

CULTURAL WALKING ADVENTURE

India

Rajasthan & the Taj Mahal

CLASSIC JOURNEYS
THE WORLD'S FINEST WALKING TOURS



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*Classic Journeys
provides unbeatable
access to experiences
around the globe.”*

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TRAVEL + LEISURE

The Vast Subcontinent, Crystallized

Watching the sun's first rays tint the Taj Mahal saffron and coral? Or walking with a shepherd on a quiet country lane. As you look back on India, you can decide which was more memorable. India is fantastical—and you'll visit sumptuous palaces and temples for the Instagrammable proof. India is intensely human too, but visitors who only see the raucous cities miss the point. So we arrange one-of-a-kind countryside walks that introduce you to villagers, farmers and rural life...as well as descendants of royal families, sari- and turban-tying experts, and artisans. India is a rush of mind-bending contradictions, from the aromatic clangor of local markets to the deep serenity of some of the world's most lavish hotels. And that's where Classic Journeys comes in with a thoughtful itinerary that handles the complex logistics and frees you to absorb an amazingly broad wealth of experiences.

The Classic Journeys Difference

- ACTIVE HIKING & WALKING
- LOCAL WELL-CONNECTED GUIDES
- PREMIERE HOTELS
- FOODIE FOCUSED
- HANDCRAFTED TRIP DESIGN
- MORE IS INCLUDED

What's Included

- All breakfasts, 6 lunches, 7 dinners and 1 cooking instruction
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip and handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Admissions to tastings, historic sites and other scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals, and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

Above & Beyond Benefits

→ INVISIBLE CHECK-IN

When your group arrives, we whisk you and your bags to your room immediately. No waiting – no tipping.

→ PRIVILEGED ACCESS EVENTS

One-of-a-kind access to remarkable people, places and activities arranged just for you.

Terrain

Easy to moderate countryside trails with the option to do several more difficult walks

DAY 1 »

Delhi

Your guide welcomes you this morning at your hotel to begin exploring Delhi. The contrasts in India's capital city couldn't be more startling. Over the past 3,000 years, seven cities have stood here. You start in the contemporary precincts with a walk to Jamali Kamali Mosque. After just a while on the streets, you'll understand why Delhiites appreciate the beautiful lawns where they love to picnic. Not far on foot is the soaring minaret of Qutub Minar and you stroll there as well.

After lunch, it's as if you've entered an alternate dimension in Old Delhi. Dating back to the Mughal Dynasty, remarkably little has changed here in hundreds of years. Where your morning explorations took place on foot, this afternoon you board rickshaws to navigate the gallis (lanes). Along the way, your guide will share the history and lore of the city. Once the commercial hub of the Mughal dynasty, Delhi still feels like one never-ending bazaar. Colorful markets (and even more colorful local shoppers) fill the very small byways. It's a place where, for instance, you'll find shops and stalls that specialize in clothing and accessories just for weddings. You have to wonder how anyone navigates the labyrinth that seems to go on forever, but of course your guide and rickshaw driver are right at home.

MEALS: L, D

OVERNIGHT: NEW DELHI

DAY 2 »

Delhi - Agra

A scenic morning drive leads to Agra. You'll enter your gleaming white hotel through a courtyard graced by pools and fountains. The lobby is a great tiled dome and terraced that gardens enfold a brilliant blue swimming pool. But it's the view from the hotel that you've really come to see: the Taj Mahal.

Mid-afternoon, after some time to relax at the hotel, you'll head to Agra Fort, the walled city that was the primary residence of the Mughal emperors until 1638. The massive red sandstone walls are an impressive display of power, though it's the view of the Taj Mahal from the battlements at sunset that steals the show.

As you'll see on tomorrow's visit to the Taj, its' walls are clad with intricate marble inlay studded with semi-precious stones. This afternoon, you have a chance to meet the artisans who still practice that nearly lost craft. The work is painstaking, and it's worth considering that it took 20,000 such artisans almost 22 years to create Shah Jehan's memorial to his favorite wife.

