

RAJASTHAN IN ALL ITS GLORY

NOVEMBER 2020

18 Day Fully Escorted Tour



RAJASTHAN IN ALL ITS GLORY

Yes, we are running again in 2020, our successful November India Tour across the colourful Rajasthan Region which also includes our clients must do overnight experience at the “Marigold Hotel” used in the movie “Best Exotic Marigold Hotel”. After being picked up at your front door we whisk you away to this special land via Singapore. Singapore is where will have a 2-day stopover and be based at the club floor level of the Park Hotel Clarke Quay. So handy and central to everything, yet in its own grounds with lush gardens and a swimming pool. This gives everyone a rest after the initial flight from New Zealand and a chance to get to know each other before we arrive into India.

Once we arrive into Delhi Airport you will be pleasantly surprised of just how modern and easy the airport is to access and exit. We will be met by our local ground operational staff and head to our first Hotel - the start of our “Rajasthan and All Its Glory” small group hosted tour.

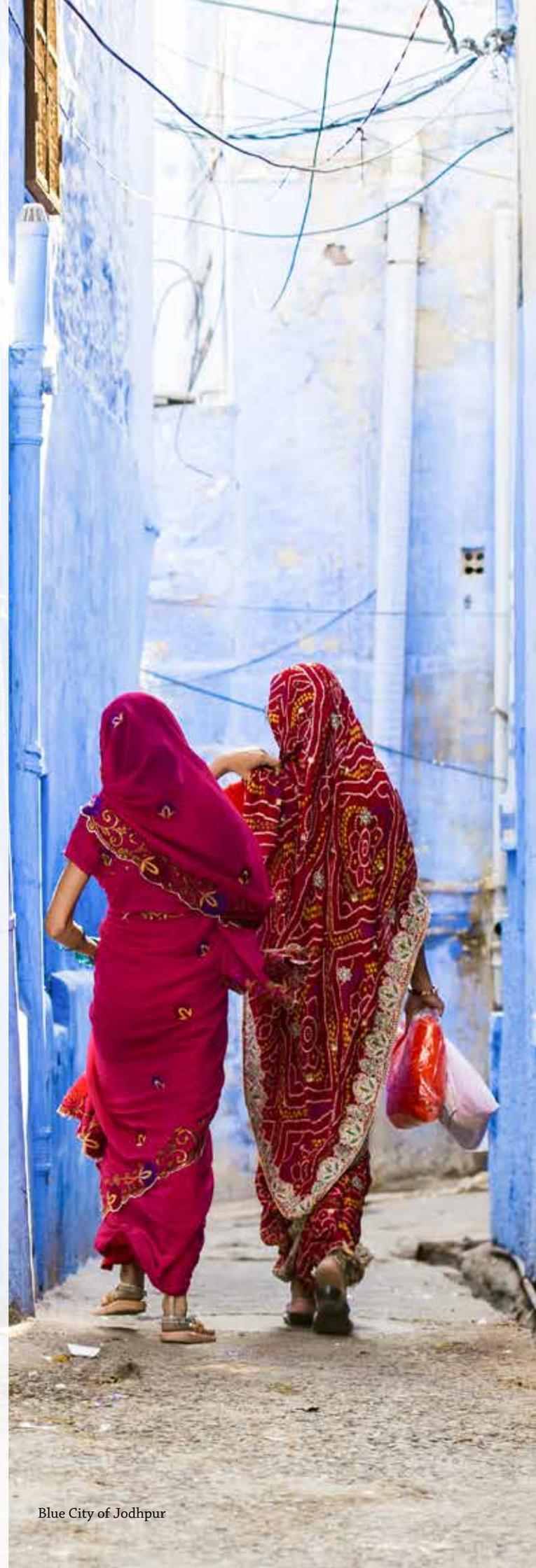
We take a rickshaw ride around the hustle and bustle of Old Delhi City and visit both a Mosque and a Sikh Temple to learn about both their religions. At the Sikh Temple we observe groups of locals who donate their time every day to the preparation, cooking and cleaning of over 4000 meals daily to the needy at no charge and no questions to anyone who enters. A wonderful heartfelt experience for all.

