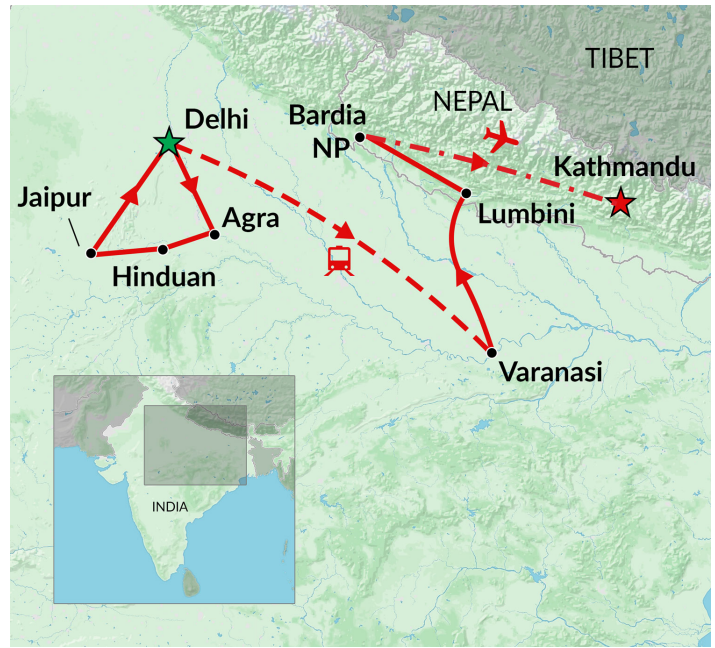
**Start Location:** Delhi, India

**End Location:** Kathmandu, India

**Meals:** Breakfasts - 15, Lunches - 4, Dinners - 4

**Highlights:**

Old and New Delhi, Taj Mahal, Agra, local village in Suroth Mahal, Pink city of Jaipur, hill top fort, Abhaneri step well, River Ganges at Varanasi, Buddhist site at Sarnath, Streets & temples of Kathmandu, Buddhist Lumbini and Bardia NP.



# Itinerary

## Day 1: Arrival in Delhi - hotel transfers included

Your Indian adventure starts in the capital city of Delhi. One of our local staff members will be waiting to greet you at the airport, before transferring you to your hotel. You'll have some time to settle in, before we run you through the tour itinerary, introduce you to the local area and discuss a time to collect you tomorrow.

**OVERNIGHT:** Hotel in Delhi

**MEALS:** None

**EXTRAS:** Single room supplement (INSGDK)

## Day 2: Exploring Delhi, Rickshaw Ride & Street Food Tasting

Your day starts with a morning tour of India's capital, New Delhi. Built on the banks of the Yamuna river, New Delhi is a beautiful blend of a historical past and a vibrant present.

We start at India Gate in the centre of New Delhi, a 42-metre high "Arc-de-Triomphe" like archway, a war memorial built to commemorate the 82,000 soldiers who partook in the undivided Indian Army. We'll drive past various government buildings such as the President's Palace and the Parliament of India, before passing Humayun's Tomb - a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the Bangla Sahab Gurudwara Sikh Temple.

We'll stop at Connaught Place Station and join the locals on the metro to Old Delhi where we'll walk through one of the oldest and busiest markets in Old Delhi, Chandni Chowk, before exploring the narrow streets of Chawri Bazar which specialises in selling brass, copper and paper products. Throughout the afternoon our guide will also introduce you to the wide range of street food snacks and delicacies so you can get your first authentic taste of the delicious and varied Indian cuisine. Our walking tour will also take in a rickshaw ride and the Jama Masjid mosque, one of the largest in India.

**OVERNIGHT:** Delhi hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:**

## Day 3: Head to Agra. Sheroes Hangout, Mughal Heritage Walk. First glimpse of the Taj Mahal

We head to Agra this morning, home of the famous Taj Mahal. After arriving in Agra we'll make a stop for lunch at the Sheroes Hangout Cafe. The cafe was set up by the Chhanv Foundation and is run by victims of acid attacks. The cafe works to raise awareness of acid attacks in India and to empower those who have sadly been the victims of these heinous crimes. Prior to gaining employment in the cafe, many of the 'Sheroes' led solitary lives, rarely going outside due to shame associated with their scars. At Encounters Travel we're proud to support such an organisation, which has the sole aim of helping these women find acceptance, a supportive community and a means of income. Lunch will be included whilst at the cafe.

