

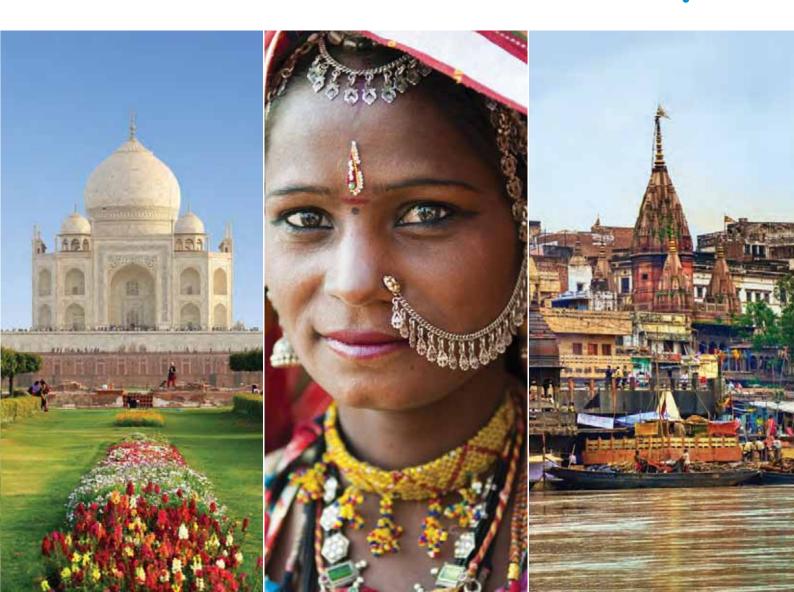


27 NIGHT LUXURY ADVENTURE INCLUDING 10 NIGHT RIVER CRUISE

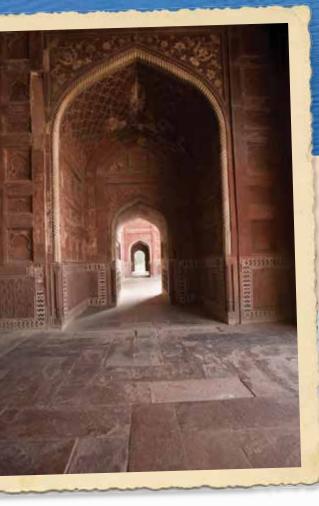
# authentic asia india

2015/2016

### Incredible India



# ndia's sights, sounds and flavours will bring you to your senses







Cruiseco does not offer holidays in a region until all of the elements are of the standard we demand. This has been the case for the last five years with our Authentic Asia Holidays to Vietnam and Cambodia, and for three years of those in Burma.

We have long wanted to offer you a bespoke adventure in India and now, with the launching of the wonderful RV Ganges Voyager, we have added **Authentic Asia India** to our holiday range.

Starting in the bustle of Kolkata (Calcutta), the RV Ganges Voyager, spends 10 nights on a unique cruise all the way to Patna. It's a magical journey through countryside, towns and cities, deep into the culture and homeland of the Bengalis.

Next, we take you on a holiday of indulgent luxury, starting in Varanasi, a most holy city for Hindus and Buddhists. Then we visit Agra, home to the Taj Mahal. We also explore Ranthambore National Park for the best chance of seeing tigers.

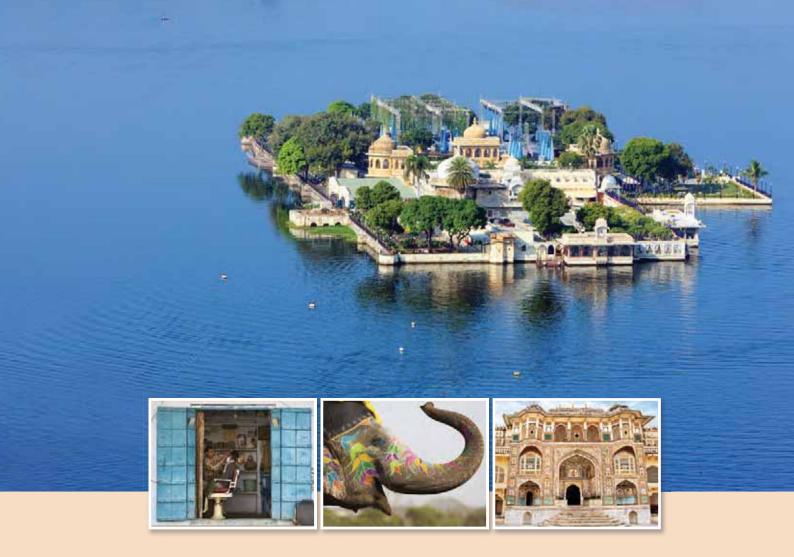
Then, the great cities of Rajahstan await. The Pink City of Jaipur, the desert fortress of Jodphur and the mystical magic of Udaipur are all included in your adventure before it concludes in the excitement of Mumbai.

Our itinerary has comprehensive inclusions but it also lets you choose some afternoons and meals so as to control the pace of your day.

There are only four departures per year of **Authentic Asia India** in 2015 and 2016, with space for just 100 bookings per year.

We urge to get aboard now and join us for this exclusive holiday.

elcome to Cruiseco's



Your **Authentic Asia India** holiday includes: a 10 night luxury river cruise • 17 nights in 5-star hotels 59 meals, including the best of Western and Indian cuisine • Spectacular sightseeing Most beverages and onboard services while cruising • Transfers and gratuities. *See details below.* 

### This adventure is strictly limited to just 56 fortunate travellers per departure who will delight in these amazing inclusions:

- 10 night luxury cruise aboard RV Ganges Voyager between Kolkata and Patna.
- 17 nights luxury accommodation in 5 star hotels, including Taj Gateway in Varanasi, Imperial in Delhi, Amarvilas in Agra, Rambagh Palace in Jaipur, Umaid Bhawan Palace in Jodhpur, Taj Lake Palace in Udaipur, and Taj Mahal Palace & Towers in Mumbai.
- 59 meals, including all meals whilst aboard RV Ganges Voyager, and breakfast, lunch, dinner and meals as specified in itinerary during land tour.

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- Beverages while cruising—all locally produced beer, soft drinks, coffee, tea and mineral water are served free of charge during the cruise; house red and white wine is served with lunch and dinner.
- Services of the ship's crew throughout your cruise.
- Included sightseeing with stops in Mumbai, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Jaipur, Ranthambore, Agra, Delhi, Varanasi, Patna, Munger, Bateshwarsthan, Rajmahal, Farakka, Murshidabad, Matiari, Kalna, and Kolkata.
- Gratuities aboard to dining room, cabin staff and ashore to guides and drivers.
- Transfers on day of your arrival and departure.



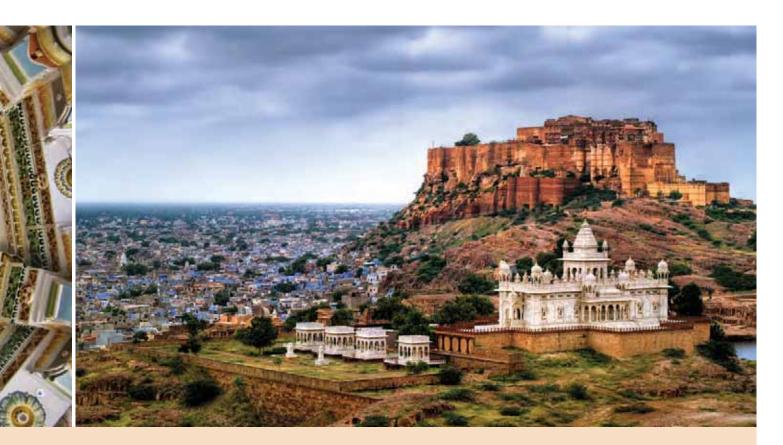


Contrasts abound everywhere you look, from monolithic gateways to the most humble of traditional of doors.



India is the inventor of the decimal system and chess; home to over 1.2 billion people and the world's largest democracy. Jain temple honouring the mother goddess Sachiya: Jainism is one of the world's oldest religions but it is a 'minority' in India with about 7 million adherents. Their faith prescribes non-violence towards all living ber followers are scrupulously observant, with some even forgoing root vegetables because tiny organisms are when the plants are pulled from the ground.





considered ings and injured

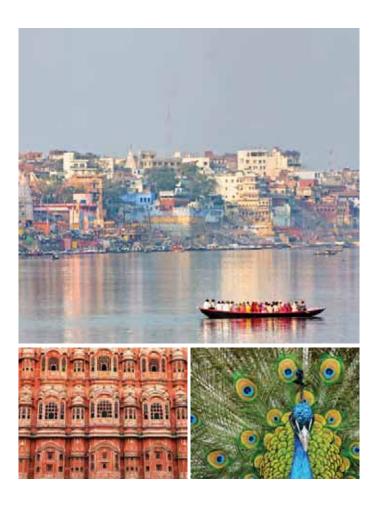
Jodphur, the Blue City: Rajasthan's second largest city sits in superb contrast to the surrounding and stark Thar Desert. It is famed for its many palaces, forts and temples, including the mighty Mehrangarh Fort. Many reasons are given for why paint the houses blue, including: it keeps them cool, it symbolises water in a desert region, or it was how the Brahmins (Hindu priestly class) signified their domicile.

To whet your appetite for this most fascinating of countries we have compiled these intriguing backgrounders:

- at approximately one third the size of the United States, it is the world's second most populous and seventh largest nation.
- it is illegal to take rupees out of India
- cows are held as sacred by Hindus—believing them to be one of humankind's seven mothers, they are permitted to wander freely
- while the nation boasts over one million millionaires most Indians live on less than two dollars a day
- many Indian wives will not say their husband's name aloud fearing it to be a sign of disrespect
- widows are considered to be bad luck and some will not permit them near newlyweds
- Mahatma is a honorific title meaning 'great soul'; his real name was Mohandas K. Gandhi
- the national flag has three horizontal bands: saffron for courage, white for truth and peace, and green for faith, fertility and chivalry.

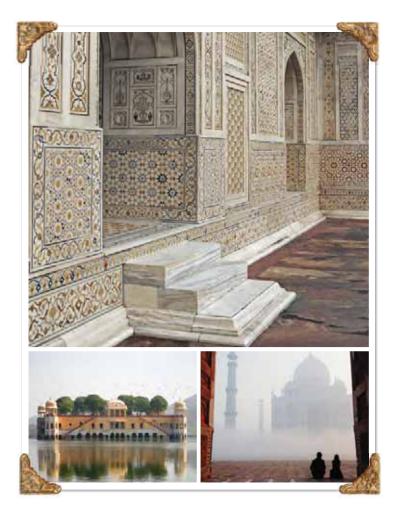
We owe a lot to the Indians who taught us to count, without which no worthwhile scientific discovery could have been made.

ALBERT EINSTEIN





*Kalna* offers a treasure trove of historical monuments, including the awe-inspiring 108 Shiva Mandirs (Nava Kailash). Built in 1809 from white marble and black stone to symbolise the beads in a rosary. An ingenious positioning lets a visitor view all the temples from one central point.