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: AGRA

DAY 3 »

Agra - Jaipur

This morning, the white-domed apparition that's been a part of so many views finally becomes real. Your hotel is so near the grounds that it takes 10 minutes or less by golf cart to arrive at Taj Mahal. Of course, you will have plenty of once-in-a-lifetime photo opportunities. In recent years, access to the octagonal interior of the mausoleum has been limited significantly, but your guide has arranged access for you. Here you see the pinnacle of the inlayers' art with intricate patterns that shimmer with jade, crystal, lapis lazuli, amethyst and turquoise. Afterward, you'll have time to wander the grounds on your own or with your guide before returning to the hotel for brunch.

On a midday drive to Jaipur, you'll have time to consider the how the vast, historic flow of this country, and your guide will answer your questions and offer their personal views on the past, present and future of their homeland.

In Jaipur, your hotel is a traditional Indian mansion in the heart of the city. The balance of the afternoon is yours to go for a city walk if you like. In the hotel's courtyards, you'll also find a very tempting pool and a spa.

MEALS: B, L, D OVERNIGHT:JAIPUR

DAY 4 »

Jaipur

An excellent breakfast fuels you for a visit to the Amber Fort. (Amber, by the way, refers not to the color of the fort, but to the Amber Clan that built the richly ornamented structure in the 16th century.) In contrast to the buildings you've seen so far, this one was built by Hindu kings and the architecture is noticeably different – as are the interiors with halls decorated in sandalwood and ivory.

Then, your viewpoint shifts from regal to rural as you strike out on a walk on a country road where you share the right of way with bullock carts and bicyclists. It's an everyday path used by the locals, not a tourist track. You'll have a chance to see a step-well, a distinctive architectural feature of this region. The well itself is well below ground level and is reached by elaborate steps and chambers. If you like, you can remove your shoes to enter a tiny local temple. There's a village school along the way, and when class is in session, you'll have a chance to visit with the students. Farmers are glad to take a break to greet you, and everywhere you see vividly dressed people going about their daily tasks. As your guide greets the villagers they know, they'll arrange for you to step into one of their houses where there's likely to be a meal in preparation. Beginning to end, this remarkable walk is a chance to be immersed in a lifestyle and culture that couldn't be more different from anything you've ever seen. The walk ends in the hamlet of Dera Amer where you stop to relax over lunch.

Back in Jaipur, you'll wander through the old city past the Palace of Winds and market stalls. The markets here are the classic style – flower vendors down that street, shoe stalls clustered over there – and you get a real sense of how you'd shop if you lived here. Dinner this evening is on your own. Your guide will be happy to recommend a favorite restaurant in the city or, if you prefer, you can dine at the hotel.

MEALS: B, L OVERNIGHT:JAIPUR

DAY 5 »

Jaipur - Deogarh

A brief morning flight and drive brings you to Deogarh village. You'll have plenty of time to explore later, but the first order of business is settling into your gorgeous hotel. Built in the style of a haveli – the traditional mansion style of Rajasthan – it's a serene spot with a lawn that stretches to the banks of Ragho Sagar Lake. The owners live at the property, and they are happy to chat with you about their home and the town.

In natural progression, you've moved through the week from metropolitan Delhi, to mid-size Jaipur, and now to Deogarh – the most intimate yet. Deogarh is lively, especially in the evening when the markets operate at full tilt. Here, the women carry water in clay pots on their heads. The banter and the bargaining are non-stop. And it's not just market stalls. A barber plants his chair on the street to give open-air trims. At his elbow, tea is being brewed, and everywhere there are cobblers, dyers, potters and artisans at work. It's just another day in the local life, and one you'll always remember because you participated in it.

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: DEOGARH

DAY 6 »

Deogarh

India, of course, is the spiritual birthplace of yoga. This morning, you're invited to join a local instructor for a relaxing pre-breakfast class.

Then, for a completely different perspective on rural India, you'll board a train as it chugs from Kamblighat to Phulad through jungle, hills and tunnels. The train is a lifeline for the local people who climb aboard to reach jobs, carry on business and visit family. You're likely to spot a milkman carrying his wares to customers. Fruit vendors work the aisles, and even if you're not conversant in Hindi you're likely to end up in a sign-language conversation with your fellow passengers (or even translated by your guide).