Once you've checked in into your hotel, we'll spend the afternoon on a Mughal Heritage Walk through the ancient village of Kachhpura and surrounding farmland on the banks of the Yamuna River across from the Taj Mahal and Red Fort. This walk has been designed by a local NGO and helps support the local community through employment and new infrastructure. During the walk one of the villagers will give a guide to their village life, the layout of their homes, with living, cooking & religious areas, the farming done, and the local cottage industry for leather shoe making which helps Agra export shoes all over the world. You'll also see some lesser known but important Mughal era monuments. Finally today we'll stroll around the park at Mehtab Bagh - originally built by Emperor Babur as the last in a series of 11 parks on the Yamuna River's east bank, before taking in the magnificent sight of the Taj Mahal at sunset.

A special evening option is available today, where you can join a Hindu family for a Vegetarian Thali cooking lesson and meal.

**OVERNIGHT:** Agra hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast,Lunch

**EXTRAS:** Cook with a Hindu family in Agra

## **Day 4: Taj Mahal sunrise. Drive to Suroth Mahal, enjoy a Village Walking tour**

We start today early for our tour of the Taj Mahal. Truly one of the wonders of the world this elaborate monument to love was built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan and took over twenty-two years to complete. Sunrise is a great time to visit as the light changes gradually with the colours of the Taj changing too.

After breakfast we leave the region's popular tourist areas and head into the heart of rural Rajasthan to the small town of Suroth. The property was a former palace, now welcoming guests as a hotel, but retaining its heritage charm, with rooms painted with murals.

The afternoon sees us exploring the village, interacting with the local villagers, getting invaluable insight into seeing their way of life. Our walking tour will pass by local shops, down narrow streets, we'll visit a small temple and perhaps even visit a local barber shop where you can have a shave or head massage. In the evening we'll have a cooking demonstration before enjoying dinner at the hotels restaurant.

**OVERNIGHT:** Suroth Mahal heritage hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast,Dinner

**EXTRAS:**

## **Day 5: To Jaipur via the Abhaneri step well. Optional Bollywood Movie or Cooking Demo**

Today we head to Jaipur, the capital and the largest city of the Indian state of Rajasthan in Western India. Enroute, we'll visit the Abhaneri step well, the largest and deepest step well in the world, which boasts 3500 steps and is 13 stories deep. You may recognise this as the place that Sonny tried to express his feelings for Sunaina in the recent movie The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel.

The remainder of the day in Jaipur will be free to explore at leisure or join one of our optional extras:

- A fun option this evening is to head out and watch a Bollywood movie at the Raj Mandir cinema.

- Another good choice for this evening is to visit a local family in their home for a cooking demonstration and dinner together.

**OVERNIGHT:** Jaipur heritage hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** Jaipur Bollywood Movie - Raj Mandir Cinema Hot air balloon in Jaipur Jaipur Cooking demo and dinner with local family

## Day 6: Amber Fort & Jaipur City. Block printing workshop

You have an option of going on an early morning hot air balloon ride over Jaipur, flying over its palaces, forts and lakes - a truly mesmerising experience.

If you chose to sleep a little later, your morning starts with a visit to the Amber Fort, the jewel in Jaipur's crown - an ancient fortress built on a hilltop in the 16th century dedicated to the ruling Kachhawa clan of Amber. Be mesmerised by this majestic architectural wonder, with its pink sandstone and marble palace shining in the sun. It's massive fortress walls sprawls across the hills, with many seeing a resemblance of the Great Wall of China.

Later, we return to the city for a tour of Jaipur, as we visit the strange Jantar Mantar monument, a collection of nineteen architectural astronomical instruments, built by the Rajput king Sawai Jai Singh II between 1724 and 1730. Jaipur was the first planned city of medieval India and we'll also explore its City Palace. Built by Raja Man Singh during 1729-1732 AD, the City Palace was once the seat of kings as it was from here that they ruled the region. This tangle of courtyards, manicured gardens and exceptionally crafted mahals is one of the most revered attractions in India.

We spend the remainder of the day walking in the walled city to discover some of Jaipur's famous crafts markets and craftsmen in action such as jewellers, silversmiths, textile workshops and bangle makers. Our tour will include a blockprinting workshop, where we learn the ways in which fabric is decorated using this ancient method and we'll also have a gemstone demonstration.