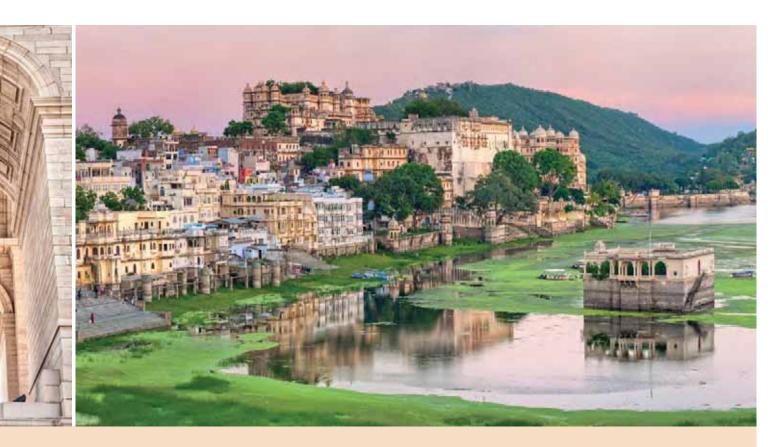


# Oxperiential travel of the very best kind

Travelling through India threatens to overload your senses. Opulent palaces, spice laden markets and scenes of great import for your attention.

Everywhere you turn there is another wonder to gaze upon, a sound to delight in and a taste to savour.

Combining many years of research and even more of experience, we are proud to present you with Cruiseco's **Authentic Asia India** adventure.



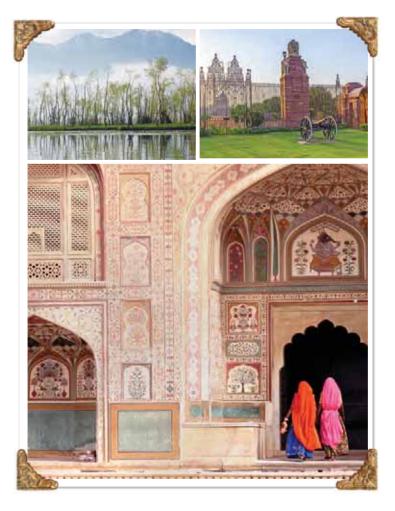
**Udaipur:** the 'City of Lakes' was founded in 1553 and features a massive array of breath-takingly beautiful palaces built on the shores. Naturally, it has been used in myriad Bollywood movies but also claims mention in Rudyard Kipling's Jungle Book. This wonderland abounds with romantic tales, including that of a princess so alluring that she poisoned herself to avert any warring for her hand.

Here are but some of the sites you will visit during this most memorable of all your explorations:

- Varanasi is one of seven sacred Hindi cities and, being founded some 3,000 years ago, also one of the world's oldest.
- Calcutta became Kolkata (again) in 2000. Despite being only some 300 years old it claims to be India's cultural capital.
- Jaipur was the country's first planned city. It's buildings were painted pink in 1876 to welcome the Prince of Wales; the colouring continues.
- Udaipur is oft voted India's most romantic city with fairytale palaces built over entire islands, including the sublime Lake Palace hotel.
- Jodphur has one of most formidable fortresses and was once known as the 'Land of death'. Today, visitors see only an incredible beauty.
- Fatephur Sikri is surely the world's most glorious ghost town. Built by an emperor with over 300 concubines, it is deserted but preserved.
- New Delhi was built alongside Old Delhi to symbolise continuity and project permanence.
- Mumbai (was Bombay) is the nation's powerhouse and is projected to become the world's most populous city by 2020.

Our most valuable and instructive materials in the history of man are treasured up in India only.

MARK TWAIN





# elcome aboard India's most luxurious rivership: the RV Ganges Voyager

Your **Authentic Asia India** cruise includes: a 10 night luxury river cruise between Kolkata and Patna • Private stateroom accommodation • Sightseeing as specified • All onboard meals and most beverages • Service of the ship's crew • Gratuities and transfers *Details on page 3* 

Mystery, enchantment, intrigue, beauty...it's little wonder so many seasoned travellers hold India to be an incomparable adventure.

And as the expert in creating Authentic Asia experiences, Cruiseco has generated much interest with our first luxury adventure on the mightiest of its rivers.

To ensure this holiday is amongst our guests' most cherished, we sail aboard the RV Ganges Voyager. She's renowned for providing the most comfortable surroundings, most delectable cuisine and most attentive service.

With the highest crew-to-guest ratios, RV Ganges Voyager provides 5-star accommodation to rival the finest hotels—leaving guests free to delve deep into India's enigmatic heart. However, their first discoveries are likely to focus on the sanctity of their private suites, the elegance of fabulously furnished common areas and decks, and the gloriously appointed dining room.

Patna Munger

Bateshwarsthan Farakka

Rajmahal

Matia

Kolk

Kalna

Having completed each day of exploration, they can rejuvenate themselves in its onboard spa before joining fellow travellers for a predinner drink in the extensive lounge areas.

When it comes to dining, the RV Ganges Voyager has determinedly raised the bar for culinary standards. Guests will relish chef's innovative menus and the mouthwatering mix of Western and Indian delights.

Naturally, we have also developed a program of cultural performances, nightly entertainment and enlightening lectures are included so that the evenings are just as engaging and insightful as the days.









Observation Lounge



This most inviting of venues with its hand-crafted cocktails and fine wines is the ideal location for meeting fellow guests to share the wonders seen during yet another incredible day.



Offering the absolute best of Indian and Western cuisine in romantic luxury. Guests will delight in receiving one sumptuous meal after another while enjoying an ever-changing panorama gliding by.



Sink into the hands of practitioners skilled in the most soothing of Western and Indian treatments. And maintain your health by using the latest fitness equipment as the scenery rolls by.

Governor's Lounge

Chaises longues and relaxing shaded seating abounds on the sun deck. Make your choice and prepare to witness yet another dramatic sunset.





East India Dining Room



Cabin's corridor



Spa reception

#### our stateroom amenities include:

Spacious accommodation • Luxury honeycomb cotton, spa-quality robes and slippers • pillow menu in-room electronic safe • individual climate control • high quality linens with duvet • premium mattress • daily bottled water • welcome flower arrangement and fresh fruit • wireless internet in public areas • make-up mirror multi-configuration plugs • ample closet space • under-bed storage • iPhone dock and alarm clock • hair dryer LCD television • panoramic floor-to-ceiling glass French doors

Daily butler service, includes: nightly turndowns • pillow menu assistance • presentation of bathroom amenities assistance with on-demand entertainment system • maintaining immaculate presentation of stateroom polishing and conditioning of shoes upon request • preparation and packing of luggage upon request refreshing of ice bucket • in-room breakfast (Maharaja Suite) • complimentary 1-hour spa treatment (per person, per cruise) • complimentary bottle of wine upon embarkation • laundry service evening canapés • and scented bath upon request (Maharaja Suite)



ignature Stateroom

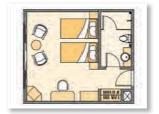
Conveniently located on the main deck, this stateroom gives you 24sqm of gorgeous living space with twin- or queen-sized bedding. Its sitting area and French balcony, floor-to-ceiling glass doors and colourful elegance will see it become your spacious retreat.



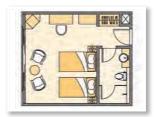
Located on the upper deck, this 24sqm stateroom offers an enchanting mix of warm and inviting colours, original artwork and comfortable sitting areas. Floor-to-ceiling glass doors lead onto a French balcony to ensure you miss nothing on this river adventure.



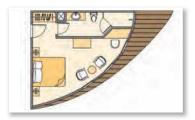
This suite offers 26sqm of living space, ideally positioned on the bow of the upper deck. Decorated in a wonderful timeless elegance, you will delight in its many features, including an intimate Juliet balcony, floor-to-ceiling glass doors and the exquisite four-poster bed.



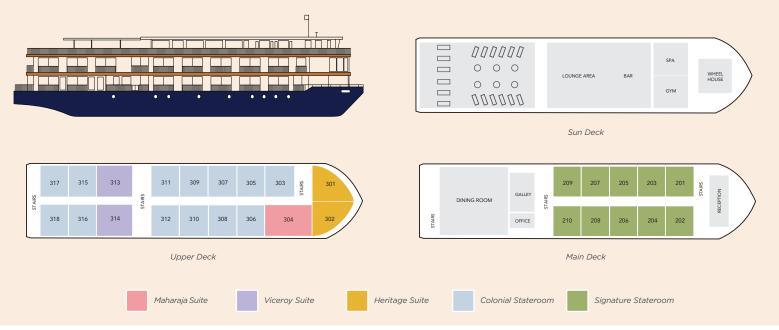
Floor-to-ceiling glass doors with French balcony providing panoramic river views Seating area and writing desk Twin beds or queen-size bed Television with on-demand movie system iPhone docking station with alarm clock Spacious bath with rain-style shower



Floor-to-ceiling glass doors with French balcony providing panoramic river views Seating area and writing desk Twin beds or queen-size bed Television with on-demand movie system iPhone docking station with alarm clock Spacious bath with rain-style shower



Floor-to-ceiling glass doors with Juliet balcony providing panoramic river views Seating area and writing desk Twin beds or king-size bed Television with on-demand movie system iPhone docking station with alarm clock Spacious bath with rain-style shower







Located mid-ship on the upper deck, the Viceroy Suite offers a regal setting, designed for the most discerning traveller, complete with daily butler service. Furnished in an opulent, traditional Indian decor, the Viceroy Suite offers over 33sqm of living space including a superb French balcony, floor-to-ceiling glass doors and a spacious spa-like bath. Floor-to-ceiling glass doors with French balcony providing panoramic river views. Seating area and writing desk King-size bed

Television with on-demand movie system iPhone docking station with alarm clock Spacious bath with rain-style shower



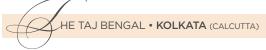
🖉 aharaja Suite

Located forward on the upper deck, this is the most luxurious, spacious suite. Over 37sqm, it is one of a kind with floor to ceiling glass doors opening onto a French balcony to witness the panorama gliding past outside. It includes complimentary laundry service, a daily butler and special in-room dining options.

Floor-to-ceiling glass doors with French balcony providing panoramic river views Seating area and writing desk King-size bed

Television with on-demand movie system iPhone docking station with alarm clock Spacious spa-style bath with soaking tub and separate shower

# India has some of the world's best hotels and Cruiseco offers you the finest in each city



A landmark in downtown Kolkata, The Taj Bengal is close to the city's diplomatic and commercial sector and conveniently near the Victoria Memorial, the library, zoo and the Royal Calcutta Racecourse.

Its large rooms contrast traditional accents with modern touches, augmented by a wonderful mix of exotic antiques and priceless art. Enjoy a high-tea and patisserie in the lounge before choosing from the mouth-watering menus in its Western, Bengali, Chinese, and Middle Eastern restaurants. And then cap your day with a cocktail in its popular Junction bar.





ALL CALLON

1 14 4



Though only a little distance from Varanasi's bustle, this superb hotel is set in 40 acres of lush green gardens. It will be your veritable oasis after visiting the Holy Ghats and The Chowk in the city's centre.

Recently refurbished to offer the very best in facilities, you will delight in exploring its wonderful grounds and pool area.

Its international restaurant provides an exquisite selection of Western and Asian dishes or choose a flavourful vegetarian dish from its renowned Indian restaurant. And then relax with enticing cocktails and finger food from the Prinsep Bar.







