



**WENDY WU TOURS**

# Tour Dossier

## HIGHLIGHTS OF INDIA AND NEPAL, 22 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 periods of sightseeing on foot and climbing of some steps will be necessary. These tours are not recommended for those that are unable to walk for prolonged periods without assistance. These tours are generally longer in length and could involve long days of driving".

Anyone with a reasonable 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 climbing quite a number of steps. 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 steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite large, not level 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 from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

People with knee or hip injuries, who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider

carefully the suitability of this itinerary.

### **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 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 uneven 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. 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 can 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 indicates when you need to consider these.

### **Rail journeys**

This trip involves 1 day train in AC2 chair class - 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.

### **Electricity**

The supply of electricity in Ranthambore National Park (Days 9-11) can be unreliable. Refer to Your Travel Guide's ELECTRICITY section. For those passengers taking the Nepal tour extension, please note that Nepal's electricity supply is also unreliable and blackouts occur almost daily, even in Kathmandu. Refer to Your Travel Guide's ELECTRICITY section.

## Group size

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

## Altitude

For those continuing on the Nepal tour extension, Kathmandu is at an altitude of 1337m [4390ft] and the rest of the valley is roughly the same. This is considered to be moderate, rather than high altitude and people rarely have any trouble with this. However, as you will be flying to Kathmandu, the sudden rise in altitude may cause some mild effects. It is recommended to drink more (water, non-alcoholic and non-caffeinated drinks) and avoid exertion after arriving at altitude. However if you have an existing respiratory, vascular or coronary condition, we recommend checking with your Doctor before undertaking this itinerary.

Mild symptoms of AMS occur in some people and include dizziness, fatigue, nausea or loss of appetite, breathlessness or headache. These usually develop over the first 36 hours at altitude and not immediately on arrival. AMS symptoms are experienced by people of varying ages and levels of fitness, and usually the symptoms will subside after a day or so. If symptoms worsen, you should seek medical advice and descend in altitude immediately.

## Tipping

If there are less than 10 people in your group, please allow USD\$98 each for tipping. If there are more than 10, please allow USD\$83 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. For Nepal, please also allow USD\$5 each per day.

## Highlights of India plus Nepal

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

### Day 1-2: Johannesburg/Delhi

You will be met in the airport arrivals hall tonight by your Local 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. There is no sightseeing scheduled for this afternoon.

### Day 3: Delhi

Today is a very full day of sightseeing around Old and New Delhi, involving approx 4 hrs on foot. Sightseeing includes 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 4: Delhi/Udaipur

You may need to rise very early this morning to transfer to the airport to catch the morning flight to Udaipur (flight duration 1 ½ hrs). As the hotel rooms will not be available at this time, you will transfer (½ hr drive) directly from the airport to commence sightseeing around the lakes in Udaipur. Transfer to the hotel and check in for an afternoon at leisure. 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. Easy sightseeing at the Jagmandir Lake Palace.

### Day 5: 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 6: Udaipur/Jodhpur

Drive 3 to 4 hrs (90km) to Ranakpur and visit Jain temple complex. Sightseeing here involves ½ hr easy walking - refer to **Appropriate Dress**

above. Drive a further approx 4 hrs (180km) to Jodhpur & check in.

### Day 7: Jodhpur

Visit the Meherangarh Fort which involves approx 2 hrs on foot and some steps. The group bus will drop off and collect passengers at the same place, so anyone unable to complete this activity may return and wait for group. Drive to (½ hr) to Umaid Bhawan Palace (also called Chittar Palace); sightseeing here involves approx 1 hr easy walking around palace and museum.

### Day 8: Jodhpur/Jaipur

Drive approx 7 hrs (336km) to Jaipur and have lunch en route. Upon arrival in Jaipur, check in to hotel; there is no sightseeing scheduled for this evening. Jaipur is a larger city where it would be unwise to wander around without your Guide/Escort at night as there have been reports of pickpockets, etc.