**OVERNIGHT:** Jaipur heritage hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** Hot air balloon in Jaipur

## Day 7: Return to Delhi (optional multimedia show at the Akshardham Temple)

We leave Jaipur today to head back to Delhi, from where we'll take the train to Varanasi tomorrow. You can use your remaining time in Delhi for last minute shopping, exploration of join our optional visit to the Swaminarayan Akshardham a Hindu mandir and a spiritual-cultural campus, home to millennia of traditional Hindu and Indian culture and architecture to witness the mesmerizing Sahaj Anand water show - which makes use of multicoloured lasers, under-water flames, video projection, water jets combine to provide a captivating experience which tells the story of Kena Upanishad - a Vedic Sanskrit text.

**OVERNIGHT:** Delhi hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:**

## Day 8: Morning train to Varanasi, evening Aarti ceremony by the Ganges

Today we'll board the Vande Bharat train, bound for Varanasi. The journey will take approximately 8 hours. From the window you'll be able to see the outskirts of Delhi and rural Indian life as we make our way to Varanasi.

After arriving you'll have some free time to settle or begin exploring. As night falls, we head to the holy Ganges River for the evening Aarti ceremony, a devotional Hindu ritual which involves numerous small candles being lit inside cups made from leaves and flowers and floated down the river. Varanasi is one of India's holiest cities and we get our first taste here of how important the city and the Ganges River is to the country's Hindu population.

**OVERNIGHT:** Varanasi hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:**

## **Day 9: Sunrise on the Ganges, Varanasi Exploration and visit to Sarnath**

Our second day in Varanasi starts with an early morning boat ride along the Ganges River, as we explore the city. The Ganges is a constant hive of activity throughout the day, as hordes of people come to pray and immerse themselves in its spiritually cleansing waters. The city is also considered an extremely auspicious place to die, and many people come to Varanasi to spend their final days. We'll see many funeral pyres on the ghats at the edge of the river as we pass by on the water. Whilst on the river, you'll have the opportunity to offer Pind Daan in memory of any deceased loved ones.

We'll then go on a walking tour of the city, exploring its medieval streets, intricate temples and busy markets, abuzz with the general cacophony of Indian life. We'll also spend some time exploring the Ghats which straddle the banks of the Ganges.

In the afternoon we take the short trip to the ancient Buddhist site at Sarnath where Lord Buddha delivered his first sermon after becoming enlightened.

**OVERNIGHT:** Varanasi hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:**

## **Day 10: Cross the border into Nepal. Head to Lumbini, birthplace of the Buddha**

We'll be leaving Varanasi early this morning to begin our journey north towards the border between India and Nepal. It will be a long drive, but it offers a great opportunity to see the countryside and experience a bit of rural Indian life. We'll pass through the bustling town of Gorakhpur along the way, which is known for its temples and historical sites.

Once we cross the border into Nepal, we'll need to switch to a different vehicle that's better suited for the terrain. From there, it's a relatively short drive to Lumbini, a town of great significance as it is the birthplace of the Buddha. After a full day of travel, you'll have the afternoon free to relax and unwind at your accommodation or perhaps start exploring the sacred sites of Lumbini. There are numerous temples and monasteries to visit, each with its own unique history and atmosphere. We'll see a few of these tomorrow.

**OVERNIGHT:** Lumbini hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:**

## Day 11: Learn about the Buddha on a tour of Lumbini. Travel to Bardia National Park

Today, we'll delve deeper into the spiritual heart of Lumbini. Our morning will be dedicated to exploring some of its most iconic landmarks, including the sacred Maya Devi Temple, the ancient Ashoka Pillar, and the revered Banyan Tree. Each of these sites holds a special significance in the story of the Buddha's birth and enlightenment, offering a glimpse into the rich history and spiritual traditions of this sacred place.

Later in the day, we'll embark on a scenic drive through the Nepali countryside, heading towards the renowned Bardia National Park. This sprawling wilderness is home to a remarkable diversity of wildlife, including the majestic one-horned rhinoceros, the powerful Asian elephant, and the elusive Bengal tiger. Upon arrival at the Bardia Eco-Lodge, you'll have time to settle into your comfortable accommodations and soak in the tranquil atmosphere of the surrounding jungle. This evening offers a chance to relax and recharge before we embark on our exciting exploration of the national park tomorrow.