### They include a spell-binding selection of palaces, forts, luxury tented camps, and others showcasing the splendour of India's maharajahs and colonial past.

Each has been chosen because it proffers the best facilities, the best service and world-class comfort. Their peace and tranquility will be a great contrast to the sensory overload of your Authentic India adventure and we are sure they will be amongst your warmest memories.

Taj Lake Palace, built in 1743 as a royal summer retreat, also served as home to 300 dancing girls.



This splendid hotel opened in 1931 (the year New Delhi was completed) and has been amongst India's most prestigious since. And being in Janpath means it's close to New Delhi's centre and enticing shopping.

Its art deco styling boasts large, well-furnished rooms and guests enjoy its dining options, including the 1911 Restaurant and Terrace (all-day dining), the Spice Route (Indian and South East Asian cuisine and voted in the world's top 10 restaurants), the San Gimignano (wonderful Italian fare), and other inviting restaurants and bars. There's even an intriguing museum of colonial and post-colonial artifacts—the largest collection anywhere.



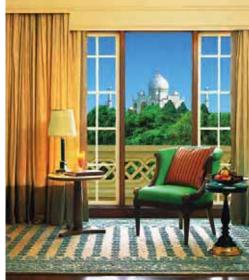


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Undoubtedly Agra's leading luxury hotel, The Amarvilas overlooks the Taj Mahal with all of its rooms providing views of Shah Jahan's monument to his undying love. Imagine your delight in watching sunrises and sunsets play across this masterpiece.

Built in a style reminiscent of Mogul and Moorish dynasties, this hotel has splendid lawns, fountains, pools and pavilions that will transport you back to an era of emperors. It offers wonderfully spacious rooms with luxurious fittings, an indulgent spa, and ready access to the city's highlights. One restaurant serves flavourful Western and Asian dishes while another, Esphahan, offers delicacies from India's many regions and neighbour countries.



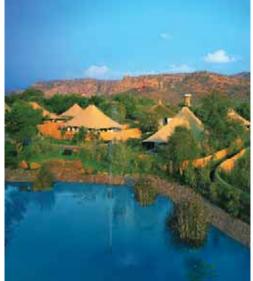




This is India's leading luxury game-viewing resort and one of the world's finest. The resort sits on a dramatic watercourse on the edge of Ranthambore Tiger Reserve. Luxury tents offer private walled gardens, luxurious bathrooms and embroidered canopies, in a beguiling contrast to the rugged and exciting jungle surrounds.

The dining room offers mouthwatering Western, Thai and Indian dishes. And guests delight in the bar conveniently adjacent to both the restaurant and pool.





*Please note:* RV Ganges Voyager suite guests will be allocated rooms here. Stateroom guests may request an upgrade to this property for an additional \$980 per person twin share on a 'first-booked' basis.

# 

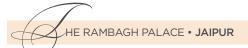
Over 80 years ago the Maharajah of Jaipur built a hunting lodge in 5 hectares of gardens. While the dining hall, bar and lounge remain, the original tents have been replaced by luxurious rooms and suites with the facilities expected in premier accommodation.

Vivanta by Taj is a truly atmospheric hotel, complete with the Maharajah's dining table and a restaurant serving delicacies from Western and Indian menus. Artifacts and trophies line the walls in the evocative Tiger Bar and guests delight in a full size snooker table. It has often been noted that Vivanta by Taj combines all that is required of a modern first class hotel with its enchanting Rajastan history.





Please note: RV Ganges Voyager stateroom guests will be allocated rooms here, unless an upgrade to the Oberoi Vanyavilas is purchased.



The former residence of the Maharajah of Jaipur, the Rambagh Palace is rated among the world's finest hotels. Commenced in 1835, the palace was continually enlarged and then converted into a luxury accommodation with 20 hectares of manicured grounds.

Large, individually designed rooms offer the finest of appointments. Its superb restaurants and bars include The Suvarna Mahal with exquisite Indian cuisine and the Rajput Room serving Western food amongst the romance of a garden terrace. And the iconic Polo Bar features memorabilia of chukkas played on the palace's fields.

The Rambagh Palace is sure to be amongst the strongest memories of this adventure.





#### MAID BHAWAN PALACE • JODPHUR

The Umaid Bhawan Palace sits high above the city—the last great palace to be built in India and, with 347 rooms, also one of the largest. Today, it serves as a home to the current Maharajah, a museum and a hotel managed by Taj International.

It features a cupola some 30 metres high, 10 hectares of glorious gardens, and many rooms adorned with gilt and magnificent murals. The Risala restaurant serves continental and Indian cuisine while the Sunset Colonnade offers cocktails. The extraordinary Sunset Pavilion (with its evocative Whispers Gallery) combines wonderful cuisine with one of the palace's more dramatic areas to ensure everyone sees that it is a true palace.





### 

Many believe this to be India's—and the world's—most romantic hotel. Taj Lake Palace sits on 1.5 hectares of island in the middle of Udaipur's Lake Pichola.

Originally a royal summer palace, its white marble walls shimmer in the sun. Later converted into a hotel and extensively rebuilt twice, the rooms exhibit their own charm and character. Guests enjoy high tea and cocktails in the Amrit Sagar before dining in Bhairo, the European restaurant, or Neel Khamal with its devine Indian fare.

Over-looked by the city of Udaipur, surely no other hotel can lay more claim to being 'unique' and an 'oasis'.





AJ MAHAL PALACE AND TOWERS • MUMBAI (BOMBAY)

Undeniably one of the world's great hotels, the impressive Taj Mahal Palace and Towers overlooks the Gateway of India (built for King George V's visit) and the Arabian Sea.

Prominent in the city's intrinsic and historic quarter, it continues to host royalty, stars and dignitaries in its 560 rooms. They delight in its soothing spa and take advantage of extensive leisure facilities, including eight restaurants, cocktail and poolside bars and Starboard, one of India's hottest night clubs.

A stay at the Taj will be either a memorable beginning or a fitting conclusion to any Authentic India holiday.







Victoria Memorial: offering 25 galleries of fascinating Raj-era nostalgia, sitting amidst 25 hectares of manicured gardens.

#### Australia-Singapore-Kolkata (Calcutta)

Fly with Singapore Airlines to Kolkata via Singapore\*.

Kolkata can be overwhelming, perhaps like no other city. Crowded, alive and vibrant, it has a rich intellectual and cultural heritage and is home to people proudly calling themselves 'Calcuttans'.

As the East's most important city with some 10 million inhabitants. it's a nerve centre of trade and industry and was made famous as the 'City of Joy' by author and humanitarian Dominique Lapierre. Overnight will be at the Taj Bengal.

#### Kolkata (B, L, D, cultural performance)

DAY 2

DAY 1

Following breakfast, a half day tour of Kolkata begins at the Jain Temple (the 'Jewel Box Temple of Calcutta'). This temple's exquisite design is dedicated to the 10th of the 24 Jain Tirthankaras and is an ornate mix of mirrors, coloured stones and glass mosaics.

The tour continues to Kumartolli where craftsmen skilfully produce idols by hand for Kolkata's many festivals (puja).

Next on the itinerary is the wondrous Marble Palace. This palatial and private residence houses compelling statues and art (including Rubens) and, of course, stunning marble walls and floors.

Lunch at a local restaurant concludes the tour before transferring to RV Ganges Voyager for a welcome reception, dinner and an entertaining cultural performance.

Overnight onboard.

FROM ONLY \$17,499 per person

\*Price excludes accommodation in Singapore made necessary by flight schedules

WESTBOUND DEPARTURES 2015: 4 MAR, 11 NOV • 2016: 4 MAR, 14 NOV

# Kolkata to Mumbai

### 27 NIGHTS From humble villages to impossible beautythis is a land with as many contrasts as it has people

#### Kolkata/Cruising (B, L, D)

DAY 3

After breakfast a visit to Mother Teresa's house will reveal where this famed altruist began her Missionary of Charity in 1952, including an exhibition on her life's work, her tomb and the room she occupied until her death. The tour includes a visit of the still operational Sishu Bhavan orphanage led by one of the charity's sisters.

After lunch visit the well-preserved British colonial area, including: the Writer's Building, General Post Office, High Court, Raj Bhawan (Governor's House), Treasury and Dalhousie Square (now known as Benoy-Badal-Dinesh Bagh).

The tour includes the oldest Anglican church, St. John's-home to tombs of British generals and India's oldest pipe organ. The Victoria Memorial Hall is next, it houses the country's largest collection of colonial history inside a design echoing the Taj Mahal. Overnight onboard.

#### Kalna/Cruising (B, L, D)

DAY 4

This morning starts with a ride through Kalna to Rajbari's enchanting temples. This unique mixture of Bengali architecture features an amazing 108 'aat-chala' Shiva temples. The Pratapeshwar Temple contains terra cotta plaques depicting themes of Hindu epics, mythical life of Sree Chaitanya and aspects of day-to-day life. Overnight onboard.





Katra Mosque, West Bengal: built by Murshid Quil Khan who was buried under the entrance steps so as to repent by feeling the 'footprints of noblemen'.

#### Matiara/Cruising (B, L, D, cultural performance)

An early morning arrival in Matiari provides for a visit to a shoreside bazaar. The village is renowned for its handcrafting of superb brass pieces. Master craftsmen recycle copper into splendid pots and platters and their metal-working rings out from the many house-workshops.

Today sail past the 1757 battlefield of Plassey, here Robert Clive of British East India Company defeated the Mogul Nawabs and their French allies to commence the company's rule in India.

#### Overnight onboard.

#### Murshidabad/Cruising (B, L, D)

DAY 6

DAY 7

DAY 5

Today includes a visit to Murshidabad. This hidden architectural gem of a city features dramatic whitewashed, colonial-era structures and the imposing Hazarduari Palace. Built in Greek Doric-style, it has a thousand real and false doors in vast corridors. The tour then visits the vast Nizamat Imambara, India's largest congregation hall for Shia worshippers.

A buggy ride to the Katra Mosque is next. This massive complex is used for Friday prayer and could once hold 2,000 followers.

The intrigue of everyday village-life and the charm of locals will be evident during the return to RV Ganges Voyager.

Overnight onboard.

#### Farakka, Rajmahal/Cruising (B, L, D)

This morning the RV Ganges Voyager passes through the lock gates at Farakka Barrage. One of India's largest dams, it was begun in 1962 but only completed in 1973.

En route to Rajmahal, the countryside changes from 'lunar' sandbanks to verdant farming area. Following lunch, there's time for a brief walk down Grand Trunk Road—for over two millennia it was the essential trade link between South Asia and Central Asia.

Reaching the ruins of Rajmahal (founded as Bengal's capital in 1592) there's the opportunity to explore this marvellous palace and its mosque, frescos and architecture from the Mughal and Bengal periods. On the return to RV Ganges Voyager there's a chance to see locals working china clay (kaolin) into porcelain. Overnight onboard.

#### Bateshwarsthan/Cruising (B, L, D)

After breakfast, RV Ganges Voyager's chef will host an entertaining cooking class and lecture on Indian cuisine. Then, following lunch, a scenic drive contrasts a farming village with the ancient ruins of Vikramashila University. Dating from the 8th century, this important centre of Buddhist learning with studies in theology, philosophy, grammar, metaphysics and logic.

