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BUSINESS & TOURIST SERVICES

Division of OKTA International Pvt. Ltd



REGAL RAJASTHAN

Day 1: Arrive DELHI

After you have cleared immigration and customs formalities, you are met outside the Arrivals Hall and transferred to the hotel (check in at noon). Overnight at the hotel

Day 2: In DELHI

After breakfast depart for a tour of India's capital. In the morning visit **Old Delhi**. Drive past the **Red Fort**, built in 1648 during the reign of Shah Jehan in red sandstone, which gave the fort its name and **Jama Masjid** is India's largest mosque, built of red sandstone and white marble in the middle of the 17th century. There is time to wander down **Chandni Chowk**, once the imperial avenue down which Shah Jehan rode at the head of lavish cavalcades, is today bustling with shops, stalls and silversmiths' ateliers. Also visit Raj Ghat, where Mahatma Gandhi was cremated.



In the afternoon, in **New Delhi** drive past **India Gate**, built in memory of Indian soldiers killed during the First World War, **Rashtrapati Bhawan**, built in the early 20th century as the Imperial residence of the Viceroy, today the official residence of the President of India and **Parliament House**, an unique circular building with huge colonnades, houses the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament. Visit **Humayun's Tomb**, the first Mughal garden tomb. The gardens and waterways were recently restored. One of Delhi's most striking monuments is the 70-meter high **Qutb Minar**, which looms majestically across the wide plains of Delhi. Overnight at the hotel.



Incredible India

Day 3: Drive DELHI to AGRA

After breakfast depart on the 5-hour drive to Agra. On arrival check in at the hotel.



In the afternoon take a tour of Agra. Visit the red sandstone **Agra Fort**, which stands like a crescent on the banks of the Jamuna River, enclosed by forbidding 20-meter high walls, with a 12-meter moat between them. Three successive Mughal emperors - Akbar, Jehangir and Shah Jehan - helped create this massive structure which contains Hindu and Muslim architecture. The highlight of your trip will be a visit to the Taj Mahal, the greatest monument to love and one of the wonders of the modern world, constructed by Emperor Shah Jehan as a mausoleum for his beloved queen Mumtaz Mahal. Overnight at the hotel.



Day 4: Drive AGRA to JAIPUR



After breakfast depart on the 6-hour drive to Jaipur. En route stop at **Fatehpur Sikri**, the deserted sandstone city, which was the glorious but short-lived imperial capital of Akbar, the greatest of Mughal emperors. Lying on a rocky ridge, it is today a haunting complex of empty palaces, forts and mosques. A variety of architectural styles are found, since craftsmen representing many schools were employed. On arrival in Jaipur check in at the hotel. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 5: In JAIPUR



After breakfast visit **Amber**, the capital for 6 centuries before Jaipur was built, which lies 11 km north of Jaipur. Rising majestically on the slopes of a hill, this 11th century fort and palace complex is a blend of Hindu and Muslim styles - the earlier constructions in the inner apartments designed by the Hindu founder are austere, while later constructions abound in the rich flourishes characteristic of Muslim influence. The **Diwani-i-Am** (Hall of Public Audience) affords a view of the strategic location of Amber. The **Jai Mandir** (Hall of Victory) is the finest example of the artistic exuberance of the day - panels of alabaster, fine inlay work, a shimmering Hall of Mirrors, renowned for its fine mirrorwork. The **Sukh Nivas** (Hall of Pleasure) has 17th century air conditioning. Experience the thrill of riding up to the fort on gaily-decorated elephants, in the manner the Rajputs of old made their royal ascent centuries ago.



In the afternoon explore **Jaipur**, one of the best-planned cities in India, built of rose-pink sandstone by the great astronomer-king Jai Singh II in 1727. The **City Palace** stands in the centre of the city. Part of it is still the Maharaja's residence, while most of the complex has been developed into a museum containing rare manuscripts, fine specimens of Rajput and Mughal paintings, royal apparel and an armoury. **Hawa Mahal** (Palace of Winds) is the landmark of Jaipur. Built of pink sandstone with a delicate honeycomb design and rising five storeys high, it is composed of semi-octagonal overhanging windows, each with its perforated



screen, which allowed the ladies of the court to look onto the main street without being seen. **Jantar Mantar** observatory was built by the founder of Jaipur, Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh. The huge stone instruments were devised to study the movements of the sun, moon and planets and are incredibly accurate. There is time to wander through the colourful bazaars, a veritable collector's paradise where you can watch ancient craft forms. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 6: Drive JAIPUR JODHPUR

After breakfast depart on the 6-hour drive to Jodhpur. This is the land of the valiant Rathore kings, whose courage was a match for the tyranny of the Thar Desert. A bleak scarp rears up 120 meters from the desert valley. Straddling the rocky crevices is the massive **Jodhpur Fort**, its sheer walls reflecting the strength of its warrior builders.