### Day 9: Jaipur

Sightseeing this morning involves 2 to 3 hrs on foot. At Amer Palace, 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 need to queue for 2 to 3hrs and the service is often shut down without notice by local tourism authority due to safety concerns. There are a number of steps within the palace. Sightseeing this afternoon involves approx 2 hrs on foot & climbing steps in the City Palace.

### Day 10: Jaipur/Ranthambore National Park

Drive approx 4 hrs (170km) south to Ranthambore National Park and check in. 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 11: Ranthambore National Park

You will have morning and afternoon excursions into the park, involving 2 to 3 hrs of driving through the park in canters, on uneven and unsealed

tracks, returning to the hotel for lunch. There is also easy sightseeing at Ranthambore Fort, involving approx ½ hr walking and a few steps.

### **Day 12: Ranthambore National Park/Agra**

Early this morning transfer 10km to the train station in nearby town of Sawai Madhopur to catch the train to Bharatpur (journey takes 2 ¼ hrs). After lunch, drive ½ hr (22km) to Fatehpur Sikri and visit the ancient capital city. Sightseeing involves up to 1 hr easy walking. Continue driving 1 ½ hrs (40km) to Agra and check in at hotel.

### **Day 13: 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 steps. This afternoon, visit Agra Fort, sightseeing here involves approx 1 ½ hrs on foot and climbing stairs.

### **Day 14: Agra/Khajuraho**

Rise early this morning and transfer to train station to catch the train 220km to Jhansi (journey takes approx 2 ½ hrs). From Jhansi, drive 4 to 5 hours (178km) via Orchha to Khajuraho and check in at the hotel. Sightseeing at Orchha is easy with a few steps and may take up to an hour.

*[N.B: Our seats will be in an AC Chair Car. More than likely you will not be able to purchase any food/drink on the train so if you need munchies make sure to purchase them before boarding. There will be local travellers on these carriages, so be aware of your belongings.]*

### **Day 15: Khajuraho/Varanasi**

Check out from the hotel and drive 15mins to Khajuraho temples. We usually spend 2 hrs here; sightseeing involves walking with little shade, so make sure you bring sun protection. From here, transfer directly to the airport for the afternoon flight to Varanasi (flight duration 40mins). Transfer (1 hr drive) to the hotel and

check-in. 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 16: Varanasi**

Another early rise this morning to take a boat ride on the River Ganges for 2 to 3 hrs. Please note that you should not take photos of any burning Ghats, as this is a funeral ceremony. Return to hotel for breakfast. The rest of the day's sightseeing is leisurely, involving approx 1 hrs walking. You will be visiting Buddhist sacred sites – refer to **Appropriate Dress** section above.

### **Day 17: Varanasi/Kathmandu**

Kathmandu altitude – 1337m [4390ft]

You will be met in Kathmandu airport arrivals hall by your Local Guide/National Escort and transfer (20 to 40mins drive depending on traffic) to your hotel and check-in. Refer to **Notes on Altitude** section above.

### **Day 18: Kathmandu/Patan**

Leisurely sightseeing today at nearby Patan and the Swayambunath and Bodhnath Stupas just outside Kathmandu; involving approx 4 hrs on foot. It's a good idea to have sunglasses, hats etc on the bus at Swayambunath and keep a firm hold of cameras, etc as the monkeys which gave this stupa its nickname can be thieves! You will be visiting Buddhist sites today – refer to **Appropriate Dress** section above.

### **Day 19: Bhaktapur day trip**

Bhaktapur altitude – 1401m [4600ft]

Drive 13km (½ hr to 1hr) east to Bhaktapur – this is a winding and occasionally uneven road. Bhaktapur is a protected site and vehicles are not allowed within it, so the group bus will drop you off at one of the entrance gates and you will be able to explore the town on foot. Sightseeing involves approx 4 hrs on foot but not many steps. Return to Kathmandu overnight.

### **Day 20: Kathmandu**

Today is at leisure.

### **Day 21: Kathmandu/Johannesburg**

You will be transferred from the hotel to the airport, according to the departure time of your flight. Any time before your flight is at leisure.

### **Day 22: South Africa**

Arrive home.

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