The day concludes with visiting a museum and its fascinating collection of regional artifacts.

Overnight onboard.

Munger/Cruising (B, L, D, cultural performance)

DAY 9

DAY 8

Munger was an key outpost during British rule and its stunning Red Fort, waterfront and colonial homes are on ready display during a rickshaw ride through the village. A late afternoon visit to the Bihar School of Yoga is a chance to learn some basic yoga practices in a world renowned ashram.

Overnight onboard.

Munger/Cruising (B, L, D, farewell reception)

DAY 10

The last full day of sailing passes through a section of Bihar and the chance to see the myriad wildlife living in and on the Ganges, including Gangetic dolphins, otters, antelopes and osprey. Overnight onboard.

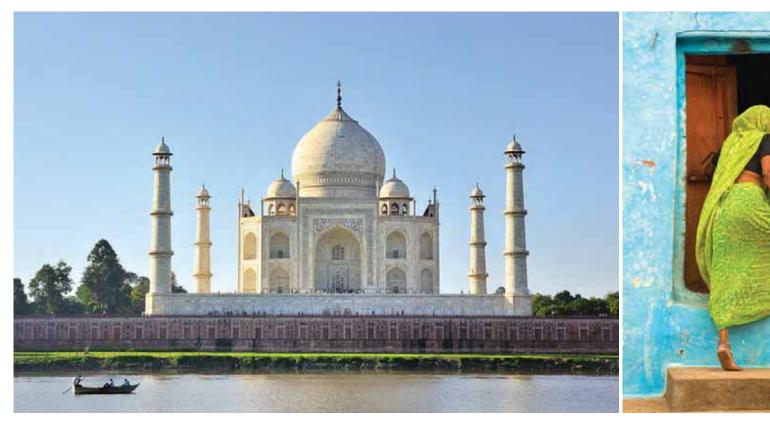
#### Patna/Cruising (B, L, D)

#### DAY 11

After breakfast, the scenic cruising concludes at Patna's colonial waterfront before a final lunch and dinner on board.

Overnight onboard.





The Taj Mahal: so many specialists were employed in its construction that one was responsible for carving only the marble flowers.

#### Patna, Varanasi (B, L)

**DAY 12** 

After an early breakfast farewell RV Ganges Voyager and take a half day drive to Varanasi (with lunch en route).

Varanasi is important to pilgrims because the Ganges flows through this 'eternal city' with the power to wash away sins. Mark Twain saw it as "...older than history, older than tradition, older even than legend and look[ing] twice as old as all of them put together."

For pious Hindu, the city is held to be an auspicious place to die and one that ensures an instant routing to heaven.

This evening witness the 'Aarti' on the Ganges' banks before taking a short rickshaw ride through intriguingly narrow lanes.

Overnight at the Taj Ganges Gateway.

#### Varanasi (B)

#### DAY 13

An early start allows a visit to the Daswamedh Ghat for the sunrise before meandering by boat along this most sacred river. During pilgrimages, the faithful use the steps to perform their religious ablutions. Watching people worship is an extraordinary experience and there is also the possibility of seeing a funeral pyre.

Returning to the hotel, breakfast is provided before a city tour. The Bharat Mata Temple is an important stop. Mahatma Gandhi inaugurated it so that citizens could respect Mother India in a statue form.

The Banaras Hindu University (with some 20,000 students) and the Durga Temple are among other highlights visited before arriving at the buried city of Sarnath. Chosen by Buddha to deliver his first sermon, this site is as holy to Buddhists as Varanasi is to Hindus.

Overnight at the Taj Ganges Gateway.



#### Varanasi, Delhi (B)

**DAY 14** 

DAY 15

In the morning there's time to enjoy Varanasi at leisure before an afternoon transfer to the airport for a flight to Delhi.

Delhi is home to some 14 million, it sprawls over nearly 1500 square kilometres and dates some 3,000 years. Divided in two (Old and New Delhi) the old part was founded as Shahjahanabad and has the famous Red Fort as a focal point.

The planning for New Delhi started in 1911 after the British decreed that Calcutta would no longer be India's capital.

An evening at leisure allows further exploration of this alluring city. Overnight at the Imperial Hotel.

#### Delhi (B, L)

A tour of Old Delhi starts after breakfast, visiting Jama Masjid, India's largest mosque and Shah Jahan's final architectural extravagance.

Of course, the tour also includes the Red Fort and its massive walls extending an amazing two kilometres.

A rickshaw ride follows, along the main street of Old Delhi to the colourful Chandni Chowk shopping bazaar. The morning's final stop is at Raj Ghat where a simple square of black marble marks Mahatma Gandhi's cremation following his assassination in 1948.

After lunching at a local restaurant, the tour proceeds to New Delhi to visit Humayun's Tomb. An early example of Mughal architecture, it is an awesome combination of sandstone and marble with wondrous inlay patterns and commanding regional views.

Next is the Qutub Minar, an ornate tower dating from 1192 and reaching a staggering 73 metres high. Equally surprising, a iron pillar standing nearby has remained rust free for 1500 years.

Other highlights include driving on Raj Path avenue to the imposing India Gate monument before enjoying the rest of the evening at leisure.

Overnight at the Imperial Hotel.

#### Delhi, Agra (B, D)

DAY 16

Following breakfast, it's a half day drive to Agra. The afternoon is at leisure to delight in the contrast of red sandstone and white marble edifices, and exploring narrow alleys with quaint buggies.



Varanasi: ghats (many privately owned) provide access to the Ganges amongst the chaotic housing.

This evening visit one of the world's most revered buildings: the Taj Mahal. A mausoleum to the beloved spouse of Shah Jahan, it includes a forecourt, a lofty entrance, a charming Mughal garden with canals, fountains, the tomb proper, and mosques. It took 20,000 workers and 1,000 elephants to construct this wonder.

This evening enjoy pre dinner drinks in the hotel bar, whilst gazing at the Taj Mahal from the bar terrace. Following we will have dinner in the hotel restaurant.

Overnight at The Oberoi Amarvilas.

#### Agra (B)

#### DAY 17

After breakfast, it is time to visit the awe-inspiring Agra Fort (though at 40 hectares, it's more a walled city). Originally a brick fortress, visitors delight in this immense mix of Hindu and Islamic architecture and wonder at defensive systems that defeated war-elephants.

The afternoon will be at leisure.

Overnight at The Oberoi Amarvilas.

#### Agra, Ranthambore (B, L, D)

#### DAY 18

Sunrise allows for a revisiting of the Taj Mahal, this time to see it in all of its fabulous morning glory.

Returning to the hotel for breakfast, the morning continues with a drive of some two hours to Bharatpur. En route there's time to visit Fatehpur Sikri—a 16th century fairy tale city deserted upon completion, it is a fascinatingly bizarre 'ghost town'.

Buland Darwaza, the world's largest gateway, guards the city's southern entrance and is worthy of a visit in its own right.

After lunch at The Bagh, a historic resort in Bharatpur, transfer to the railway station for an express to Ranthambore. Upon arrival guests will be met and transferred to the hotel.

Spanning about 65,000 hectares, this national park includes lakes, rivers, forests and open bush land. Once the Maharajahs' private hunting grounds, the park is now active in tiger conservation and they can be spotted while hunting prey or rolling lazily in the sun.

The park is a World Heritage Site with many picturesque ruins and the majestic centuries-old Ranthambore Fort standing witness to the region's glorious past. Leopard, hyena, jackal, sloth bear and wild boar roam the reserve along with deer, nilgai, chinkara and langur monkeys.

*Please note:* accommodation is either at The Oberoi Vanyavilas in a luxury tent (for suite guests) *or* Vivanta by Taj Lodge (for stateroom guests). Upgrades to Vanyavilas are an additional \$980 per person twin share. As space is limited at Vanyavilas upgrades are offered on a 'first come, first served' basis.

#### Ranthambore (B, L, D)

#### DAY 19

Today's adventures include two game drives (one early morning and another in the afternoon) in search of tigers, nilgai, sloth bears, crocodiles, eagles and rare red jungle fowl.

Overnight at selected Ranthambore accommodation.

#### Ranthambore, Jaipur (B)

DAY 20

An early start this morning allows for still one more exciting game drive before returning for breakfast in the hotel.

Next, it's time to drive a couple of hours to experience the wonders of Jaipur. Now a bustling metropolis, it retains the character of its 18th century founding and presents an engaging fusion of yesteryears and modernity.

It is known as 'the Pink City' due to an abundance of pink plastered stone, painted so in honour of the royal consort of Queen Victoria. Jaipur never fails to thrill visitors with its massive forts, magnificent palaces, exquisite temples and lush gardens.

Overnight at The Rambagh Palace.

#### Jaipur (B, L)

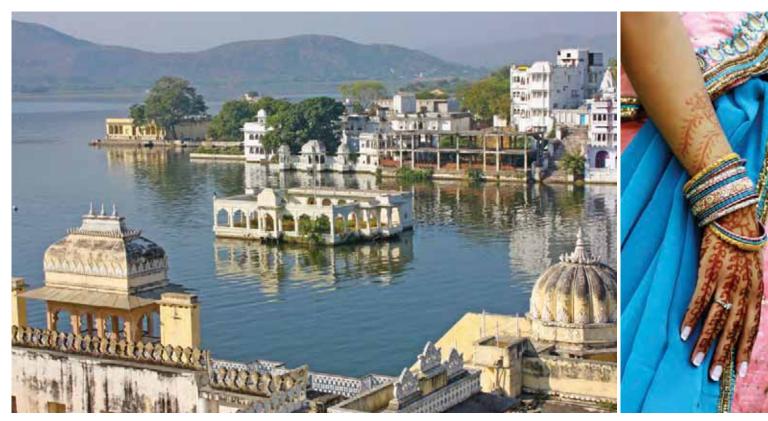
DAY 21

Tour Amber Fort with its distinctly Mughal-influenced architecture. Commenced in 1600, this opulent palace stunningly combines red sandstone and marble.

Afterwards, there's an elephant ride at Dera Amer—a private farm near the fort—before enjoying a champagne lunch.

During the afternoon visit Jaipur and the exquisite Hawa Mahal. Famed for a pink façade, it was built for the Maharaja's harem with 953 windows and intricate latticework. Cool air circulates readily and the royal ladies could watch everyday life.





Lake Pichola, Udaipur: an artificial freshwater lake (created in 1362 AD) covers about 12 square kilometres.

The City Palace entices visitors back into the centre of Jaipur. This enormous complex comprises several palaces along with pavilions, temples, wonderful gardens and a museum.

Today's exploration concludes with visiting the famous Jantar Mantar Observatory. Built in the 18th century, its instruments measure 'the harmony of heavens' correctly to within half a second.

Overnight at The Rambagh Palace.

#### Jaipur, Jodhpur (B, L)

#### DAY 22

After breakfast, a full day drive to Jodhpur includes a lunch stop. Founded in 1459, the city gradually expanded beyond the walls of the imposing Meharangarh Fort. Lying on the ancient silk route linking Central Asia to northern India, it became a major trading centre and still serves as such for cattle, camels and crops.

As temples, monuments and grand gardens were added, its beauty evolved in a captivating contrast to the harsh surrounding land. Overnight at Umaid Bhawan Palace.

