



WENDY WU TOURS

Tour Dossier

GRAND TOUR OF INDIA, 28 DAYS

This document was designed to be read in conjunction with our other pre-departure information provided after you have made a booking with Wendy Wu Tours. It aims to provide a straightforward description of the physical activities involved in sightseeing or travelling during the tour. All passengers should read this dossier to confirm their ability to complete the tour. This is not your final Itinerary and therefore does not mention all the sites visited.

Tour Grade – Medium Paced Tour

This is defined in our brochure as the following: “These tours are not strenuous but do include several days where long periods of walking and climbing of stairs will be necessary. These tours are not recommended for those that are unable to walk for extensive periods without assistance. These tours are generally longer in length and could involve long days of driving.”

Anyone with a good level of fitness should be able to complete this itinerary. Of course, our local guides always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance, but they cannot be expected to cater for passengers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

Climbing steps

Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves the climbing of stairs. These palaces were built to provide defence against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steep steps to slow down the advance of enemy once they were inside. The stairs tend to be large, uneven and sometimes without handrails. Hindu and Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk a distance uphill from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb stairs once inside.

Group size

In most cases, the group size will operate with a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 18 passengers

Itinerary changes

1. Order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions.
2. The domestic airlines in this region have frequent schedule changes. For this reason we have indicated morning, afternoon or evening flights only in the section below. Your Local guide or National Escort will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them.

Appropriate dress

When visiting temples or mosques, both men and women should dress in non-revealing clothes. Full-length trousers with a shirt or t-shirt for men; and pants or skirts well below the knee with a top that covers the shoulders and upper arms for women. Women might also consider carrying a ‘modesty shawl’ in their daypack – this could be a sarong or light scarf – which is worn over their shoulders and heads to feel more comfortable while sightseeing at mosques.

When visiting Jain temples, you must not wear or take in any leather items such as belts, watches, camera straps, purses, shoes.

Religious sites and homes throughout India – for Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, Muslims or Buddhists to name a few - **require all visitors to remove their shoes to enter.** Even if you then need to walk outdoors, over hot or rough ground, you will not be allowed to wear shoes. You will often find shoe storage rooms near the entrance of a site where it is customary to leave your shoes near the entrance. Occasionally there are ‘shoe minders’ who will offer to keep your shoes safe for a ‘tip’ – this is not compulsory so each passenger can choose to tip for this service or not. If you do not want to remove them, you will have to remain outside.

Bring some shoes that easily slip on and off, and carry a pair of thick, old socks in your daypack, which you can wear to protect your feet from any rough or hot ground.

The section below will indicate when you need to consider these.

Rail journeys

This trip involves 1 day journey in AC class cars - refer to Your Travel Guide’s TRANSPORT and EATING IN INDIA sections for more information.

Getting on and off the trains in India can be quite disordered and amusing as passengers will start boarding well before people have finished getting off! If your group is disembarking at a stop that is not the end of the line, the train will only stop for 10mins and you must have your luggage ready and by your side a few minutes before the train pulls into the station.

Alternative accommodation

In Kerala, you will be staying overnight on board a traditional style houseboat called a **kettuvallam** – refer to Your Travel Guide’s ACCOMMODATION section for more information.

Tipping

If there are less than 10 people in your group, please allow NZD\$275 each for tipping. If there are more than 10, please allow NZD\$240 each for tipping. These amounts **do not include hotel portage** so if you would like your luggage to be carried to your hotel room this will be at your discretion.

Electricity

The supply of electricity is limited on board the kettavallum houseboat (Day 25) Refer to Your Travel Guide’s ELECTRICITY section.

NB: Times and distances listed in this section are approximations only.

Day 1: New Zealand/Delhi

You will be met in the airport arrivals hall tonight by your Airport Guide/National Escort together with any other passengers from your group who may be arriving at a similar time. Transfer (45 mins drive) to your hotel and check in.