After Delhi we began to make our way across land following the itinerary in our private air-conditioned, pristine coach with one of the most qualified drivers and his companion who travels along with him, serving bottles of chilled water (and the odd rum and coke) like a private butler. He also stays with the coach making it very safe to leave things aboard should you wish at any time.

Rajasthan and it's people are very colourful, simple and honest, interesting and exciting, all rolled up into one. Rajasthan is full of amazing history, farms, cotton fields and of course the sacred cow that wanderers around all day with no pressure. Its family palaces, forts, castles and buildings go back to before the 15th century. The heritage hotels (ex-palaces & forts) where we stay are great fun, interesting and often luxurious.

The food on our tour to date has always exceeded everyones expectations and the majority of your meals are included. We start each day with a hearty daily breakfast offering both international and local delights (grab a banana on your way after breakfast perhaps for lunch) then a wonderful prepared large evening meal, displaying a wide range of regional dishes, with something for everyone. No one goes hungry in India. The authentic home cooking class we do, provides that evenings meal also for everyone and is great fun as well as educational.

What this tour aims to do is take you off the beaten track, where most tours tend to stick to the well-trodden roads, however does include the must see, Jodhpur (the blue city), Jaipur (pink town), Udaipur (the Venice of India) Khempur (home of the Best Exotic Hotel) Narlai (a Royal Family residence and a dinner in a 16th century step well -lit by over 700 candles) Rohet (where we integrated with the local Bishnoi community) and of course Agra, home of the famous Taj Mahal which we visit twice, (at sun set and at sun rise).



Blue City of Jodhpur



RAJASTHAN ITINERARY November 2020

FRI 13 Wellington - Singapore

Upon arrival you will be met by a local representative and transferred by private vehicle to your accommodation.
Park Hotel Clarke Quay (Club Lounge Accommodation - meals in flight).

SAT 14 Singapore

ⓑ

Singapore, a dynamic city rich in contrast and colour. Today we have free time to explore at leisure. Perhaps visit Sentosa Island or Supertree Grove at Gardens by the Bay. Later you are invited to meet Peter at Raffles for a Singapore Sling, after all, when in Singapore... *Park Hotel Clarke Quay (Club Lounge Accommodation).*

SUN 15 Singapore - Delhi

ⓑ

We say farewell to Singapore and take our flight to Delhi. Delhi, the capital of India, is a city that offers a glimpse of both ancient and modern-day India. This city is rich in culture, always changing with time but never hiding its splendid past. The various ancient ruins seen in the city are silent witnesses to its magnificent history. With its multi-ethnic, multi-cultural population, New Delhi is truly cosmopolitan. *Maidens Hotel.*

Singapore

If there is one word that best captures Singapore, it is "unique":

A dynamic city rich in contrast and colour, you'll find a harmonious blend of culture, cuisine, arts and architecture here.

Brimming with unbridled energy, this little dynamo in Southeast Asia embodies the finest of both East and West. A single day can take you from the past to the future - from exotic ethnic enclave to efficient business centre, from serene gardens to sleek skyscrapers.

You can start your day with a hearty breakfast amidst lush vegetation with Singapore's very own orangutans. Then take a step back in time as you enter a traditional Chinese temple, Muslim mosque, Hindu temple and Christian church - all in the same neighbourhood. You can then return to the present by strolling down Orchard Road, picking up the latest fashion trends and entertaining local catch phrases along the way.

All in-flight meals included.

ⓑ Breakfast

ⓓ Dinner



Singapore



MON 16 Delhi

(B) (D)

This morning enjoy sightseeing in the walled city of Old Delhi, pulsing with energy and colour. The hustle and bustle of thronged bazaars is laced by a maze of narrow lanes which twist and turn between tall, leaning houses. You will visit Jama Masjid with its tapering minarets and wonderful marble domes, Red Fort and Raj Ghat. You will also have an opportunity to enjoy a rickshaw ride through the market streets - a fascinating experience.

