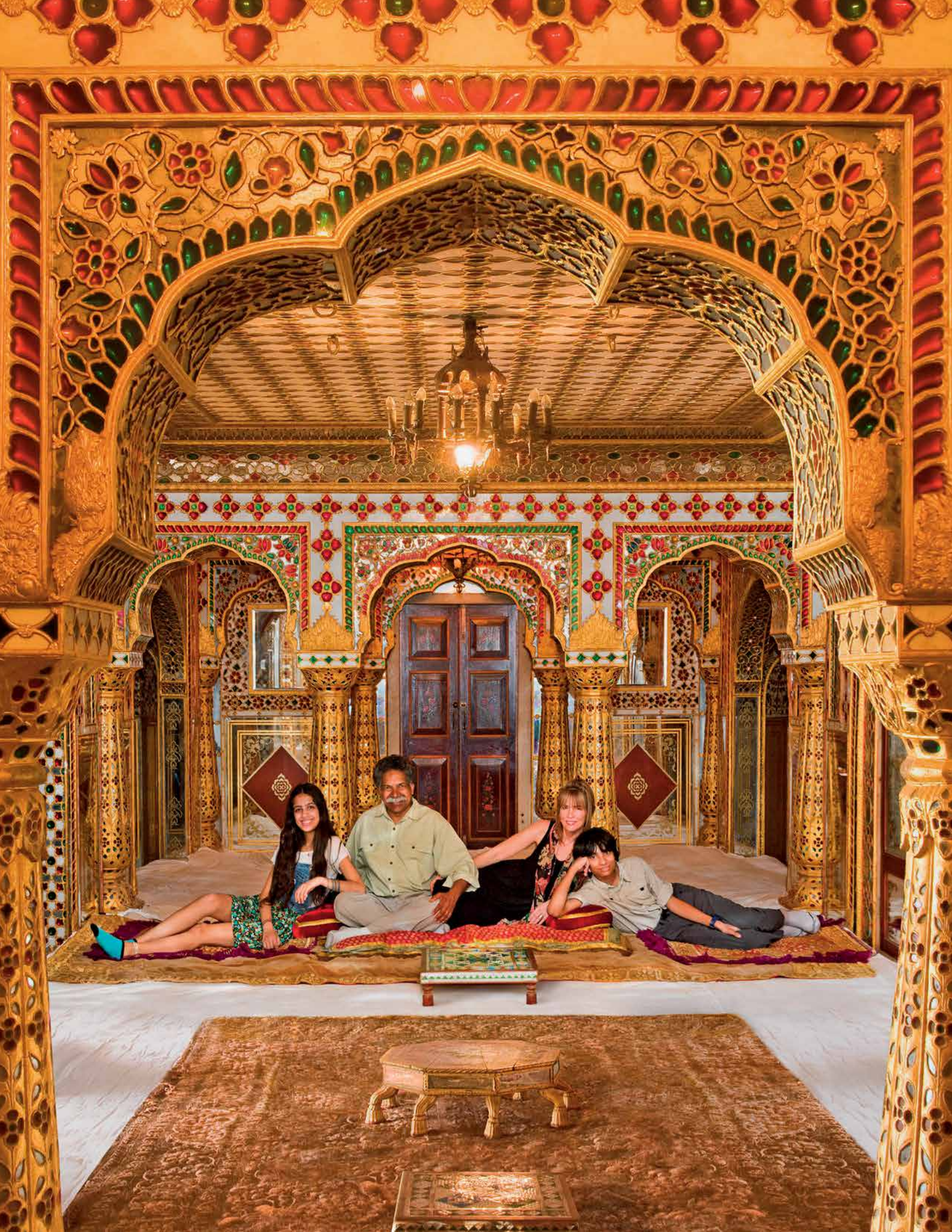




SPLENDOURS
OF
NORTHERN
INDIA





Dear Traveller,

My parents, Felix and Jane Pinto, founded Micato Safaris over 55 years ago in Africa, and 30 years ago my dear friend Cecil Haidar Ali and I started Micato India. But India has been an integral part of my family for centuries (my grandparents immigrated to Kenya from Goa during the British Raj). Our roots in India are deep, our love for it is great.