Your host at the hotel is an avid birder, which proves to be the perfect hobby in these parts as the lake is on a major migratory flyway. He'll invite you for a stroll on the shores of the lake to take in the scenery and possibly spot species you've never seen before. Later, you'll get a lesson in an essential local skill. The men receive pointers on how to wind a turban. The ladies learn how to transform six yards of silk into a deceptively simple-looking sari.

Dinner tonight is a relaxing lakeside feast.

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: DEOGARH

DAY 7 »

Deogarh - Udaipur

Every time of day has its own tempo in the Indian countryside. On today's morning walk, you see the villages come to life and hear the sounds as farmers head to the fields and tend to their cattle and herds of goats. You'll even be welcomed to breakfast at a local farm.

As the sun climbs higher, you'll settle in for a scenic drive to Udaipur, known for its fine palaces and beautiful lakes. In Udaipur, your extravagant hotel overlooks the city, and you'll have time to explore its beautiful grounds or even to arrange an optional spa treatment.

MEALS: B, L, D OVERNIGHT: UDAIPUR

DAY 8 »

Udaipur

It took a mere 400 years to build up Udaipur's City Palace to the flamboyant architectural landmark you visit this morning. On your guided visit you'll see over-the-top royal memorabilia, lavish pavilions and elaborate inner courts. As always, the maharajah rarely lived far from mainstreet, and that's especially the case in Udaipur. With just a 10-minute walk, you're in the market district. The air is filled with the fragrance of aromatic spices and the clatter of commerce. Your walk ends at the vegetables, where you shop with your guide. Then you'll join a local chef in her kitchen where your meal comes together as she explains some of the techniques and traditions of classic Indian cuisine. You'll be able to help with the preparation of the dishes if you like, and everyone sits down together to enjoy this very personal meal.

Later, spend the afternoon to relax at the hotel or join an hour-long walk from Dudh Talai to the top of Maachla Magra. This scenic walk leads uphill along a paved path. Your reward is an unparalleled view of Udaipur and its three lakes—Pichola, Fateh Sagar and Swaroop Sagar—as well as bird's eye views of the City Palace, Jagdish Temple and the Monsoon Palace. As the sun sets, you have the option to walk back down or use the new ropeway tram.

Tonight, you'll be treated to a lavish farewell dinner at your hotel.

MEALS: B, L, D OVERNIGHT: UDAIPUR

DAY 9 »

Udaipur / Depart

After a leisurely breakfast, you'll depart for the airport to begin your journey home.

MEALS: B

Tour Hotels



Shangri-La Eros Delhi

In the heart of New Delhi, this luxurious 5-star hotel is an elegant oasis. Sprawling lawns surround it, and many of the tasteful contemporary Asian-style rooms offer grand views of the city's historic district. Facilities include a lovely pool.

NIGHTS: 1 nights



Oberoi Amarvilas

Just 600 meters from the Taj Mahal, all rooms and public areas in this fine resort offer breathtaking views. Inspired by Moorish and Mughal architecture, it has been ranked in the top 10 hotels in the world by Travel + Leisure.

NIGHTS: 1 nights



Samode Haveli

Built by various rulers over many centuries, the former royal residences are now deluxe rooms and suites. Each room in Samode Haveli is unique and has a distinctive character which reflects the rich history and culture of Samode.

NIGHTS: 2 nights



Dev Shree Deogarh

This luxury hotel has been constructed in a traditional haveli style with deep verandahs, courtyards of Rajput architecture and influence. The interiors are airy and spacious, and the décor has a contemporary twist. Bedrooms offer views of the gardens.

NIGHTS: 2 nights



[Oberoi Udaivilas](#)

On the banks of Lake Pichola, this extravagant hotel sprawls across 50 acres with sapphire pools, vivid gardens and amazing views. Rooms are a distinctive blend of local style and contemporary amenities. Arrange an over-the-top afternoon tea.

NIGHTS: 2 nights

Arrival & Departure

→ ARRIVAL DETAILS

START LOCATION: **Lobby of Shangri-La Eros Delhi**
START CITY: **Delhi**
START TIME: **9:00 AM**

→ DEPARTURE DETAILS

END LOCATION: **Lobby of Oberoi Udaivilas**
END CITY: **Udaipur**
END TIME: **At Leisure**