In the afternoon you will be taken on a tour of cosmopolitan New Delhi. It is a city of wide boulevards which offers ever changing perspectives of Lutyen's landscaped city. See the magnificent Parliament Building and India Gate. Visit the Sikh shrine of Bangla Sahib Gurudwara and if time permits, visit the city markets of Connaught Place. *Maidens Hotel.*

TUE 17 Delhi - Agra

(B) (D)

Today you will be transferred to Agra. The journey of 205 km takes approximately 3 - 4 hours.

This afternoon visit Agra Fort before watching the sun set over the Taj Mahal from the riverside gardens of Mehtab Bagh. The Taj Mahal is truly a vision to behold as the last golden rays of light shimmer off its lacy white marble, showcasing what is, perhaps, the most perfect architectural monument in the world. Little needs to be said about this architectural wonder, which is always the *raison d'être* for every tourist's visit to Agra. Built by Shah Jahan, the Taj is a white marble memorial to his beautiful wife Mumtaz Mahal. This monument took 22 years to complete and a quirk of history meant that although he intended to build a black facsimile of the white marble "Taj" as his own mausoleum, tragically before he could begin the Shah was deposed by his son and imprisoned in the Agra Fort where he remained until his death, spending the rest of his life looking out from his cell along the river to the final resting-place of his wife. Continue for a traditional Indian barbecue dinner before returning to your hotel. *Crystal Sarovar Premiere - Taj view rooms.*

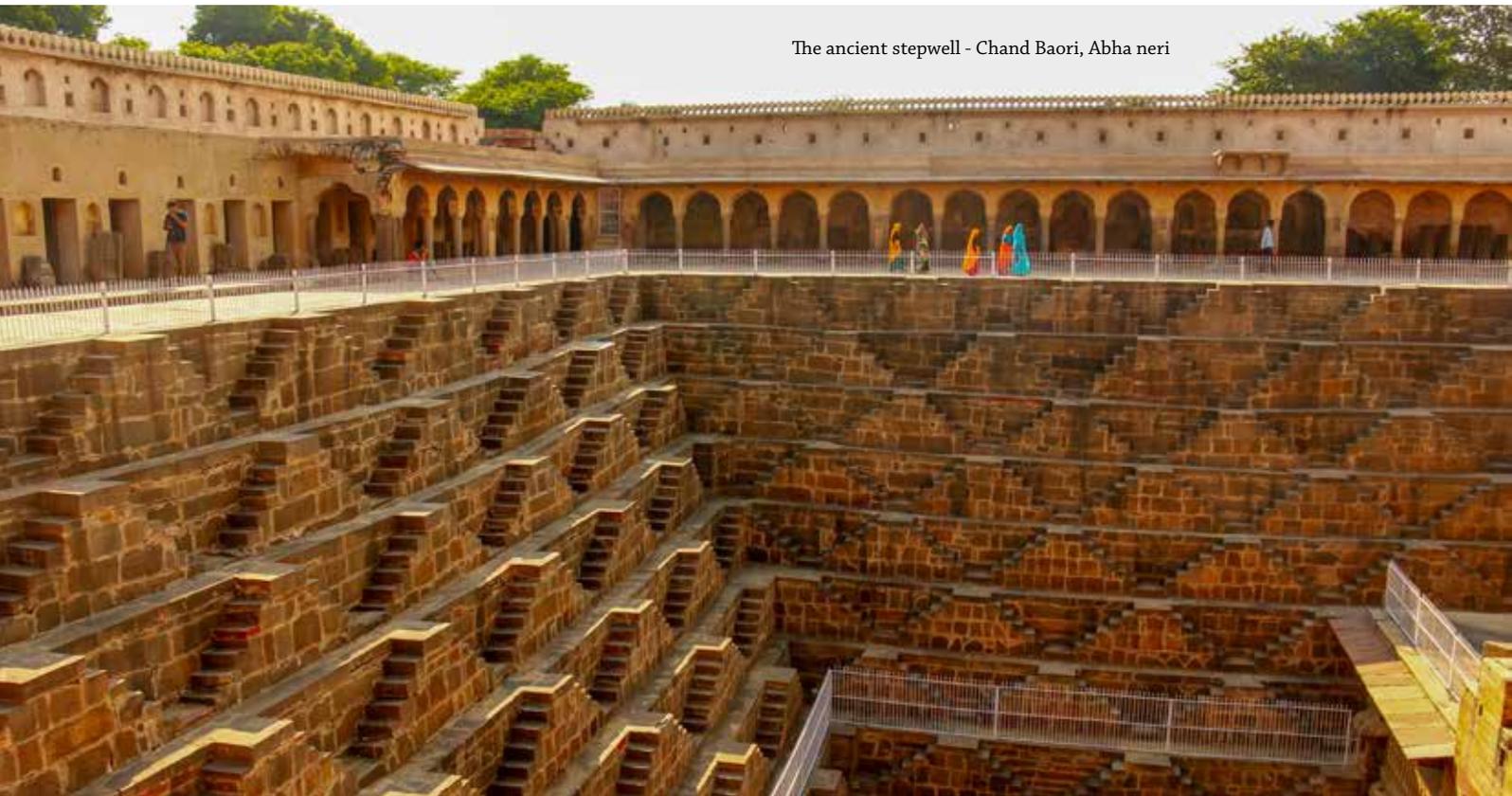
Agra is famous as being home to one of the Seven Wonders of the World - the Taj Mahal. The architectural splendor of the mausoleums, the fort and the palaces are vivid reminders of the opulence of the legendary Mughal empire, of which Agra was the capital in the 16th and early 17th centuries. While its significance as a political centre ended with the transfer of the capital to Delhi in 1634 by Shah Jahan, its architectural wealth has secured its place on the international map. A pleasant town with a comparatively slow pace, Agra is known for its superb inlay work on marble and soapstone by craftsmen who are descendants of those who worked under the Mughals. The city is also famous for its carpets, gold thread embroidery and leather shoes.