### Jodhpur (B)

#### DAY 23

DAY 24

This morning features an excursion to Bishnoi village to learn of the teachings of Guru Jambheshwar, a visionary who linked famine to deforestation and compiled 29 rules (including 'don't kill animals, don't cut green trees and take only what you need') that underpin today's Bishnoi philosophy. As vegetarians they value all living

things and ask visitors to respect their way of life.

In the afternoon, a guided tour of Jodhpur visits the mighty Meharangarh Fort with its charmingly latticed windows, elaborately carved panels and porches.

Next, is the famed Jaswant Thada, a white marble memorial with impossibly intricate stone sculptings —so thin that its outside surface emits a warm glow as the sun plays across it.

Overnight at Umaid Bhawan Palace.

Jodhpur, Udaipur (B, L)

After breakfast there's a full day drive to Udaipur with time for a refreshing lunch in Ranakpur. An important

pilgrim centre for the Jain community, this village is surrounded by forests and home to monkeys cavorting in its courtyards.

Arriving in Udaipur, visitors are struck by this serene vision. In particular, they note how the shimmering bluewater lakes reflect the green hills and delight in the lake palaces emerging from the placid Lake Pichola to whisper of a bygone era. Little wonder it's known as the 'Venice of the East'.

Overnight at Taj Lake Palace.

#### Udaipur (B, D)

DAY 25

After breakfast, a sightseeing tour visits the city palace standing on the shore of Lake Pichola. Paintings, mosaics, intricately carved chhatries and an architecturally brilliant façade combine to make this a particularly memorable experience.

The tour then moves to the Crystal Gallery and its wondrous display of crystal ornaments, fountains, crockery and furniture. Next, a visit to the splendid Sahelion Ki Bar gardens offers extensive lawns and shady walks along the shores of Fateh Sagar lake.

The afternoon is at leisure.

This evening features a cruise on Lake Pichola's placid waters, offering wonderful views of the city rising majestically above this lake in the middle of the Rajasthan desert. It also includes a visit to the island of Jag Mandir. A pleasure palace for royal parties, this magnificent monument has domes, pillars, fountains, and a row of marble elephants standing in silent vigil over the island.

Following the cruise enjoy dinner at the hotel.

Overnight at Taj Lake Palace.

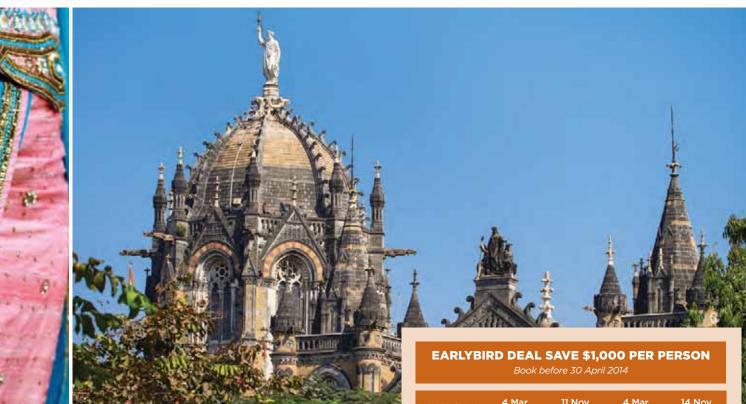
#### Udaipur, Mumbai (B)

DAY 26

Today is at leisure to explore Udaipur before a late afternoon airport transfer for the flight to Mumbai. Upon arrival guests will be transferred to the hotel with the remainder of the day at leisure.

Some 300 years ago Mumbai was just seven islands inhabited by fisherman but with the opening of the Suez Canal it began to overtake Kolkata as India's main port.

Today, with a beautiful harbour, hilly islands and a palm-fringed shore rising gradually to mountain peaks, it is truly the 'Gateway of India'.



Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Mumbai: originally the Victoria Terminus.

Besides being a major port, this engaging city is also the nation's commercial capital with a population of about eight million. Overnight at the Taj Mahal Palace and Towers.

#### Mumbai (B, D)

DAY 27

This morning's guided tour of Mumbai includes its most prominent landmark, the Gateway of India, and the Prince of Wales Museum to see fascinating 18-19th century miniature paintings, elegant ivory-art and a superb collection of Nepalese and Tibetan Art.

Driving through the city's colonial part reveals its rich heritage, including the Victoria terminus (Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus), the Marine Drive and Malabar Hill. This tour also visits Mani Bhawan, a museum dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi before making a photostop at the famous Dhobi Ghats.

The rest of the afternoon is at leisure before a farwell dinner at the hotel.

Overnight at the Taj Mahal Palace and Towers.

#### Mumbai-Singapore-Australia (B)

DAY 28

This morning features a one hour boat ride across Mumbai Harbor to the engaging greenery of Elephanta Island with its huge, intricately carved cave temples. Dating from the 8th century, they are dedicated to Shiva, the Hindu Sun God.

This evening transfer to the airport for a Singapore Airlines flight home to Australia\*.

\* Prices exclude accommodation in Singapore made necessary by flight schedules.



WESTBOUND	4 Mar 2015	11 Nov 2015	4 Mar 2016	14 Nov 2016
Signature Stateroom	Twin Share <b>\$17,499</b> Single <b>\$31,499</b>	Twin Share <b>\$18,199</b> Single <b>\$32,199</b>	Twin Share <b>\$18,449</b> Single <b>\$32,449</b>	Twin Share <b>\$18,799</b> Single <b>\$32,799</b>
Colonial Stateroom	Twin Share <b>\$17,749</b> Single <b>\$31,749</b>	Twin Share <b>\$18,449</b> Single <b>\$32,449</b>	Twin Share <b>\$18,699</b> Single <b>\$32,699</b>	Twin Share <b>\$19,049</b> Single <b>\$33,049</b>

Guests choosing suites below also get these upgrades:

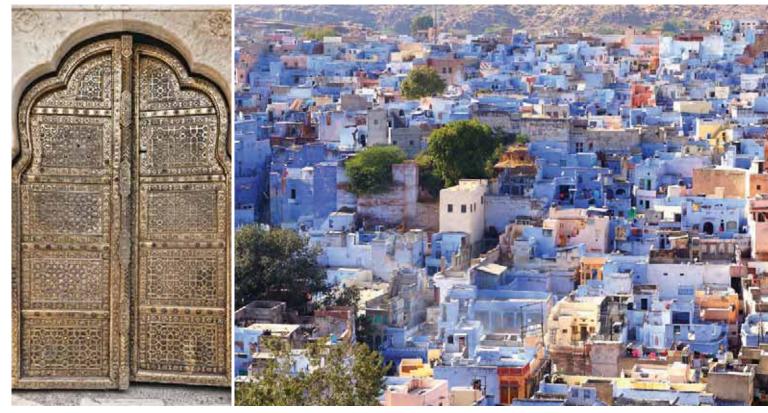
- Additional luxury amenities onboard RV Ganges Explorer — see page 10 for details
- A luxury tent at Vanyavilas, Ranthambore
- Historical Suite at Rambagh Palace, Jaipur
- Historical Suite at Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur
- Palace Lake view room at Taj Lake Palace Udaipur

Heritage Suite	Twin Share <b>\$20,599</b> Single <b>\$35,599</b>	Twin Share <b>\$21,399</b> Single <b>\$36,399</b>	Twin Share <b>\$21,649</b> Single <b>\$36,649</b>	Twin Share <b>\$22,099</b> Single <b>\$37,099</b>
Viceroy Suite	Twin Share <b>\$20,849</b> Single <b>\$35,849</b>	Twin Share <b>\$21,649</b> Single <b>\$36,649</b>	Twin Share <b>\$21,899</b> Single <b>\$36,899</b>	Twin Share <b>\$22,349</b> Single <b>\$37,349</b>
Maharaja Suite	Twin Share <b>\$21,099</b> Single <b>\$36,599</b>	Twin Share <b>\$21,899</b> Single <b>\$37,399</b>	Twin Share <b>\$22,149</b> Single <b>\$37,649</b>	Twin Share <b>\$22,599</b> Single <b>\$38,099</b>

#### Your Authentic Asia India adventure includes\*...

- 10 night luxury cruise aboard RV GANGES VOYAGER between Kolkata and Patna
- 17 nights in 5-star hotel accommodation
- 59 meals, including all meals aboard RV GANGES VOYAGER and breakfast, lunch and dinner as per the itinerary
- Sightseeing as specified in the itinerary
- Most beverages while cruising
- Services of the ship's crew during the cruise
- Gratuities on board and transfers as per itinerary

See full details of inclusions on page 3



Jodphur: some claim the houses are blue because Brahmins wanted to identify their domiciles while others say it just keeps the interior cool.

#### Australia-Singapore-Mumbai (Bombay)

Fly with Singapore Airlines to Mumbai via Singapore\*.

Some 300 years ago Mumbai was just seven islands inhabited by fisherman but with the opening of the Suez Canal it began to overtake Kolkata as India's main port.

Today, with a beautiful harbour, hilly islands and a palm-fringed shore rising gradually to mountain peaks, it is truly the 'Gateway of India'. Besides being a major port, this engaging city is also the nation's commercial capital with a population of about eight million.

Overnight at the Taj Mahal Palace and Towers.

#### Mumbai (B, D)

#### DAY 2

DAY 1

This morning features a one hour boat ride across Mumbai Harbour to the engaging greenery of Elephanta Island with its huge, intricately carved cave temples. Dating from the 8th century, they are dedicated to Shiva, the Hindu Sun God.

The afternoon's guided tour of the city includes its most prominent landmark, the Gateway of India. Driving through the city's colonial part will reveal its rich heritage, including the Victoria terminus (Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus), the Marine Drive and Malabar Hill. This tour also visits Mani Bhawan, a museum dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi before making a photo-stop at the famous Dhobi Ghats.

The rest of the afternoon is at leisure before a welcome dinner at the hotel.

Overnight at the Taj Mahal Palace and Towers.

EASTBOUND DEPARTURES 2015: 27 FEB. 6 NOV • 2016: 28 FEB. 9 NOV

# Mumbai to Kolkata

27 NIGHTS Having stood in awe of an ancient monument FROM ONLY you need only turn a corner to \$17,499 per in another from a colonial past you need only turn a corner to delight

#### Mumbai, Udaipur (B, L)

DAY 3

DAY 4

The morning is at leisure in Mumbai before transfer to the airport in the afternoon for the flight to Udaipur. A packed lunch will be provided for the flight. Upon arrival, guests will be transferred to the hotel with the remainder of the day at leisure.

Visitors to Udaipur are struck by a truly serene vision. Shimmering bluewater lakes reflect the green hills while palaces seem to emerge from the placid Lake Pichola to whisper of a bygone era. Little wonder it's known as the 'Venice of the East'.

Overnight at Taj Lake Palace.

#### Udaipur (B, D)

After breakfast, a sightseeing tour visits the city palace standing on the shore of Lake Pichola. Paintings, mosaics, intricately carved chhatries and an architecturally brilliant façade combine to make this a particularly memorable experience.

The tour then moves to the Crystal Gallery and its wondrous display of crystal ornaments, fountains, crockery and furniture. Next, a visit to the splendid Sahelion Ki Bar gardens offers extensive lawns and shady walks along the shores of Fateh Sagar lake.

The remainder of the afternoon is at leisure.

