



WORLD DISCOVERY
— HISTORY CULTURE WILDLIFE —

India and Nepal



The Temple of Swayambhunath, Kathmandu

DAY 1 - Depart UK.

DAY 2 - Arrive Delhi.

On arrival in Delhi in the morning you will be met by a representative of World Discovery outside immigration and customs. You will then be taken by private car direct to your hotel. The remainder of the day is at leisure.

DAY 3 – Delhi Sightseeing.

After breakfast, you will meet your World Discovery guide and spend the morning visiting the highlights of India's capital city, beginning with the colossal **Qutb Minar**. This amazing 73-metre high Victory Tower was completed in 1236 to celebrate Qutb-ud-Din's defeat of the Turks and can be seen for miles around. Continue to the elegant **Humayun's Tomb**, a fine example of early Mughal architecture, and later visit the fascinating **Hindu temple complex of Chattarpur**. The afternoon is spent exploring New Delhi, planned on a grandiose scale as the capital of British India by the architect Edwin Lutyens and his colleague Herbert Baker, and inaugurated in February 1931. This morning you will drive along the wide avenues of this late-imperial capital, viewing the vast complex of government buildings and the famous **India Gate**, built to commemorate the 70,000 Indian soldiers who died in the First World War. You will also visit **Raj Ghat**, the moving memorial to Mahatma Gandhi, set in landscaped gardens, and the interesting **Gandhi Museum**. A further afternoon at leisure.

Meals included: Full breakfast.

DAY 4 – Drive to Agra via Sikandra.

After breakfast your driver will collect you and you will head south out of the capital down the former Grand Trunk Road on your morning drive to Agra, the capital of the Mughal Empire. Shortly before reaching Agra, a special visit is made to the mausoleum of Akbar the Great at Sikandra. This beautifully proportioned complex, often omitted from tour itineraries, is set in extensive gardens. Continue to Agra. The rest of the day has been left free.

Meals included: Full breakfast.

DAY 5 – Taj Mahal and the Agra Fort.

This morning visit what is generally regarded as the world's most romantic building – the glorious white-marble Taj Mahal, built by the fifth Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in the 17th century in memory of his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal. This magnificent monument, a fusion of Indian Hindu and Persian Muslim architectural traditions, never fails to impress. You will also explore the huge red-sandstone Agra Fort overlooking the River Jumna. Afternoon at leisure. In the evening you may wish to return to the Taj Mahal for an optional sunset visit.

Meals included: Full breakfast.

DAY 6 – By road to Gwalior.

In the morning drive south to the city of Gwalior. Despite being somewhat off the beaten tourist track, the huge hilltop fortress of Gwalior is one of the most impressive in northern India. Sightseeing in Gwalior will also include the Maharaja's Palace which incorporates the Scindia Museum, an unusual collection of royal possessions. The Durbar Hall of the palace is famous for containing two of the world's largest chandeliers, each weighing over 3 tons, and the charming battery-operated silver train set which used to transport cigars and drinks around the huge banqueting table.

Meals included: Full breakfast.

DAY 7 – By road via Orchha to Khajuraho.

Drive south from Gwalior to the atmospheric abandoned city of **Orchha**, set on an island on a bend in the Betwa River. Built in the early 16th century by the Bundela dynasty this little visited medieval fortress boasts some splendid buildings, especially the Raj Mahal, which contains a selection of beautiful murals, and the Lakshminarayan Temple. In the afternoon continue your journey by road to Khajuraho.

Meals included: Full breakfast, lunch.

DAY 8 - Khajuraho.

In the morning your guide will take you to visit the astonishing temples of Khajuraho, built under the Chandela kings in the 10th and 11th centuries. The 20 remaining temples (originally there were 85) are intricately carved with mythical beasts, celestial nymphs, Hindu gods and goddesses and cult images. There are many erotic representations for which Khajuraho has become world-famous. The temples have been granted World Heritage status. Afternoon free.

Meals included: Full breakfast.

DAY 9 - Fly to Varanasi.

Morning free. There is the option of an early morning visit to **Panna National Park**. Panna is well known for its deer, antelope and leopard. There are also tigers in the reserve but these are rarely seen. In the early afternoon take the short flight to Varanasi.

Meals included: Full breakfast.

DAY 10 - Boat ride on the Ganges.

An early rise to experience one of the most atmospheric sights of India - the morning rituals on the banks of the River Ganges. You will travel by rowing boat alongside the famous 'ghats' (steps down to the river) where you will see hundreds of Hindu pilgrims bathing in the river, facing the rising sun. The scene is quite incredible and will remain in your memory for ever. Afterwards, walk through the narrow alleys of the old city to visit several temples and further capture the spirit of this unique city. The afternoon is at leisure, with the option of visiting the ruins of **Sarnath**, where Buddha is believed to have delivered his first sermon in 528 B.C.

Meals included: Full breakfast.

DAY 11 – Fly to Kathmandu in Nepal.

Morning at leisure. In the afternoon fly to Kathmandu where you will be met by our representative outside immigration and customs. You will then be taken by private car direct to your hotel.

Meals included: Full breakfast.

DAY 12 – Kathmandu Sightseeing.

After a leisurely breakfast, you will meet your World Discovery guide and spend the morning visiting the highlights of Nepal's fascinating capital, located at 1,337m (4,390ft) in a valley beneath the towering peaks of the Himalaya. Walk through the atmospheric medieval centre of this ancient city, visiting **Durbar Square** with its many temples and monuments, including the old Royal Palace, home to the famous 'Living Goddess'. Continue to the dramatic Buddhist stupa of **Swayambhunath**, located on a hilltop overlooking the city. The afternoon is at leisure, with the opportunity of taking an optional excursion to **Patan**, the second city of the Kathmandu Valley, with its superb collection of ancient temples.

Meals included: Full breakfast.

DAY 13 – Kathmandu.

A day to relax at your hotel, do some shopping, or explore some of the other attractions within easy reach of the capital. For those with an interest in history and architecture, a must-see is the glorious medieval town of **Bhaktapur**, virtually untouched by modernity and designated by UNESCO as a World heritage Site. Also worth visiting is the Hindu holy site of **Pasupatinath**, where crowds of pilgrims gather to bathe and worship in the many shrines beside the sacred Bagmati River (a tributary of the Ganges). Your World Discovery representative is on hand to organise these and other visits on your behalf.

Meals included: Full breakfast.

DAY 14 - Kathmandu. Special 6-course Nepali dinner.

Another day in Nepal's capital for relaxation or further sightseeing. In the evening you will be taken to the unique **Dwarika's Kathmandu Hotel** for a special farewell Nepali dinner.

Meals included: Full breakfast, dinner.

DAY 15 – Depart for home.

Private transfer to the airport for your international flight home.

Meals included: Full breakfast.