I hope this brochure conveys that love and firm connection. But before you size it up, I'd like to highlight a few key reasons we think Micato can't be surpassed in offering a deep and delightful Indian experience.

Luxury with a purpose: You'll immediately see that Micato India doesn't stint on creature comforts. Yet we know that the sweetest and most sumptuous luxury always has a rationale. India is a lively place—to put it mildly. And so the Indians have devoted deep thought and talent to creating a science of serenity, and they've put that science to work in creating our favoured hotels, some of the most luxuriously serene hotels on earth.

Exclusive inclusions: Throughout this brochure, we zero in on our unique approach to Indian travel: Our no-tipping policy. The top-flight Travel Director who accompanies each trip—private Custom, small-group Classic, or Private Classic—from beginning to end. Our all-meals-included policy (which isn't confined to hotel restaurants), all local wine and beer at mealtime, complimentary laundry service, and much more.

Family: is a bedrock Micato principle, in Africa (*Travel+Leisure* has named us World's Best Family Safari Outfitter) and in India (whose on-the-ground staff is led by Cecil's children, Lisa and Michael, members of the extended Pinto family). And the family principle has always included our guests as a matter of course...which is why journalist Becca Hensley recently wrote in a prominent travel magazine that:

"Traveling with Micato feels much like being escorted through India by old family friends."

And which is why I invite you to join us in India, our ancestral home.

Sincerely,

Dennis Pinto
Managing Director



The Micato Difference in **INDIA**

Micato's trips are inspired by our Indian heritage, by decades of experience, and by an enduring fascination with this endlessly engaging country. We're intent upon presenting India in its most sparkling and enchanting light, and so:

Toppest-Notch Travel Directors

All our trips are accompanied every step of the way by a highly trained Indian Travel Director. We stress *Indian*, because of the advantages of being escorted by someone deeply knowledgeable about the land and its customs and dialects, not to mention its lesser-visited wonders, including unique encounters with local people our guides have known for years, marvelous people in all walks of

life, engaged in all kinds of fascinating endeavours, from India's skyrocketing movers and shakers, to traditional artists, cosmic thinkers, and tea shop proprietors with a love for Hitchcock movies.

As journalist Becca Hensley writes, "Our Micato Travel Director was a miracle worker, following one magic trick with the next."

All Gratuities Always Included

No tipping is necessary or expected in Micato's India, ever, from the beginning of your trip to its end (this includes tips to your Travel Director and drivers). We are happy to take care of this often nagging detail for you.



An Indian Company

Micato India's home base is in India, not in an office two oceans away. Upon arrival you are given key phone numbers, which you can call anytime, day or night. So, if your Travel Director isn't in attendance, and you need a prescription filled, a question answered, or a car at your hotel's front entrance, we're on-the-24-hour-ball. Plus, Micato is a well-known and respected partner of India's champion hotels, making life all the sweeter for our guests.

Upgrades

We fly business class in India whenever possible. If—as sometimes is the case—there is no business class, we purchase an extra 12 pounds of baggage allowance per sector, per guest.

We Pick Up the Check, Always

All meals are included everywhere, every day. If you choose to dine at one of your hotel's restaurants, you're not—this is very often the case—limited to a buffet or minimal menu. And if you want to sample one of Jaipur's famous eateries, or follow your Travel Director's tip on a hip new Delhi café, Micato takes care of the check.

Refreshing Travel

We only use the most up-to-date, air-conditioned vehicles (and our cars and vans are carefully supplied with iced water, hand purifiers, snacks, and whatever you need).

We Pick Up the Tab

Local wine and beer are included with all meals.

Laundry Happily Included

Complimentary laundry service is on us.