WED 18 Agra - Jaipur

(B) (D)

An early start today as you visit the Taj Mahal for the sunrise. Return to your hotel for breakfast and depart for Jaipur. En-route stop in Abhaneri Village to visit Chand Baori Stepwell. The Chand Baori Stepwell was built over a thousand years ago and is one of the largest stepwells in the world, as well as one of the most beautiful. Centuries ago, the stepwells were built in the arid zones of Rajasthan to provide water all year round. Today, the construction is not used as a well anymore, but its exquisite geometry attracts local and international visitors alike. *The Fern Residency.*

The picturesque capital of Rajasthan, Jaipur is awash in pink - the colour associated with hospitality in Rajput culture. Built in 1727 A.D. by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh of Jaipur displays a remarkable harmony and architectural splendor (most notably the renowned Palace of the Winds, pictured). The ancient heart of the Pink City still beats in its fairy-tale palaces, rugged fortresses perched on barren hills and broad avenues that dot the entire city. There is a timeless appeal to Jaipur's colourful bazaars where one can shop for Rajasthani handlooms and trinkets. Beautifully laid out gardens and parks, attractive monuments and marvelous heritage hotels (once the residence of Maharaja's), are worth admiration. Not to mention the ambling camels and cheerful people in multi-hued costumes that will make your trip to the pink city a memorable one.