This evening features a cruise on Lake Pichola's placid waters, offering wonderful views of the city rising majestically above this lake in the middle of the Rajasthan desert. It also includes a visit to the island of Jag Mandir. A pleasure palace for royal parties, this magnificent monument has domes, pillars, fountains, and a row of marble elephants standing in silent vigil over the island.





Ranthambore National Park: 392 sq. kms of wildlife sanctuary with some 300 types of trees, 272 kinds of birds and, of course, tigers.

DAY 5

Following the cruise enjoy dinner at the hotel. Overnight at Taj Lake Palace.

#### Udaipur, Jodhpur (B, L)

After breakfast drive to Jodphur with time for a refreshing lunch in Ranakpur. An important pilgrim centre for the Jain community, this village is surrounded by forests and home to monkeys cavorting in its courtyards.

Founded in 1459, the city gradually expanded beyond the walls of the imposing Meharangarh Fort. Lying on the ancient silk route linking Central Asia to northern India, it became a major trading centre and still serves as such for cattle, camels and crops.

As temples, monuments and grand gardens were added, its beauty evolved in a captivating contrast to the harsh surrounding land. Overnight at Umaid Bhawan Palace.

#### Jodhpur (B)

DAY 6

This morning features an excursion to Bishnoi village to learn of the teachings of Guru Jambheshwar, a visionary who linked famine to deforestation and compiled 29 rules (including 'don't kill animals, don't cut green trees and take only what you need') that underpin today's Bishnoi philosophy. As vegetarians they value all living things and ask visitors to respect their way of life.

In the afternoon, a guided tour of Jodhpur visits the mighty Meharangarh Fort with its charmingly latticed windows, elaborately carved panels and porches.

Next, is the famed Jaswant Thada, a white marble memorial with impossibly intricate stone sculptings—so thin that its outside surface emits a warm glow as the sun plays across it.

Overnight at Umaid Bhawan Palace.

#### Jodhpur, Jaipur (B, L)

#### DAY 7

After breakfast, a full day's drive, with lunch en route, reveals the wonders of Jaipur. Now a bustling metropolis, it retains the character of its 18th century founding and presents an engaging fusion of yester-years and modernity. It is known as 'the Pink City' due to an abundance of pink plastered stone, painted so in honour of the royal consort of Queen Victoria. Jaipur never fails to thrill visitors with its massive forts, magnificent palaces, exquisite temples and lush gardens.

Overnight at The Rambagh Palace.

#### Jaipur (B, L)

DAY 8

This morning features a tour of Amber Fort with its distinctly Mughal-influenced architecture. Commenced in 1600, this opulent palace stunningly combines red sandstone and marble.

Afterwards, there's an elephant ride at Dera Amer—a private farm near the fort—before enjoying a champagne lunch.

During the afternoon the tour visits Jaipur and the spectacular Hawa Mahal. Famed for its pink sandstone façade, it was built for the Maharaja's harem and has 953 windows decorated with intricate latticework. Cool air (hawa) circulates readily and the royal ladies could watch everyday life without being seen.

The City Palace draws visitors back into the centre of Jaipur. This enormous complex comprises several palaces along with pavilions, temples, wonderful gardens and a museum.

Today's exploration concludes with visiting the famous Jantar Mantar Observatory. Built in the 18th century, its instruments measure 'the harmony of heavens' correctly to within half a second.

#### Jaipur, Ranthambore (B, L, D)

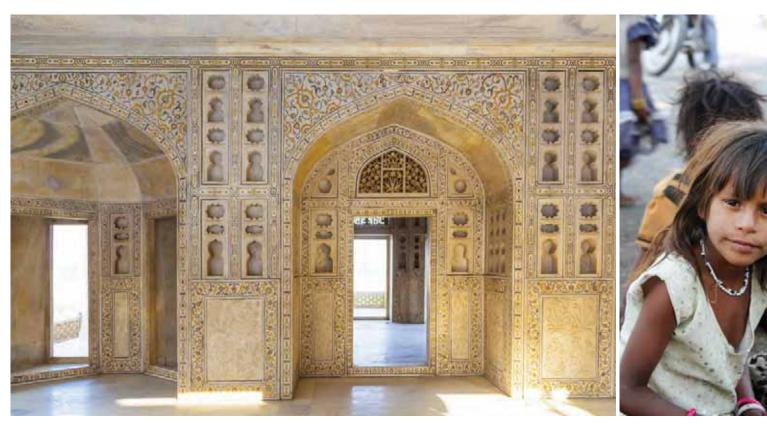
DAY 9

Following breakfast, drive to the Ranthambore National Park. Spanning about 65,000 hectares, it includes lakes, rivers, forests and open bush land. Once the Maharajahs' private hunting grounds, the park is now active in tiger conservation and they can be spotted while hunting prey or rolling lazily in the sun .

The park is a World Heritage Site with many picturesque ruins and the majestic centuries-old Ranthambore Fort standing witness to the region's glorious past.

Leopard, hyena, jackal, sloth bear and wild boar roam the reserve along with deer, nilgai, chinkara and langur monkeys. And a game drive in the afternoon will give guests a chance to see all of them.

\*Price excludes accommodation in Singapore made necessary by flight schedules



Agra Red Fort: a UNESCO World Heritage Site and sister-monument to the Taj Mahal.

*Please note:* accommodation is either at The Oberoi Vanyavilas in a luxury tent (for suite guests) *or* Vivanta by Taj Lodge (for stateroom guests). Upgrades to Vanyvalis are available for an additional \$980 per person twin share. As space is limited at Vanyvalis upgrades are offered on a 'first come, first served' basis.

#### Ranthambore (B, L, D)

#### DAY 10

Today's adventures include two game drives (one early morning and another in the afternoon) in search of tigers, nilgai, sloth bears, crocodiles, eagles and rare red jungle fowl.

Overnight at selected Ranthambore accommodation.

#### Ranthambore, Bharatpur, Agra (B, L)

DAY 11

After breakfast, take an early morning transfer to the railway station for the Jan Shatabdhi Express to Bharatpur and then the drive to Agra.

En route visit the mysterious Fatehpur Sikri. This deserted red sandstone city, built in the 16th century, is a bizarre fairy tale city. Still largely in pristine condition, it's easy to imagine how court life must have been before it was abandoned.

Buland Darwaza, the world's largest gateway, guards the city's southern entrance and is worthy of a visit in its own right.

The evening will be at leisure to delight in the striking contrast of red sandstone and white marble edifices, and exploring narrow alleys with quaint buggies.

Overnight at The Oberoi Amarvilas.

#### Agra (B, D)

#### DAY 12

Start the day with a sunrise visit to see the magic of a dawn upon the wondrous Taj Mahal. A mausoleum to the beloved spouse of Shah Jahan, it includes a forecourt, a lofty entrance, a charming garden with canals, fountains, the tomb proper, and mosques. It took 20,000 workers and 1,000 elephants to construct this wonder.

Having returned to the hotel for breakfast, it's then time to visit the awe-inspiring Agra Fort (though at 40 hectares, it's more a walled city). Originally a brick fortress, visitors delight in this immense mix of Hindu and Islamic architecture and wonder at defensive systems that defeated war-elephants.

The afternoon will be at leisure.

This evening enjoy pre dinner drinks in the hotel bar, whilst gazing at the Taj Mahal from the bar terrace. Following we will have dinner in the hotel restaurant.

#### Agra, Delhi (B)

#### DAY 13

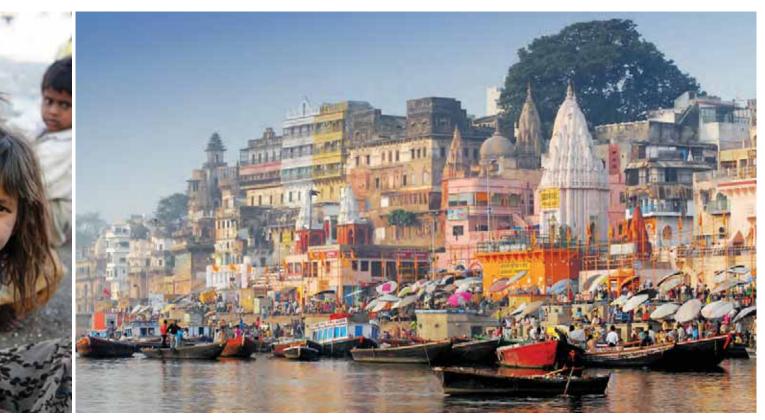
After breakfast, drive to Delhi. Home to some 14 million, it sprawls over nearly 1500 square kilometres and dates some 3,000 years. Divided in two (Old and New Delhi) the old part was founded as Shahjahanabad and has the famous Red Fort as a focal point.

The planning for New Delhi started in 1911 after the British decreed that Calcutta would no longer be India's capital.

Overnight at The Imperial Hotel.



**Equal among us:** while cows are held as sacred by Hindus, other kinds are often also accorded a right of access similar to humans.



Varanasi: has about 100 ghats (steps descending to the Ganges), most are for bathing while some are cremation sites.

#### Delhi (B, L)

DAY 14

A tour of Old Delhi starts after breakfast, visiting Jama Masjid, India's largest mosque and Shah Jahan's final architectural extravagance. Of course, the tour also includes the Red Fort and its massive walls extending an amazing two kilometres.

A rickshaw ride follows, along the main street of Old Delhi to the colourful Chandni Chowk shopping bazaar. The morning's final stop is at Raj Ghat where a simple square of black marble marks Mahatma Gandhi's cremation following his assassination in 1948.

After lunching at a local restaurant, the tour proceeds to New Delhi to visit Humayun's Tomb. An early example of Mughal architecture, it is an awesome combination of sandstone and marble with wondrous inlay patterns and commanding regional views.

Next is the Qutub Minar, an ornate tower dating from 1192 and reaching a staggering 73 metres high. Equally surprising, a iron pillar standing nearby has remained rust free for 1500 years.

Highlights include driving on Raj Path avenue to the imposing India Gate monument before enjoying the evening at leisure. Overnight at the Imperial Hotel.

#### Delhi, Varanasi (B)

DAY 15

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for a flight to Varanasi and two nights at the Taj Ganges Gateway hotel.

Varanasi is important to pilgrims because the Ganges flows through this 'eternal city' with the power to wash away sins. Mark Twain saw it as "...older than history, older than tradition, older even than legend and look[ing] twice as old as all of them put together."

For pious Hindu, the city is held to be an auspicious place to die and one that ensures an instant routing to heaven.

This evening offers a chance to witness the 'Aarti' on the Ganges' banks before taking a short rickshaw ride through intriguingly narrow lanes.

#### Varanasi (B)

#### DAY 16

An early start includes a visit to the Daswamedh Ghat for the sunrise before meandering by boat along this most sacred river. During pilgrimages, the faithful use the steps to perform their religious ablutions. Watching people worship is an extraordinary experience and there is also the possibility of seeing a funeral pyre.

Returning to the hotel, breakfast is provided before a city tour. The Bharat Mata Temple is an important stop. Mahatma Gandhi inaugurated it so that citizens could respect Mother India in a statue form.

The Banaras Hindu University (with some 20,000 students) and the Durga Temple are among other highlights visited before arriving at the buried city of Sarnath. Chosen by Buddha to deliver his first sermon, this site is as holy to Buddhists as Varanasi is to Hindus. Overnight at the Taj Ganges Gateway.