Udaipur's Lake Pichola and its grand City Palace, built over the course of 400 years by the Maharanas of the Mewar dynasty. Micato's Hem Singh says that "My favourite city, outside of Jaipur, of course, is Udaipur: coffee on a private terrace overlooking the lake, a little city exploring—especially the rural areas—and a sunset boat ride followed by dinner on the edge of the lake."



SPLENDOURS OF NORTHERN INDIA

13 days | Departs Thursday, returns Tuesday

India is a land of rapturous liveliness, of art and devotion and flowering creativity, a land that values intense quietude amidst its endlessly swirling colour.

And, of course, it's a land of sublime natural and perhaps matchless human-made majesty. Based from some of the world's most expertly luxurious and serene hotels, this brilliantly choreographed two-week journey brings us into intimate contact with many of India's most compelling splendours: Delhi's many monuments to Mughal and British imperial pride; Jaipur's whimsical pink buildings and vast royal residences; beautiful Udaipur's lakeside and island-straddling palaces; and perhaps especially with the Taj Mahal, an edifice so bewitching that Micato's friend Theo Cruz "had to shut my eyes to escape the feeling of being in a dream."



India was the motherland of our race, and Sanskrit the mother of Europe's languages: she was the mother of our philosophy; mother, through the Arabs, of much of our mathematics; mother, through the Buddha, of the ideals embodied in Christianity; mother, through the village community, of self-government and democracy. Mother India is in many ways the mother of us all.

—Will Durant, *The Case for India*



DAY 1 *En route*

DAYS 2–4 *Delhi*

Our days in India's capital will be eye-openingly active. Largely a creation of the British Raj, New Delhi is magnificently planned, with spacious, tree-lined avenues and fanciful Indo-Saracenic architecture. We'll visit Rajpath, one of the world's most impressive civic boulevards, and—with our Tour Director's well-practiced help—we'll navigate Old Delhi's twisting maze of narrow, bustling, intriguing, shop-thronged byways. We'll pay our respects at Humayun's magnificent Tomb, resting place of the second of India's 19 Mughal emperors. And we'll get acquainted with India's ethnic mosaic at the country's largest mosque, the imposing Jama Masjid, and at bustling Gurudwara Bangla Sahib, a centre of worship and community for India's 21 million Sikhs. Our Delhi hotel, the sparkling and strategically located Taj Mahal, is a

lovely introduction to the country's talent for mixing modernity with timeless grace and charm.

DAYS 5 & 6 *Agra*

A morning drive on a modern toll road takes us to Agra and the inimitable Taj Mahal, a structure that blurs the line between nature and art, stone and spirit, wakefulness and a wondrous dreamworld. Luckily, our Agra domicile, the fabled Oberoi Amarvilas, enjoys a dramatically apt location: its every beautifully designed window looks out at the Taj—only a couple of thousand feet away.

We'll visit the Taj in early morning and at sunset, and drive to the gardens of Mehtab Bagh for a view across the Yamuna River. It has long been a cliché that the Taj is one of the few world-iconic sights that lives up to its star billing; many of us agree with traveller Thomas Bacon, who wrote way back in 1835 that “had fifty times as much been said in its praise...all these rhapsodies [would fall] short of its real magnificence.”

Agra is home to much more than the Taj, of course—it was said in the official Mughal history, the *Padshahnama*, that “who sees Agra has seen the world;” the Mughals left a liberal sprinkling of fascinating tombs, mausoleums, and the vast UNESCO World Heritage Site of Agra Fort, more an endlessly fascinating walled city than a fortress.*

DAYS 7–9 *Jaipur*

We drive west to the Pink City of Jaipur, steeped in history and endlessly vibrant with life and colour. Our headquarters for three Jaipurian nights is the magnificent Rambagh Palace, once home to Maharajah Sawai Man Singh II, the last of Jaipur’s famously stylish and extravagant reigning maharajahs.* The Rambagh is a good example of one of Jaipur’s joys: the tangibility of its past, which comes alive at the Rambagh, at the fabulously ornate City Palace, at the almost whimsical yet stunningly accurate observatory of Jantar Mantar, and at Amber Fort, a massive, sandstone-walled marvel with lavish interior murals, frescoes and carvings. (At the Fort’s Sheesh Mahal, or

Mirror Palace, strategically placed lamps reflected in thousands of multi-coloured mirrors

create a sparkling, magical mist of light.)