**OVERNIGHT:** Bardia Eco-Lodge

**MEALS:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**EXTRAS:**

## Day 12: Cameras at the ready! Begin exploring Bardia National Park

Nestled in the remote western corner of Nepal's Terai region, Bardia National Park offers a serene escape into a world teeming with wildlife. Over the next two days, you'll have the opportunity to immerse yourself in the natural wonders of Nepal's largest wildlife sanctuary and join our optional park activities. Embark on exhilarating jeep safaris, where you might encounter majestic tigers, lumbering elephants, and the iconic one-horned rhinoceros. Glide along the gentle currents of the river on a leisurely rafting trip, surrounded by lush greenery and the sounds of the jungle. Venture deep into the forest on guided walks, led by experienced guides who will share their knowledge of the park's flora and fauna.

Beyond the wildlife encounters, you'll also have the chance to connect with the local communities who call this region home. Participate in cultural shows that offer a glimpse into their traditional way of life, their music, dance, and customs. As the day draws to a close, return to the comfort of your lodge, nestled on the edge of the park. Here, you can unwind and reflect on the day's adventures, surrounded by the sights and sounds of the jungle.

**OVERNIGHT:** Bardia Eco-Lodge

**MEALS:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**EXTRAS:**

## Day 13: Bardia National Park, further park activities

Today, we'll further delve into the wonders of Bardia National Park, tailoring our safari activities to maximize your wildlife encounters. We'll take into account the latest animal sightings, current weather conditions, and your own preferences. If you're eager for the thrill of a tiger sighting, we can strategically position ourselves in areas known for their recent activity, patiently waiting for a glimpse of this elusive predator.

Alternatively, if you prefer a more active approach, we can focus on exploring diverse habitats within the park. Birdwatching enthusiasts will be delighted by the abundance of avian species, while those seeking a variety of wildlife can keep an eye out for deer, monkeys, otters, and other fascinating creatures that call this park home.

**OVERNIGHT:** Bardia Eco-Lodge

**MEALS:** Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

**EXTRAS:**

## **Day 14: Fly to Kathmandu from Nepalguni**

Today marks our transition from the wild beauty of Bardia National Park to the vibrant energy of Nepal's capital, Kathmandu. We'll begin with a transfer to the nearby Nepalgunj Airport, where you'll catch a domestic flight that will whisk you over the breathtaking landscapes of Nepal. The aerial views of the Himalayas and the sprawling Terai plains below will be a memorable part of your journey.

Upon arrival in Kathmandu, we'll ensure a smooth transfer to your hotel, conveniently located in the heart of the bustling Thamel district. This lively neighborhood is renowned for its narrow streets lined with shops, restaurants, and cafes, offering a vibrant glimpse into Nepali culture and cuisine. The remainder of the day is yours to explore at your own pace. You might choose to wander through the colorful streets of Thamel, sample local delicacies, or simply relax and soak in the atmosphere of this fascinating city.

**OVERNIGHT:** Kathmandu hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:**

## **Day 15: Thamel Rickshaw Ride. Walk around Durbar Square, visit Swayambunath Stupa**

Our Nepal tour starts with an exciting Rickshaw ride through the backstreets of Thamel, to Durbar Square. We'll pass through small back streets full of numerous tiny shops, workshops, temples, and stupas to Durbar Square with its array of wooden and stone carved temples and palaces, where we'll have plenty of time to walk around and explore. After lunch at a rooftop restaurant overlooking the square, we drive to the important Swayambunath Stupa which sits on a hilltop overlooking the city, visible from miles around. Also known locally as the 'monkey temple', we'll see these nimble inhabitants scampering in and around the trees and temple.

**OVERNIGHT:** Kathmandu hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:**

## **Day 16: Kathmandu, free time, transfer to airport**

Our Nepal holiday package comes to an end. Here you'll have some free time in Kathmandu today until we transfer you to the airport for departure. Extensions to the tour are available to add more trekking, white water rafting or to visit Bardia National Park (the best place in Nepal to see tigers). First thing this morning there is also the option to take a spectacular mountain viewing flight up to see Mt. Everest (requires an evening international flight departure).