#### Varanasi, Patna (B, L, D) DAY 17

After breakfast there's a half day drive to Patna for lunch at a local restaurant. Guests then board the R.V Ganges Voyager, delighting in the comfort of their cabin and before enjoying a relaxed dinner onboard.

Overnight onboard.

#### Patna/Cruising (B, L, welcome reception, D)

DAY 18

A leisurely morning in Patna is followed by an afternoon's scenic cruising beginning at the colonial waterfront.

Gangetic Dolphins and otters often follow the RV Ganges Voyager while antelope, osprey and kingfishers can be seen on shore. Passing through Dorigung will be a chance to witness locals floating their colourfully decorated boats, playing music and gathering sand from the riverbed for construction.

This evening features a delightful display on board of local entertainment, including traditional music and dancing. Overnight onboard.

#### Munger/Cruising (B, L, D)

DAY 19

A morning visit to the Bihar School of Yoga is a chance to learn some basic yoga practices in this world renowned ashram.

Munger was an key outpost during British rule and its stunning Red Fort, waterfront and colonial homes are on ready display during a rickshaw ride through the village. Overnight onboard.



Rajmahal Palace: faded glory evident in its ornate gazebos, festooned with exquisitely carved marble.

#### Bateshwarsthan/Cruising (B, L, D)

After breakfast, a scenic drive contrasts a farming village with the ancient ruins of Vikramashila University. Dating from the 8th century, this important centre of Buddhist learning with studies in theology, philosophy, grammar, metaphysics and logic.

Next, visit the university's museum for a fascinating display of artifacts before returning to the RV Ganges Voyager where chef will host an entertaining cooking class and lecture on Indian cuisine. Overnight onboard.

#### Rajmahal/Cruising (B, L, D) DAY 21

Following breakfast, there's time for a brief walk down Grand Trunk Road—for over two millennia it was the essential trade link between South Asia and Central Asia.

Reaching the ruins of Rajmahal (Bengal's capital founded in 1592) there's the opportunity to explore this marvellous palace and its Mughal- and Bengal-influenced mosques, frescos and architecture.

On the return to RV Ganges Voyager there's the chance to see locals skilfully working china clay (kaolin) into porcelain. The cruise then continues upstream towards Farraka Lock, en route to Kolkata. Overnight onboard.

#### Farraka/Cruising (B, L, D)

#### DAY 22

**DAY 20** 

This morning the Voyager passes through the lock gates at Farakka Barrage. One of India's largest dams, it was begun in 1962 but only completed in 1973.



Guests will notice a dramatic change in the local landscape while cruising southward to Murshidabad, from 'lunar' sandbanks northwest of the gate to verdant green farming area.

Overnight onboard.

#### Murshidabad/Cruising (B, L, D)

DAY 23

The intrigue of everyday village-life and the charm of locals will be evident on the way to Murshidabad. This hidden architectural gem of a city features dramatic whitewashed, colonial-era structures and the imposing Hazarduari Palace. Built in Greek Doric-style, it has a thousand real and false doors in vast corridors. The tour then visits the vast Nizamat Imambara, India's largest congregation hall for Shia worshippers.

A buggy ride to the Katra mosque is next. This massive complex is used for Friday prayer and accommodates 2,000 followers. Overnight onboard.

Matiari/Cruising (B, L, D, cultural performance)

DAY 24

An early morning arrival in Matiari provides for a visit to a shoreside bazaar. The village is renowned for its handcrafting of superb brass pieces. Master craftsmen recycle copper into splendid pots and platters and their metal-working rings out from the many house-workshops.

Today sail past the 1757 battlefield of Plassey, here Robert Clive of British East India Company defeated the Mogul Nawabs and their French allies to commence the company's rule in India. Overnight onboard.

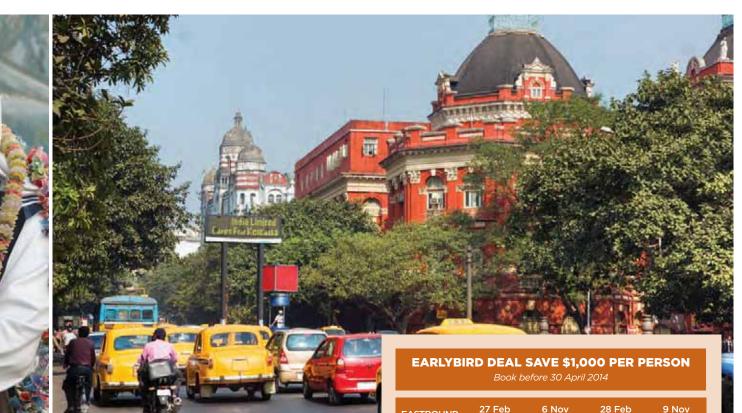
#### Kalna/Cruising (B, L, D)

DAY 25

This morning starts with a ride through Kalna to Rajbari's enchanting temples. This unique mixture of Bengali architecture features a staggering 108 'aat-chala' Shiva temples—featuring black and white linghams.

The Pratapeshwar Temple contains terra cotta plaques depicting themes of Hindu epics, mythical life of Sree Chaitanya and aspects of day-to-day life.

Overnight onboard.



Kolkata: the influence of British rule is everywhere.

#### Kolkata/Cruising (B, L, D, cultural performance)

DAY 26

After breakfast, a half day tour of Kolkata will visit the well-preserved British colonial area, including: the Writer's Building, General Post Office, High Court, Raj Bhawan (Governor's House), Treasury and Dalhousie Square (now known as Benoy-Badal-Dinesh Bagh).

The tour includes the oldest Anglican church, St. John's—home to tombs of British generals and India's oldest pipe organ. The Victoria Memorial Hall is next, it houses the country's largest collection of colonial history inside a design echoing the Taj Mahal.

After lunch on board, a visit to Mother Teresa's house reveals where this famed altruist began her Missionary of Charity in 1952, including an exhibition on her life's work, her room and tomb. Then one of the charity's sisters leads a tour of the Sishu Bhavan orphanage. Overnight onboard.

#### Kolkata/Disembarkation (B, L)

DAY 27

Following breakfast, guests will disembark the RV Ganges Voyager for a half day tour of Kolkata—including the Jain Temple (the 'Jewel Box Temple of Calcutta'). This temple's exquisite design is dedicated to the 10th of the 24 Jain Tirthankaras and is an ornate mix of mirrors, coloured stones and glass mosaics.

Lunch is enjoyed in a local restaurant.

The tour continues to Kumartolli where craftsmen skilfully produce idols by hand for Kolkata's many festivals (puja).

After the sightseeing, transfer to the Swissotel for a day-use room. Late this evening transfer to the airport for an overnight Singapore Airlines flight home to Australia\*.

 Prices exclude accommodation in Singapore made necessary by flight schedules.



**Religion:** some 82% of Indians identify as Hindus while only about 12% are Islamic followers.

#### 6 Nov 2015 EASTBOUND 2015 2016 2016 Twin Share Twin Share Twin Share Twin Share Signature \$17,499 \$18,199 \$18,449 \$18,799 Stateroom Single Single Single Single \$31,499 \$32,199 \$32,449 \$32,799 Twin Share Twin Share Twin Share Twin Share Colonial \$17,749 \$18,449 \$18,699 \$19,049 Stateroom Single Single Sinale Single \$31,749 \$33,049 \$32,449 \$32,699

Guests choosing suites below also get these upgrades:

- Palace Lake view room at Taj Lake Palace Udaipur
- Historical Suite at Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur
- Historical Suite at Rambagh Palace, Jaipur
- A luxury tent at Vanyavilas, Ranthambore
- Additional luxury amenities onboard RV Ganges Explorer —see page 10 for details

Heritage Suite	Twin Share <b>\$20,599</b> Single <b>\$35,599</b>	Twin Share <b>\$21,399</b> Single <b>\$36,399</b>	Twin Share <b>\$21,649</b> Single <b>\$36,649</b>	Twin Share <b>\$22,099</b> Single <b>\$37,099</b>
Viceroy Suite	Twin Share <b>\$20,849</b> Single <b>\$35,849</b>	Twin Share <b>\$21,649</b> Single <b>\$36,649</b>	Twin Share <b>\$21,899</b> Single <b>\$36,899</b>	Twin Share <b>\$22,349</b> Single <b>\$37,349</b>
Maharaja Suite	Twin Share <b>\$21,099</b> Single <b>\$36,599</b>	Twin Share <b>\$21,899</b> Single <b>\$37,399</b>	Twin Share <b>\$22,149</b> Single <b>\$37,649</b>	Twin Share <b>\$22,599</b> Single <b>\$38,099</b>

#### Your Authentic Asia India adventure includes ...

- 10 night luxury cruise aboard RV GANGES VOYAGER between Patna and Kolkata
- 17 nights in 5-star hotel accommodation
- 59 meals, including all meals aboard RV GANGES VOYAGER and breakfast, lunch and dinner as per the itinerary
- Sightseeing as specified in the itinerary
- Most beverages while cruising
- Services of the ship's crew during the cruise
- Gratuities on board and transfers as per itinerary

See full details of inclusions on page 3



DAY 1

DAY 2

Durbar Square, Kathmandu: a UNESCO World Heritage Site featuring spectacular architecture and elaborate carvings.

#### Arrival Kathmandu

Upon arrival in Kathmandu, guests will be transferred to their hotel. This evening will be at leisure.

Overnight at the Dwarika Hotel.

#### Kathmandu (B)

This morning starts with an introductory tour of the city.

Kathmandu (also known as Kantipur) is the capital of the Kingdom of Nepal. Occupying 564 square kilometres, it is the hub of Nepal's traditional culture and arts.

Only opened to westerners in 1950 and untouched by the industrial revolution, this is a city blessed with many 1000 year-old buildings.

Durbar Square in the city centre is overlooked by an array of temples, including the Kumari Ghar. It features magnificently intricate carvings and is home to the Kumari Devi, a living goddess.

After lunch it is time to visit Patan, just five kilometres from the city on the southern on side of the Bagmati River.

One of three royal cities, it's favoured by connoisseurs of fine arts for its wood and stone carvings and metal statues. Visitors also delight in the ornate architecture, including dozens of Buddhist and Hindu temples and over 1200 monuments.

The city is believed to have been built in the third century B.C.

pre- or post-india Extension: Nepal

### 3 NIGHTS FROM ONLY \$1,658 per person

In a land where it appears time stands still, we promise that you won't be able to.

by the Kirat dynasty. It was expanded by Lichhavis in the 6th century A.D. and again by the Mallas in the medieval period.

Patan's Durbar Square, like its counterpart in Kathmandu, is an enchanting mélange of palace buildings, artistic courtyards and graceful pagoda temples.

Listed as a World Heritage Site, the former royal palace complex is the centre of Patan's religious and social life, and houses a museum containing an array of bronze statues and religious objects.

Later, visit the Tibetan refugee camp before returning to Kathmandu. Some of the finest carpets to come out of the sub-continent are made here and it's possible to buy either pre-made designs or order one for later delivery.

Overnight at The Dwarika Hotel.