The ancient stepwell - Chand Baori, Abha neri



THU 19 Jaipur

(B) (D)

Your morning begins in heritage style as you are presented with traditional turban, bindi and stoll to wear. Transfer to the outskirts of Jaipur to walk through the grounds and structures of the Amber Fort. The fort was originally constructed by a tribe called the Meenas and dedicated to "Amba" or the "Mother Goddess." One of the fort's most striking features is the Hall of Mirrors. When the palace was occupied by royalty, the hall could be lit at night by a single candle reflected in thousands of tiny, intricate mirrors. Continue to visit Man Sagar Lake to view the water palace Jal Mahal. The palace is located in the centre of the lake, home to various migratory birds and surrounded by Aravalli Hill, ancient forts and temples. This makes for a perfect spot for photography of the palace and Jaipur before continuing on to the flower markets renowned for its marigolds before exploring the City Palace and Museum. You may like the local astrologer to read your palm here - good luck! Later this afternoon enjoy a walking tour of the old bazaar, try your hand at bargaining and hop on board a tuk tuk to ride through the narrow streets for a photo stop at the Palace of the Winds, the Hawa Mahal. Later join the fun of a Bollywood blockbuster at the heritage Raj Mandir cinema before an authentic home cooking class and dinner with Indian beer and wine. Enjoy the cultural interaction with the family before returning to your hotel. *The Fern Residency.*

FRI 20 Jaipur - Mandawa

(B) (D)

Check out this morning and drive to Mandawa. After check in, head out with your guide to explore the town. Start at the 18th century medieval Castle Mandawa and Mandawa Fort located amidst the Aravalli Hills. The town is famed for its traditional havelis decorated with unique frescoed wall paintings telling colourful Indian tales. As the sun sets, take a walk along the narrow lanes of Mandawa Village to interact with locals, visit the rustic Mandawa street bazaar and Royal Cenotaphs. *Castle Mandawa.*

SAT 21 Mandawa

(B) (D)

After breakfast join jeeps to visit the nearby villages of Dabri, Dhakali and Nabipura with short stops to meet local families and take photos. Continue to Dinwa and Kisari for dramatic desert landscapes before returning to Mandawa. This evening try a camel ride. *Castle Mandawa.*

SAT 22 Mandawa - Jodhpur

(B) (D)

Drive to Jodhpur this morning. On arrival check in to your hotel and the rest of the day is at leisure. A 30 minute head and shoulder or foot massage is included today. *Ajit Bhawan Heritage Hotel.*

SUN 23 Jodhpur

(B) (D)

Explore Jodhpur, referred to as the 'Blue City' due to the indigo tinge of the whitewashed houses around the Mehrangarh Fort, the clock tower, Jaswant Thada. Visit the Clock Tower, a prominent landmark in the city, and explore a local market. Return to your hotel for dinner. *Ajit Bhawan Heritage Hotel.*

The Mehrangarh Fort (Majestic Fort) is located on the hilltop that rises sharply above the city. With its 68ft wide and 117ft high walls soaring 400ft above the city, the fort dominates the surrounding plains. The Mehrangarh Fort was founded by Rao Jodha Singh from 1459 onwards in an informal pattern over several centuries and have their own architectural features, such as narrow staircases leading to the royal residence, carved panels and porches, elaborately adorned walls and brilliant stained glass windows that create vibrant mosaics on the floors with the play of light. The various buildings inside the fort now serve as Mehrangarh and cannons on the fort's ramparts.

The Jaswant Thada is an architectural landmark of the city - a beautiful white marble memorial built in 1899 in memory of Maharaja Jaswant Singh II. The monument, in its entirety, is built out of intricately carved sheets of marble. These stones are extremely thin and polished so that they emit a warm glow when the sun's rays dance across their surface. Within this cenotaph, there are also two more tombs.

MON 24 Jodhpur - Narlai

(B) (D)

We drive to Narlai and our accommodation tonight is the residence of the Royal family, Rawla Nalai. The village is charming so you will have time at leisure to explore. Take a walk with your guide this afternoon to explore the close-knit traditional community of Narlai. This evening enjoy candlelit dinner in the spectacular setting of a 16th century stepwell. *Rawla Narlai.*

TUE 25 Narlai - Khempur

(B) (D)

After breakfast transfer to Khempur, the actual site of the film, Best Exotic Marigold Hotel.

Arrive at the real Best Exotic Marigold Hotel aka Ravla Khempur for check-in. This charming converted Palace is a wonderfully quirky property that takes you into the world that is portrayed in the film. Further the Palace is also home to Royal Marwai horses and is surrounded by vibrant villages.

