India’s grand and gorgeous architectural masterworks have enchanted the West for scores of centuries. Lord Curzon, India’s most astute Viceroy, praised its temples, tombs, and palaces as “the greatest galaxy of monuments in the world.”

On this two-week journey to India’s northern heartland, we immerse ourselves in that stellar firmament, visiting the grandest of the subcontinent’s monuments—with an enthralling emphasis on its old and its new palaces, in which, enveloped in luxurious hospitality, we’re happy to say we stay. At Delhi’s Leela Palace; the fabulous Oberoi Amarvilas in Agra, where every window looks out at the nearby Taj Mahal; at the exquisite Rambagh Palace, home of Jaipur’s last reigning maharajah; at Udaipur’s lyric Oberoi Udaivilas; and the Taj Group’s majestic Umaid Bhawan Palace in Jodhpur.
DAYS 7–9 Jaipur

A countryside drive takes us to the fabled Pink City of Jaipur. For more than half a millennium Jaipur's Rajput maharajahs were renowned for their regal disdain for rupee-pinning. They spent, played, and built extravagantly; witness our palace, the Rambagh, home of the last of Jaipur's rulers, Sawai Man Singh II. The Rambagh Palace, now a Taj Group property, regularly lands high on lists of the World's Best Hotels, for its frank splendour, its traditionally noble but state-of-the-art comfy rooms, its cool marble corridors, its fountain-misted gardens, its fine dining, and, in the Taj Group custom, its flawlessly alert and cheery service.

There is much to see and enjoy in the Pink City, and with our Micato Travel Director at our side, we'll do our best to take it all in, visiting the vast and fabulously ornate City Palace; hot air ballooning in the early morning as Jaipur awakens; rambling in the Doctor Seussian (but strikingly accurate), 280-year-old Jantar Mantar Observatory; and admiring the whimsical Hawa Mahal, or Palace of the Winds.

We'll wander in the mirrored mini-palaces of massive Amber Fort, lunch at the serene Samode Palace a little way outside of town, and spend an afternoon helping bath and taking a short walk with lovingly cared-for elephants at a private estate, returning to the Amarvilas for a swim in its lovely pool, dinner at its top-flight restaurant, and spend an afternoon help-
**ROYAL PALACES OF INDIA**

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In 1971 India abolished the state subsidies and titles of the maharajahs, rajajins, nawabs, wadiyars, badshahs, and walis of the princely states that had become part of independent India 24 years before. But some of the families, perhaps especially Jaipur’s, held on to great wealth and prestige.

**DAYS 10 & 11 Udaipur**
A morning flight takes us to lakeside Udaipur, beloved of Indians and internationals for its beauty and serenity, its intrigueing temples, and its

**PREVIOUS PAGE. Reflection of the Taj Mahal, Agra. Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India at the turn of the 20th century, wrote that the Taj was “The gem of man’s handiwork, without flaw or blemish, exquisite, irresistible, impossible to criticize, impeccable in every detail, an extravagance, the most perfect structure in the world.” (Note that the aesthetically astute Curzon said “the gem of man’s handiwork,” not “a gem.”)

**OPPOSITE PAGE. An invitation to dine like royalty at the Umaid Bhawan Palace in Jaipur.**

**BELOW. Private pool and lounge area at the Oberoi Udaivilas in Udaipur.**

**DAY 1  En Route**

**DAYS 2–4 Delhi**
After a leisurely morning we’ll have an orientation lunch with our Micato Travel Director. Now we’ll delve into swirfly colourful Old Delhi, rich-seeing over to Jama Masjid, one of India’s largest and most impressive mosques (it’s one of the last monuments built by Shah Jahan, whose world-crowning glory, the Taj Mahal, we’ll soon see). We’ll visit Humayun’s Tomb (said to have inspired the Taj Mahal); and built extravagantly, witness our palace, the Rambagh, home of the last of Jaipur’s rulers, Sawai Man Singh II. The Rambagh Palace, now a Taj Group property, regularly lands high on lists of the World’s Best Hotels, for its frank splendour, its traditionally noble but state-of-the-art comfy rooms, its cool marble corridors, its fountain-misted gardens, its fine dining, and, in the Taj Group custom, its flawlessly alert and cheery service.