**OVERNIGHT:** N/A

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** Bardia National Park Extension Everest Mountain Flight Extra day in Kathmandu - post-tour

**Included:**

- All accommodation in mid-range hotels and heritage properties
- All transport and transfers in AC vehicles
- 24-hour airport arrival and departure transfer service
- Morning trains Delhi-Varanasi - AC Chair Car
- Nepalganj to Kathmandu flight
- Sightseeing tours and activities as per the itinerary
- Delhi Tour, Rickshaw Ride & Street Food Sampling in Delhi
- Agra Sheroes Cafe, Mughal Heritage Walk and Taj Mahal visit
- Suroth Mahal Village tour & cooking demonstration
- Jaipur Amber Fort, City Tour & craft workshop
- Varanasi Aarti Ceremony, Sunrise Boat Ride, Visits to Ghats, Temples and Sarnath
- Lumbini Sightseeing
- Bardia National Park stay (activities are payable locally)
- Kathmandu Rickshaw Ride and City Tour
- Services of a local tour leader and specialist local guides
- Entrance Fees whilst in Nepal
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary

**Excluded:**

- International flights (available on request)
- Visa fees for India and Nepal
- Travel insurance (compulsory, available on request)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips for drivers and guides
- Bardia Safari Activities (bookable and payable locally)
- Entrance fees whilst in India (budget USD 180, payable in Delhi)
- Any other items not mentioned above

**Notes****Restoration of the Taj Mahal**

The Taj Mahal, one of India's most iconic structures, is getting a much need facelift. The almost-four-century-old Taj Mahal is finally showing signs of ageing. Air pollution is unfortunately turning its ivory-white complexion - yellow. Adding to the colouration problems, the Yamuna River, with which the Taj Mahal shares a river bank, is contaminated and the insects that breed in its waters are leaving patches of green residue on its marble. In order to restore the Taj Mahal's glistening white marble, mud-pack therapy is being used. If you're worried that it might affect your India tour, this handy [Taj restoration guide](#) will tell you everything you need to know.



# Options

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Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting. However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements. Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements - full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

## Extra day in Delhi - pre-tour

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an extra day to the start of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport arrival transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

**Note:** Single room and peak season supplements apply.

## Extra day in Kathmandu - post-tour

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an extra day to the end of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport departure transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

**Note:** Single room and peak season supplements apply.

## Hot air balloon in Jaipur

Min numbers: 1

Capture the spectacular views of Rajasthan's forts with an early morning hot air balloon ride over Jaipur for a different perspective of this vibrant capital. Float high above the pink painted rooftops and enjoy a bird's eye view of Jaipur.

**This option runs from 1st of September to 10th of May each year, subject to weather conditions.**

## Single room supplement (INSGDK)

Min numbers: 1

This tour is based on twin-share accommodation, with single bookers paired up with another traveller of the same sex in the group. If the final group make-up means that no room share is available, you do not need to pay this supplement. However, if you would like to guarantee yourself a single room throughout the tour, then please add this option to your booking.

**Note:** Single supplement prices may vary seasonally.

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## 1. Accommodation

We use good quality hotels rated at the Indian 3-star and 4-star level on this tour as well as some heritage properties. These heritage hotels are often converted from former palaces or merchant houses and are full of historical character, though they may feel a little dated. They are often a highlight of your stay. In Nepal we stay in a basic but comfortable eco-lodge in Bardia National Park. Cottages are rustic and built in traditional local village style and with re-usable materials. The hotels in Lumbini and Kathmandu at the better end of the local 3-star level.

The specific hotels listed on our website are our preferred hotels for our small-group tours. However, these may be changed from time to time based on current availability and other logistics. In this event alternative hotels of a similar standard will be used. If you would like to guarantee any particular hotels for your trip, please contact us to request a tailor-made tour.

Accommodation is based on twin or double en-suite rooms with air conditioning. All couples will receive a private double room. See the Transport notes for details on the sleeper train accommodation.

Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour.

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## 2. Transport

Our trips feature a mix of different transport options. We want you to feel like you're really experiencing the country you're travelling through, but at the same time finish journeys refreshed enough to enjoy the next stage of the tour. Due to the somewhat chaotic nature of Indian and Nepalese roads, we only use private vehicles for all road journeys on this tour.

The vehicles used in Nepal will travel from Bardia National Park to meet you at the India/Nepal and are often open backed jeeps or similar. Larger groups will use several of these vehicles or a minibus. A domestic flight takes you from Nepalgunj airport to Kathmandu (aim to sit on the left side of the plane for great views of the Himalayas along the way).

The tour also features a journey on India's famous railway network. The journeys from Delhi to Varanasi (and return) takes around 8 hours and we book AC chair seats. You will be shown to your seat in the departure station and met on the platform on arrival. Delays of up to an hour are quite common, especially during the winter season if the weather is foggy. Tickets are issued 120 days before departure. If you book within that time we cannot guarantee that you will be seated with other travellers, though the train stewards are normally very helpful and will arrange seat swaps with other people on the train, who are normally very accommodating.