Day 2: Delhi

Today is a full day of sightseeing around Old and New Delhi, involving approx 4 hrs sightseeing on foot. The days’ activities include visits to a mosque and Hindu temple – refer to **Appropriate Dress** above. Please note that women are only allowed to enter the mosque outside prayer session times.

Day 3: Delhi/Varanasi

Check out of hotel this morning before easy sightseeing, involving approx 1 hr of walking. In the afternoon fly to Varanasi (flight duration 1 hr, 20 mins).

Day 4: Varanasi

While here, you will be visiting Buddhist sacred sites – refer to **Appropriate Dress** section above. In Varanasi, it would be unwise to wander around without your Guide/Escort at night as there have been several reports of pickpockets, etc.

Day 5: Varanasi/Khajuraho

An early rise this morning to take boat ride on the River Ganges for 2 to 3 hrs. Please note that you should not ever take photos of any burning ghats, as this is a funeral ceremony. Later there will be easy city sightseeing. Afterwards transfer (¾ hr drive) to the airport for the early afternoon flight to Khajuraho (flight duration 40 mins). Transfer to hotel to check in.

Day 6: Khajuraho

Drive 15mins to Khajuraho temples. We usually spend 2 hrs here; sightseeing involves quite a lot of walking and there is little shade, so make sure you bring sun protection.

Day 7: Khajuraho/Agra

Rise early this morning and drive 4 to 5 hrs (178kms) to Jhansi via Orchha. Board the early afternoon train and travel 220kms to Agra (journey takes approx 2 ½ hrs). Transfer a short distance to the hotel and check in. There is no sightseeing scheduled for today as it is quite a long day of travelling.

[N.B: As our train is a day train, our seats will be in an AC Chair Car. More than likely you will not be able to purchase any food or drink on the train, so if you need munchies make sure to pre-purchase them before boarding. There will be local travellers in the same carriages, so be aware of your belongings.]

Day 8: Agra

This morning we rise early in order to both catch tonga carts through the awakening streets of Agra, and to evade the heat and crowds at the Taj Mahal later in the day. We usually spend 2 hrs here; sightseeing is easy with almost no stairs. This afternoon, visit Agra Fort, sightseeing here involves approx 1 ½ hrs of walking.

Day 9: Agra/Ranthambore

Drive to Bharatpur to board our day train to Ranthambore. Upon arrival we drive to Ranthambore National Park and check in to hotel. In the afternoon there will be a safari ride in a canter (jeep like vehicle) through the National Park. There are no toilets available during the park excursions.

Day 10: Ranthambore /Jaipur

Option of early morning safari by canter before driving to Jaipur and check in at hotel. Sightseeing at Maharaja's City Palace is easy and pleasant. Jaipur is a larger city where it would be unwise to wander around without your Guide/Escort at night as there have been several reports of pickpockets, etc.

Day 11: Jaipur

Sightseeing this morning involves 2 to 3 hrs on foot. At Amer Fort, you will ride jeeps to and from the bus park and palace entrance. We have not included the elephant ride up to the palace in your itinerary because of the unreliability of this

service; visitors usually needs to queue for 2 to 3 hrs and the service is often shut down without notice by local tourism authority due to safety concerns.

Day 12: Jaipur/Alsisar

Drive approx 5 hrs (220kms) to Alsisar and commence sightseeing; involving up to 3 hrs leisurely walking. Check in at hotel.

Day 13: Alsisar/Bikaner

Drive to 4 to 5 hrs (190 kms) to Bikaner and check in at hotel. Drive a short distance to the Junagarh Fort and have lunch then commence sightseeing. This involves approx 2 hrs sightseeing on foot.

Day 14: Bikaner/Jaisalmer

Drive 4 to 5 hrs (180kms) to Jaisalmer and check in at hotel. In the early afternoon, drive out of town to Sunset Point for leisurely sightseeing.