#### Kathmandu (B)

DAY 3

An early start makes for a visit to the mountain resort of Dhulikel, 30km south east of Kathmandu. Standing at 1550 metres and in a pristine environment, it is often possible to see the entire Eastern Himalaya.

These spectacular snowed mountains must be one of the finest panoramic views in the world and, when a blue haze covers the lower portion of the mountains, they seem to be floating in the air.

With such a backdrop, Dhulikhel presents as a stage of immense





Himalayas: readily recognised as the world's highest mountain range, at about 70 million years, it is also the youngest.

beauty and a paradise for nature lovers. The green hills and their carved agricultural terraces add to this staggeringly beautiful vista.

Journeying back to Kathmandu allows for a visit to the valley's third royal city, the enchantingly ancient Bhaktapur (Bhadgaon).

Also known as the City of Devotees, this is a veritable trove of medieval art and architecture. Just 14 kms east of Kathmandu, it was founded in the 9th Century and is shaped like a conch shell.

Once Nepal's capital, it also has a Durbar Square with an array of temples. One of the most striking buildings is the Palace of 55 windows with its unbelievably intricate carving. The Nyatapola Temple is the best example of pagoda-style architecture, standing on five terraces—each with famous strong men, two elephants, two lions, two griffins and two goddesses.

This afternoon will be at leisure in Kathmandu.

Overnight at The Dwarika Hotel.

**Tour Price**\* Please note: prices are subject to change

#### \$1,658 per person, twin share \$2,594 single

#### Inclusions

- One way economy class airfare from Kolkata to Kathmandu (or reverse)
- 3 nights accommodation in a Heritage room at the Dwarika Hotel Kathmandu
- Meals, entrance fees, sightseeing, and transfers as per itinerary



#### Depart Kathmandu (B)

DAY 4

#### **OPTIONAL MOUNTAIN FLIGHT**

A must-see landmark is, of course, the world's highest peak: Mount Everest. Little comes close to the experience of a flight up to the tallest mountains of this earth.

Offering a panoramic view of the Himalayas, this is one hour everyone should experience. Even visitors who enjoy trekking welcome the chance to 'conquer' the mountains in one fell swoop. They value it for the uniqueness of coming face-to-face with the 'roof of the world'.

The conclusion of this flight sees guests return to their hotel for breakfast (and reflection on one of the most exciting views ever).

The balance of the day is at leisure until transfer to the airport.

Flight Price\* Please note: prices are subject to change \$372 per person



## FAQ's

#### Is travel insurance required?

Travel insurance is a mandatory requirement of Cruiseco's India holidays. Please keep in mind that some of the destinations we visit are remote and emergency services may be required. We recommend you obtain travel insurance before paying a deposit. Failure to obtain travel insurance will not waive any cancellation fees in the event that you need to cancel your trip.

### Is a doctor on board and do I need any injections before I travel?

There is no doctor on board. Staff are trained in first aid, and we are never far from on-shore medical services. Guests requiring oxygen for medical reasons are welcome to bring their own equipment, as required. Guests must bring the appropriate electric converter for personal medical equipment. It is recommended you check with your doctor that you are fit for travel. Your doctor should also check as to whether any prophylactic drugs or inoculations are required.

#### What facilities are available in the cabins?

All cabins have their own individual climate control, flat-screen television with on-demand movie system, spa quality robes, slippers and bath amenities, daily housekeeping with turndown service, fine bed linens, premium mattresses, duvets, your choice of pillows, and daily international news.

#### What language is spoken in India?

The official language is Hindi but English is widely spoken throughout India. Staff at airline, railway, telecommunication counters and offices are usually fluent in English. Most direction signs usually have an English version too.

#### What sort of power adapter is used in India?

The electrical current is 220V. The most common plug consists of two round prongs. Sometimes there will also be a third round prong, making a triangle shape. Whilst onboard RV Ganges Voyager staterooms are outfitted with a multi-plug configuration feature.

#### Is there air-conditioning on board?

Your cabin has its own air-conditioning unit, which can be adjusted for your comfort. It is recommended not to overcool your cabin as the sudden change from outside temperature to a chilled cabin can bring on colds, respiratory illnesses and even stomach upsets.

#### What is the dress code?

India does not have a very formal dress code, although some hotels and restaurants may insist on long trousers and a conventional shirt. You will need warmer clothes for evenings. The atmosphere on board is informal and relaxed; comfortable, casual attire during the day and the evenings are smart-casual. On occasion, we will visit religious sites that may require long pants and covered shoulders. In this instance, our shipboard staff will notify you the day prior, to allow you to plan accordingly.

#### What drinks are included?

Onboard RV Ganges Voyager, all locally produced beer, soft drinks, coffee, tea and mineral water are served free of charge throughout the cruise. House red and white wine are served with lunch and dinner. During your land tour drinks are at an additional cost for all meals.

#### Security

Only guests who possess tickets for passage are allowed on board the RV Ganges Voyager. Security services are provided on board to ensure everyone's safety throughout the journey.

#### What currency is used in India?

The units of Indian currency are the Rupee and Paisa (100 Paisa equal 1 Rupee). Paper money is in denominations of Rupees

1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500 and 1000. Do not use unauthorised money changers for exchanging foreign currency. You run the risk of receiving forged rupees or being cheated. Exchanging facilities are generally available at airports and authorised money changers usually display the rates of exchange. Credit cards are widely accepted in major hotels, restaurants and shops. On board RV Ganges Voyager the official currency is the Indian Rupee. All charges for services and products on board will be placed on the guest's shipboard account to be settled at the end of the voyage. MasterCard, Visa and US dollars are also accepted for the settlement of guest accounts.

#### Am I required to tip?

Gratuities have been included for local guides, drivers, and shipboard staff, guests are not expected to tip staff individually or collectively.

#### Is there Internet access on board?

There is a wifi system. Internet is available in all public areas of the vessel.

#### **Fitness Centre**

The RV Ganges Voyager is equipped with state-of-the-art fitness equipment. Guests may enjoy panoramic views of the Ganges River while enjoying the Fitness Centre, located on the Sun Deck.

#### Are there laundry facilities?

24hour professional laundry and pressing service is provided on board. Costs will be listed in each stateroom's directory, and charged to the guest's account.

#### Is smoking permitted on board?

Smoking is not permitted in your cabin or any internal areas. Smoking is permitted in the designated smoking area on the Sun Deck only.

#### What type of meals are provided on board?

We offer a fusion of Indian and Western cuisine and vegetarian dishes can also be requested. Other special meal requirements will be made on a 'request' basis only and cannot be guaranteed. Please advise your Cruiseco Travel Agent of your requirements at least 60 days prior to departure.

#### Can I have a double bed?

Most stateroom beds can be converted into double or twin beds except the Maharaja, Viceroy, and Heritage suites which are four-poster beds and fixed King size.

### Are there lifts on board and facilities for passengers in wheelchairs?

There are no lifts and the ship is not equipped for passengers travelling in a wheelchair. The vessel regularly moors where paths can be muddy and slippery. It is recommended passengers be relatively fit, able-bodied and able to walk over uneven surfaces. Please consult your Cruiseco Travel Agent if you have further questions.

#### Will my mobile phone work?

While in India, guests will be billed by their mobile phone provider, and calls or messages will appear as roaming charges on their bill. Before leaving home, guests should contact their provider to confirm a roaming agreement with local carriers in India.

#### Will I need a visa to travel?

Australian passengers must obtain a visa before travel to India. The cost of visas are not included in the cost of your holiday. Please ensure your passport has sufficient validity (over six months) before travelling. For further information on obtaining visas please speak to your Cruiseco Travel Agent.

# **Booking Conditions**

#### **Reservations and payments**

Bookings for these exclusive Cruiseco Authentic Asia India Holidays must be made with a Cruiseco Travel Agent.

On confirmation of your booking, a written confirmation will be sent to your Cruiseco Travel Agent. An option will be given for 7 days. Before the option expires it will be necessary for you to pay a deposit of \$2,500 per person. This deposit secures your holiday as requested. Failure to pay the deposit by the option due date may result in the cancellation of your booking. Final payment is due 120 days prior to sailing. If your booking is made within 120 days prior to sailing, full payment, along with details of your travel insurance policy will be due immediately.

#### Fares

The fares quoted in this brochure are shown in Australian dollars and are based on a twin sharing basis, unless specified as a single cabin category. All rates are subject to change with or without notice.

#### **Earlybird Fares**

Earlybird fares may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Please ask your Cruiseco travel agent for details.

#### What's not included in your holiday price

Passport and visa fees, insurances of all kinds, laundry, phone calls, beverages (except for those noted as being included), additional accommodation made necessary by flight schedules and items of a personal nature are not included in the holiday costs advertised in this brochure.

#### **Travel documentation**

Travel documents will be sent to you approximately 14 days prior to departure from Australia (providing full payment has been received). If you are departing Australia earlier, please ask your Cruiseco travel agent to request your travel documents in good time.

#### **Travel insurance**

Travel insurance is mandatory for Cruiseco's Authentic Asia Holidays. We recommend that you obtain Travel insurance before paying a deposit. Failure to obtain travel insurance will not waive any cancellation fees in the event that you need to cancel your trip.

#### **Booking changes and cancellations**

In the unfortunate event that you should have to cancel your holiday, we must be notified in writing. The day that we receive this notice in writing, will be considered the date that your cancellation has been made. Certain cancellation fees apply to your holiday if cancelled after a deposit or final payment has been made.

#### **Itinerary changes**

Itineraries are subject to change due to weather, road conditions, and other factors beyond our control. The order of the trips may also change. Should a location or region become unviable, we will make every effort to visit an equivalent location or region.

#### **Booking changes**

A fee of \$25 per person will be charged for any revision or alteration made to a reservation after the booking is confirmed unless the change increases the value of the booking.

#### Cancellations and cancellation fees

Notice of cancellation must be made in writing to your Cruiseco travel agent. The following scale of charges (includes GST) will apply when notice of cancellation is given prior to sailing.

Days before sailing cancellation received	Cancellation charges
Administration fee on all cancellations	\$100 per person
180 plus days	\$1,000 per person
120-179 days	Loss of deposit
60-119 days	50% of total holiday cost plus admin fee
30-59 days	75% of total holiday cost plus admin fee
29 days to day of departure or no show	100% of total holiday cost

#### Qantas Frequent Flyer points

Qantas Frequent Flyer points are awarded on Cruiseco holidays. Qantas Frequent Flyer members will receive one Qantas Frequent Flyer point for every \$1.50 spent. You must be a member of the Qantas Frequent Flyer program to earn points in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Qantas Frequent Flyer program. Points are not awarded on port charges, government fees, on board gratuities and air taxes.

#### Other conditions

It is your responsibility to ensure you have read all of the Booking Conditions and to provide valid travel documents. Be sure to ask your Travel Agent for advice concerning passport and visa requirements.

#### Cruiseco's statement of business practice

Your Cruiseco agent will provide you, on request, with a copy of Cruiseco's "Statement of Business Practice".

#### Booking arrangements

Your booking arrangements are to be made by your Travel Agent and the person effecting the booking, shall be deemed to have accepted the booking conditions.

#### **Itinerary Changes**

Itineraries are subject to change due to weather, road conditions, and other factors beyond our control. The order of the trips may also change. Should a location or region become unviable, we will make every effort to visit an equivalent location or region.

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