Due to the huge distances some trains cover, Indian trains are subject to delays and on these overnight journeys of around 12 hours a delay of an hour is not unusual. Delays can be longer in the winter months if the weather is foggy.

Tickets are issued 120 days in advance and are subject to full cancellation fees after you have arrived in India (US\$10 up until that point). If you book within 120 days of departure we cannot guarantee that you will be allocated a berth next to other people in the group, though the carriage stewards are generally very helpful in arranging to swap you with another traveller.

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## 3. Transfers

The tour price includes a 24-hour airport meet & assist service in New Delhi airport, your arrival and departure airport-hotel transfers and all other transfers involved in the tour. In Nepal you'll be helped to check in for your flight in Nepalgunj and met on arrival in Kathmandu.

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## 4. Group Size/Tour Leaders/Guides

We are committed to being a small group operator, as we feel this gives everyone in the group the best chance to get to know their fellow travellers and to hear and make the most of their guide. There's no point in us providing great guides if you've got to peer over 30-40 shoulders to see them! So, we won't ever put you in a 50-seater coach with 49 other people and just one guide. Instead, we set our India small-group departures to have a maximum of 12 travellers. The minimum group size is 2.

In India we provide a fully trained, local English-speaking tour leader/driver to accompany our groups. On this tour they will accompany you throughout the whole loop from Delhi/Agra/Jaipur/Delhi with a separate escort in Varanasi. On groups of 4 or more, a guide will accompany you for the duration of the tour, for groups of 2 to 3, you will have a driver and local guides in each city.

One of our Nepalese team from Bardia National Park will meet you on arrival at the India/Nepal border and accompany you throughout your time in Lumbini and Bardia. A specialist local guide will be used for the tour in Lumbini and the lodge guide will take you on your safaris into the park. A Kathmandu city guide will escort you on the included tours.

At Encounters Travel we have a policy of aiming to use only local Indian and Nepalese guides and reps. We feel this gives you the best experience of the countries and the sites you are seeing.

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## 5. Entrance Fees

The tour price does not include entrance fees to the Indian tourist sites mentioned in the itinerary. This allows for fluctuations in the prices set by the local authorities, which do change from time to time. All entry fees, national park fees and park activity fees are included in Nepal.

You should currently allow approx. US\$105 per person to cover the entrance fees in India (this includes one visit to the Taj Mahal). You will also need to cover the cost of entrance to any other extra sites that you may wish to visit that are not listed in the main tour itinerary. Your guide will offer to collect the entrance fee cost from everyone at the start of the tour and pay on your behalf, or you can arrange them yourself as you go along.

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## 6. Money

Rupee (INR; symbol Rs) = 100 paise. Notes are in denominations of Rs 2,000, 1000, 500, 200, 50, 20, 10 and 1. Coins are in denominations of Rs 10, 5, 2 and 1, and 50 paise (Rs 0.5). Note: The import and export of local currency is prohibited. Sometimes smaller vendors will not take bills larger than Rs 500. It is best to carry a range of rupee notes if you are shopping at bazaars and local markets.

Note: You must present your passport whenever you change currency or travellers cheques. Commission for foreign exchange is becoming increasingly rare; if it is charged, the fee is nominal.

Credit cards: In major cities, the full cadre of banks cards are generally accepted including debit cards, American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa. However, in smaller towns and villages, choice is generally narrowed to cash or MasterCard and Visa.

ATM: 24 hour ATM machines can be found in all the major cities and most large towns. Visa, MasterCard, Cirrus, Maestro and Plus are amongst the most commonly accepted cards.

Travellers cheques: These are gradually getting less accepted but may still be changed at larger banks and some larger hotels. The most widely accepted currencies include US Dollars and Pounds Sterling. Some banks may refuse to change certain brands of traveller's cheques whilst others may exchange quite happily.

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## 7. Dates & Prices

We run small-group departures on this tour from mid-September through to early June, avoiding the monsoon months of July and August. All departures are guaranteed to run with a minimum of 2 travellers. Departure dates and prices are listed on our website (please check the website for up-to-date prices and special offers).

Private and tailor-made tours are available on any dates and may be adjusted to fit your personal requirements, available time and budget.

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**Note:** Please [download an up-to-date copy](#) of these tour notes shortly before you travel as itineraries and information does change from time to time.

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