In the afternoon, visit the fort. The museum within the fort is one of the finest in Rajasthan and displays royal apparel, ancient paintings and manuscripts, fabled treasures of the royal household and an armoury. An interesting section displays folk musical instruments from different regions of Rajasthan. Delicately latticed windows and pierced screens worked in sandstone form the dominant motif within the rugged casket of the fort and the palaces are exquisitely decorated. On the road down from the fort, the splash of blinding white marble on the left is **Jaswant Thada**, Maharaja Jaswant Singh II's cenotaph, built in 1899 - all previous rulers have their cenotaphs at Mandore. As with the Taj Mahal in Agra, the marble is from Makrana. Overnight at the hotel.



Day 7: Drive JODHPUR to JAISALMER

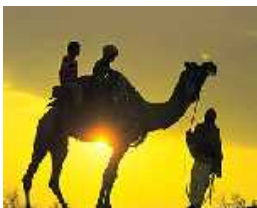


After an early breakfast depart on the 6-hour drive to **Jaisalmer**, which lies in the western extremity of Rajasthan, in the heart of the Thar Desert. On arrival in Jaisalmer check in at the hotel. Overnight at the hotel.



Day 8: In JAISALMER

After breakfast spend the day visiting Jaisalmer. The ancient city, which stands on a low range of hills, surrounded by a stone wall three miles round, was founded in 1156 AD. Within its walls lie temples, forts and palaces, all built of yellow sandstone. The **Jain Temples** in the fort are decked with deities and dancing figures in mythological settings. The library attached to these places of worship contains some of the most ancient manuscripts in India, some dating back to the 12th century, written on palm-leaf in black ink with hand painted wooden covers. Down in the city are the renowned *havelis* or mansions of Salim Singh, Nathmalji and the Patwas, every house boasting superb latticework in innumerable and intricate designs.



In the late afternoon drive out to the great Thar Desert. A camel ride on the sand dunes will give you some idea of the pace and space of desert life. The sun setting over the vast expanse of the desert is a breathtaking experience. Return to Jaisalmer. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 9: Drive JAISALMER to LUNI

After breakfast, drive 6 hours to the small village of Luni, home to many artisans who work with metal, clay and wood, keeping alive the skills passed down over the centuries by their ancestors.



Fort Chanwa, with its huge gates and protective walls, lies 35 km from Jodhpur. Built over a hundred years ago of the famous red sandstone of Jodhpur, it has ornately carved latticework friezes and intricate *jharokhas* (windows). Its traditional gates lead to a complex of courtyards, towers, water wheels, stables, passages and unexpected stairways leading to secret pavilions and panoramic terraces.

You can visit the *Bishnoi* villages. The *Bishnois* are a fascinating community, which follows the 29 (*bish-noi*) tenets laid down by the 15th century **Guru Jambheshwar**. They fervently believe in the sanctity of animal and plant life so all animals live near their villages without fear. When a *Bishnoi* dies, he is sometimes buried in the sitting position and often placed at the threshold of the house or adjoining cattleshed. A *Bishnoi* believes he will later be reincarnated as a deer, hence the herds of blackbuck often seen near their villages. Overnight



at the hotel.



Day 10: Drive LUNI to UDAIPUR

After breakfast depart on the 5-hour drive to Udaipur. En route, visit the famous Jain temples of **Ranakpur**, which lie buried in a shady glen and cover a vast area. The central temple is called **Chaumukha** (four-faced) and is the most complex and extensive of Jain temples in India, covering an area of over 3,600 sq. meters. Its 29 halls are supported by 1,444 pillars, none of which are alike. Subsidiary shrines in the shape of side alters throng around in all directions, including a temple dedicated to the Sun God, which displays erotic carvings. Continue on to Udaipur in the late afternoon. Overnight at the hotel.



Day 11: In UDAIPUR

Morning sightseeing of **Udaipur** includes a visit to the **City Palace**, which stands on the crest of a ridge overlooking Lake Pichola. The largest palace in Rajasthan, it was built at various periods but still preserves the harmony of design, enhanced by massive octagonal towers surmounted by cupolas. Now a museum, it is a labyrinth of courtyards richly decorated with inlaid mirror-work, galleries covered with frescos, temples and roof gardens, which afford a wide panorama below. The **Jagdish Temple** in the old town was built in the mid-17th century and has a remarkable bronze statue of **Garuda**, the mythical bird, facing his revered master Lord Vishnu. **Sahelion-ki-Bari** (Garden of the Handmaidens) is a good example of the Hindu art of landscape gardening on a princely scale. Ornamental pools with finely sculptured cenotaphs of soft black stone are surrounded by a profusion of fountains.



In the late afternoon take a boat ride on Lake Pichola. The steel blue waters of the lake, artificially created in the 14th century, reflect the white phantom **Jag Nivas Palace**, now the Lake Palace hotel which was built in 1746 as the summer residence of the rulers, and **Jag Mandir** said to be built by Maharana Karan Singh for his friend Prince Khurram, who was later to become emperor Shah Jehan. Huge seamless stone slabs of translucent thinness were used. The rooms were embellished with inlaid stones - onyx, jade, carnelian, jasper and agate. Overnight at the hotel.



Day 12: Fly UDAIPUR to DELHI and depart

After breakfast the morning is at leisure. The shops and craftsmen's ateliers in the narrow streets of the bazaar justify endless walks.

Afternoon transfer to the airport for the flight to Delhi. Connect with the onward flight home

END OF OUR SERVICES