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**DAY 5 & 6 Agra**
A modern toll road takes us to Agra for a couple of days in the sweetly hypnotic aura of the Taj Mahal. Our base is the Amarvilas, a scintillating Oberois Lodha property, the sublime Amarvilas, a scintillating Oberois Lodha property, the sublime

**DAY 8.** It nascented and demanded proof that our species was worth preserving; we might crank up some Mozart or Beethoven, take them on a chambered tour of Shakespearean, but we’ll really seal the deal with the Taj.

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There are some parts of the world that, once visited, get into your heart and won’t go. For me, India is such a place. When I first visited...it was as if all my life I had been seeing the world in black and white and, when brought face-to-face with India, experienced everything re-rendered in brilliant technicolor.

**Oberoi Udaitvas**, recently ranked the planet’s second best hotel by *Conde Nast Traveler*, and the number one Indian resort hotel by *Travel+Leisure*—and among the 50 best in the world, according to *Travel+Leisure*—is expertly operated, as always, by the Taj Group. Our palace rooms are decorated with Art Deco themes and feature all the luxuries, grace notes we’ve come to expect of the old ruling family, and as a uniquely stately residence—now serves as a museum, as the home of the last and largest of India’s great palaces.

Umaid Bhawan sits among 26 garden acres atop Chittar Hill, overlooking the Blue City of Jodhpur. The vast palace—once the world’s largest private residence—now serves as a museum, as the home of the last and largest of India’s great palaces. Umaid Bhawan was built in the 1730s by Jai Singh II, one of Jaipur’s long line of swashbuckling, ornate, sometimes almost whimsically beautiful maharajahs. The City Palace was built in the 1720s by Jai Singh II, one of Jaipur’s long line of swashbuckling, polo-playing, tastefully sybaritic maharajahs.

After flying back to Delhi, we’ll have day rooms,—and raghro days, if necessary for late flights—at the splendid *Oberoi Gurgaon*, near Delhi’s airport.

**In the great books of India, an empire spoke to us, nothing small or unworthy, but large, serene, consistent, the voice of an old intelligence, which in another age and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the questions that exercise us.** —Kent Bellows

**Oberoi Udaitvas**

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DAYS 12–14 Jodhpur

We drive northwest towards Jodhpur, stopping for a quiet lunch en route and a visit to the Jain temple complex at Ranakpur before motoring up to the doors of the Umaid Bhawan Palace, fittingly the last and the largest of India’s great palaces.

Umaid Bhawan sits among 26 garden acres atop Chittar Hill, overlooking the Blue City of Jodhpur. The vast palace—once the world’s largest private residence—now serves as a museum, as the home of the old ruling family, and as a uniquely stately hotel, expertly operated, as always, by the Taj Group. Our palace rooms are decorated with Art Deco themes and feature all the luxuries, amenities, and grace notes we’ve come to expect from a Taj hotel. The Umaid Bhawan is, as they say, a destination in itself, but so is Jodhpur; we’ll wander in the Old City, visit monolithic Mehrangarh Fort and the glowing marble cenotaph of Jaspwan Thada, and we’ll take a jeep safari through Bishnoi villages (the Bishnoi are a religious group rooted in deep respect for nature), followed by a lovely picnic lunch and a return to the inimitable Umaid Bhawan.

DAY 15 Back to Delhi and Homeward

After flying back to Delhi, we’ll have day rooms,— and rough rooms, if necessary for late flights—at the splendid Oberoi Gurgaon, near Delhi’s airport.

DAY 16 Arrive Home

Arrive Home

Back to Delhi and Homeward

A nook in the private quarters of Udaipur’s City Palace, a flamboyantly set engrossingly vast complex on the shores of Lake Pichola.

OPPOSITE PAGE A courtyard in the City Palace, Jaipur. Vast, sun-flooded walkways, in the artwork, gardens and polo-playing, tastefully sybaritic maharajahs.

In the great books of India, an empire spoke to us, nothing small or unworthy, but large, serene, consistent, the voice of an old intelligence, which in another age and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the questions that exercise us. —Ralph Waldo Emerson

Tariff 2019

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Make it Private

Royal Palaces of India can be transformed into a fully private trip for a family or a group of friends. You’ll have your own Travel Director and your pick of departure dates. Contact our India experts or your travel advisor to find out how to make Royal Palaces of India a Private Indian Journey.

2019 Dates

From and To Home / All dates guaranteed departures, some departure days vary

2020 Dates

From and To Home / New rates may apply; some departure days may vary

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