A heartwarming early morning hot air balloon ride takes us over Jaipur’s marble quarry hills and suburban homes and gardens: dogs bark, teakettles whistle, bicyclists head for work, and kids race off for school; we wave and smile, and becharmed Jaipuris smile and wave back and take out their handy cell phones to take our picture.

We’ll delve into Jaipur’s famous jewelry, carpets, fabrics, and you-name-it emporia, visit the lapidary Samode Palace and gardens outside the city, and one enchanting evening we’ll board a sweetly accommodating elephant and take a swaying ride into the Rajasthan countryside to a regally catered al fresco dinner.

* In 1971 India abolished the state subsidies and titles of the maharajahs, rajahs, 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.

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, incapable of improvement, 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 A courtyard in the City Palace, Jaipur. Vast, ornate, sometimes almost whimsically beautiful, City Palace was built in the 1730s by Jai Singh II, one of Jaipur’s long line of swashbuckling, polo-playing, tastefully sybaritic maharajahs.

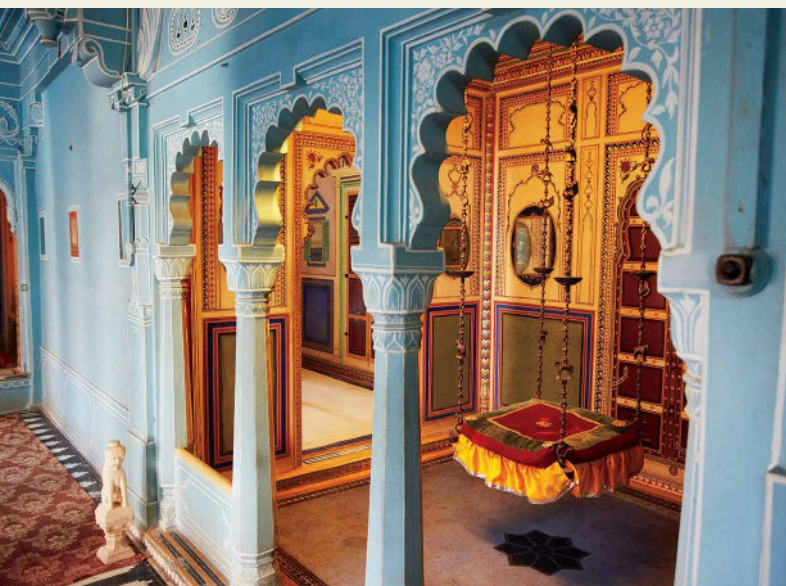
BELOW A typically vibrant street scene in Old Delhi.

* After being dethroned by his son Aurangzeb in 1658, Shah Jahan, the Taj’s inspired builder, spent the last eight years of his life locked up in the fort, gazing out at his masterpiece, the Taj.



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.

—Keith Bellows



DAYS 10–11 *Udaipur*

We fly southwest from Jaipur to Udaipur, beloved throughout India for its calm lakes and reposeful airs. On the shores of the main lake, Pichola, is our hotel, the scintillatingly reposeful, superbly imaginative, and downright gorgeous Oberoi Udaivilas (if you think we're rather free with our adjectives, note that the Udaivilas was recently named planet Earth's number one best hotel in the annual *Travel+Leisure* rankings). Udaipur's City Palace is a huge but delicate wonder. Its museum and the living quarters of the fiercely independent Maharanas of Mewar will impress us even after we've experienced eight or nine days of Indian splendour. Activities abound: We may boat on the lake (in parts reminiscent of the Bosphorus' meeting of water and stately architecture) or wander and shop on the lively street below the palace. And just north of Udaipur is the thousand-year old temple complex of Eklingji—108 intricately carved Hindu temples—and nearby Nagda, the site of two fourth-century temples with walls lavishly embellished with wonderfully carved stories from the Ramayana

and the Mahabharata, co-starring goddesses and gods and lovers in inventive embrace.