Day 15: Jaisalmer

This morning, sightseeing at Jaisalmer Fort and surrounding havellis involves 2 to 3 hrs walking and few stairs. After lunch, drive 1 ½ hrs (42kms) to Sam Village. Sightseeing here involves a camel ride in Thar Desert National Park – tourist numbers can be high, as camel rides have become very popular.

Day 16: Jaisalmer/Jodhpur

Drive up to 6 hrs (308kms) to Jodhpur and check in at hotel. After lunch, visit the Meherangarh Fort which involves approx 2 hrs walking and many stairs. Drive (½ hr) to Umaid Bhawan Palace (also called Chittar Palace); sightseeing here involves approx 1 hr easy walking around palace and museum.

Day 17: Jodhpur

Enjoy a jeep safari to Rohetgarh to visit a local Bishnoi Village. – refer to [Your Travel Guide's](#) TRANSPORT section for more information.

Day 18: Jodhpur/Udaipur

Drive approx 4 hrs (180kms) to Ranakpur and visit the Jain temple. Sightseeing here involves ½ hr easy walking - refer to **Appropriate Dress** above. Drive a further 3 to 4 hrs (90kms) to Udaipur and check in at hotel. Before sunset, drive ½ hr to Lake Pichola for boat ride. Please note that the Lake Palace (now an exclusive hotel) does not allow visitors.

Day 19: Udaipur

Easy sightseeing this morning involving 1 to 2 hrs of leisurely sightseeing. After lunch, visit the City Palace, which involves approx 2 hrs of sightseeing on foot. Some stairs at this location are without handrails, so please be cautious. The group will exit at a different gate to that which they entered (entry gate will be Fatehpole Gate while the exit gate will be Tripolia Gate), so any passengers who choose to not complete this activity have the option to transfer to the lunch venue and wait for the

group there. After lunch you will take an auto rickshaw back to the bus.

Day 20: Udaipur/Aurangabad

Afternoon flight to Aurangabad (flight duration 1 hr, 30 mins). Check in at hotel upon arrival.

Day 21: Aurangabad/Ajanta

Today drive to Ajanta Caves – this is 3 ½ hrs (100kms) drive. Sightseeing here involves climbing a short but steep hill to enter the first cave, then 2 to 3 hrs walking with few stairs. There are usually sedan chairs available at additional cost to passengers. Please note that flash photography is not allowed here so it is good idea to bring a flashlight. Return to Aurangabad.

Day 22: Aurangabad/Mumbai

Check out from hotel and drive 2hrs (30kms) to the Ellora Caves. Sightseeing here involves approx 2hrs walking with some stairs. After lunch (Indian Tandoor bbq) nearby, transfer back to the airport to catch the evening flight to Mumbai (flight duration 1hr). Transfer to hotel and check in for overnight stay.

Day 23: Mumbai/Kochi

Morning at leisure. After lunch there will be easy sightseeing in Mumbai. Transfer to the airport for flight to Kochi (flight duration 1hr 40mins). Transfer (1 ½ hrs drive) to Kochi and check in to your hotel.

Day 24: Kochi

Sightseeing in the Fort Cochin area involves 2 to 3 hours walking and shopping time.

Day 25: Kochi /Nedumudy (Houseboat).

Check out from hotel early this morning, and after some touring in Kochi drive 90mins (85kms) to the small town of Nedumudy, which is another houseboat boarding point near Kumarakom. Board houseboats.

Day 26: Alleppey/Kovalam

Continue cruising until approx 9am then disembark at Alleppey. Drive 3 to 4 hrs (190kms) to Kovalam and check in at hotel. After a late lunch, afternoon is at leisure.

Day 27: Depart Kovalam

Late check out has been requested for your group today (until 6pm). In this case, you will have sightseeing during the morning and afternoon, return to the hotel afterwards to pack and freshen up before checking out from the hotel then transfer to the airport for your international flight. Sightseeing today involves 3 to 4 hrs walking.

Day 28: New Zealand

Arrive home in New Zealand.

Updated 11th February 2009.