DAY 12 *Depart for home*

After an optional yoga session and lunch at the Udaivilas, we fly to Delhi and the Oberoi Gurgaon, where we'll have rooms available until our late night international flights.

DAY 13 *Arrive home*

LEFT A nook in the private quarters of Udaipur's City Palace, a flamboyantly yet engagingly vast complex on the shores of Lake Pichola. (And yes, that's the Palace on this brochure's cover, too.)

BELOW Ballooning at Amber Fort, Jaipur. The immense yet intimate fort is one India's most time-travelly sights; its lavish interiors and fabulously engineered fountains are brilliant testaments to the Rajput—or Jaipur—maharajahs' appreciation of beauty both subtle and dramatic.

OPPOSITE PAGE Udaipur. Micato's Hem Singh (see page 4) says that "My favourite city, outside of Jaipur, of course, is Udaipur: coffee on a private terrace overlooking the lake, a little city exploring—especially the rural areas—and a sunset boat ride followed by dinner on the edge of the lake."





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 2024

Land arrangements, per person

	Balance of Year	December 15-31
Double Occupancy	\$18,950	\$20,950
Single Supplement	4,550	6,150
Internal Flights within India	700	700

Jaipur / Udaipur* / Delhi*

*Denotes business class when available

2024 Dates

From and To Home | All dates guaranteed departures; some departure days vary

Jan. 05 – Jan. 17	Mar. 01 – Mar. 13	Oct. 04 – Oct. 16	Nov. 29 – Dec. 11
Jan. 12 – Jan. 24	Mar. 08 – Mar. 20	Oct. 11 – Oct. 23	Dec. 06 – Dec. 18
Jan. 19 – Jan. 31	Mar. 15 – Mar. 27	Oct. 18 – Oct. 30	Dec. 13 – Dec. 25
Jan. 26 – Feb. 07	Mar. 22 – Apr. 03	Oct. 25 – Nov. 06	Dec. 20 – Jan. 01
Feb. 02 – Feb. 14	Mar. 29 – Apr. 10	Nov. 01 – Nov. 13	Dec. 27 – Jan. 08
Feb. 09 – Feb. 21	Apr. 05 – Apr. 17	Nov. 08 – Nov. 20	
Feb. 16 – Feb. 28	Sep. 20 – Oct. 02	Nov. 15 – Nov. 27	
Feb. 23 – Mar. 06	Sep. 27 – Oct. 09	Nov. 22 – Dec. 04	

2025 Dates

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

Jan. 03 – Jan. 15	Feb. 28 – Mar. 12	Oct. 03 – Oct. 15	Nov. 28 – Dec. 10
Jan. 10 – Jan. 22	Mar. 07 – Mar. 19	Oct. 10 – Oct. 22	Dec. 05 – Dec. 17
Jan. 17 – Jan. 29	Mar. 14 – Mar. 26	Oct. 17 – Oct. 29	Dec. 12 – Dec. 24
Jan. 24 – Feb. 05	Mar. 21 – Apr. 02	Oct. 24 – Nov. 05	Dec. 19 – Dec. 31
Jan. 31 – Feb. 12	Mar. 28 – Apr. 09	Oct. 31 – Nov. 12	Dec. 26 – Jan. 07
Feb. 07 – Feb. 19	Apr. 04 – Apr. 16	Nov. 07 – Nov. 19	
Feb. 14 – Feb. 26	Sep. 19 – Oct. 01	Nov. 14 – Nov. 26	
Feb. 21 – Mar. 05	Sep. 26 – Oct. 08	Nov. 21 – Dec. 03	

Make it Private

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