This afternoon we take you for a local bullock cart ride to a suitable setting to enjoy sundowner with some traditional tea. Enjoy dinner in the hotel this evening with the owner of the Ravla Khempur who will discuss the impact of the film on his hotel and village. *Ravla Khempur.*





Kumbhalgarh Fort in Rajasthan

WED 26 Khempur - Udaipur

(B) (D)

Drive to the romantic and princely lake city of Udaipur, also known as the Venice of the East. This afternoon visit the elusive City Palace and the Crystal Galley showcasing the largest private collection of crystals in the world, belonging to Maharishi Saijan Singh.

Later we visit Sahelion Ki Badi (Courtyard of the Maids), Sajjan Niwas (the Royal Rose Garden) and spiritual Jagdish Temple and the bazaars.

Join a traditional sunset exclusive boat-ride on Lake Pichola for panoramic views of Udaipur, its forts, palaces and temples by the lake. Enjoy dinner overlooking the lake this evening. Return to the hotel later tonight. *Amit Haveli.*

THU 27 Udaipur

(B) (D)

After breakfast we head out of Udaipur this morning and head to Kumbhalgarh Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage Site to learn the history of the fort while enjoying its mesmerising view. We visit the Jain Temple in Ranakpur that took 65 years of careful construction for its complex structure before returning to Udaipur late afternoon for dinner. *Amit Haveli.*

FRI 28 Udaipur - Delhi

(B) (D)

We transfer to the airport for our flight to Delhi, which will allow for some free time this afternoon after our arrival. Check into your hotel near the airport for this evening. *Pullman Airport.*

SAT 29 Delhi - Singapore

(B)

Transfer to the airport for your onward flight.

SUN 30 Singapore - Wellington

Arrive Wellington. *(Meals in flight).*

Trip Highlights

- SENSATIONAL SINGAPORE STOPOVER - Club Level Hotel
- HOP ON & HOP OFF BUS TOUR OF SINGAPORE
- RICKSHAW RIDE in Deli
- SEEK TEMPLE plus experience the charity food kitchens
- THE MAGICAL TAJ MAHAL – 7th wonder of the world
- CHAND BAORI STEPWELL – largest in world
- MEANDER THROUGH FLOWER MARKETS
- SEE MIGRATORY BIRDS
- JAIPUR PINK CITY
- THE HISTORICAL AMBER FORT
- STAY AT THE 18th CENTURY CASTLE MANDAWA
- CAPTIVATING STREETS OF THE 'BLUE CITY'
- STAY AT THE REAL BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL
- VISIT THE TRIBES PEOPLE OF BISHNOI
- VISIT THE ANCIENT MEHRANGARH FORT
- MEET WITH TWO LOCAL FAMILY'S including a cookery and dining experience
- CANDLELIGHT DINNER AT SPECTACULAR 16th CENTURY STEPWELL
- CITY PALACE & CRYSTAL GALLERY TOUR IN UDAIPUR
- KUMBHALAGARTH FORT – a Unesco world heritage site
- STAY AND EXPLORE UDAIPUR – The Venus of India





Rajasthan

18 Day Tour Includes

YOURTravel home pick up (T&Cs apply)

Fully escorted by YOURTours Host

International flights ex New Zealand

Premium and boutique accommodation

Services of local guides throughout

Meals as per itinerary including bottled water

Gratuities

Departs 13 November 2020

Price \$13,795pp Twin Share

Single Supplement Available

We invite you to join us on one of our fully hosted small group tours, with a maximum of 18 guests.

Based on the beautiful Kapiti Coast with our guests joining us from all corners of New Zealand, we believe you will be pleasantly surprised by just how much we include in our tour price.

- Our Sapphire tours are our comfort tours and offer Heritage, Boutique and a minimum of 4* standard accommodation.
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When you book with us, you can also rest assured that your Tour Host will always be one of our friendly well-experienced YOURTours team members, ensuring you are looked after from start to finish.

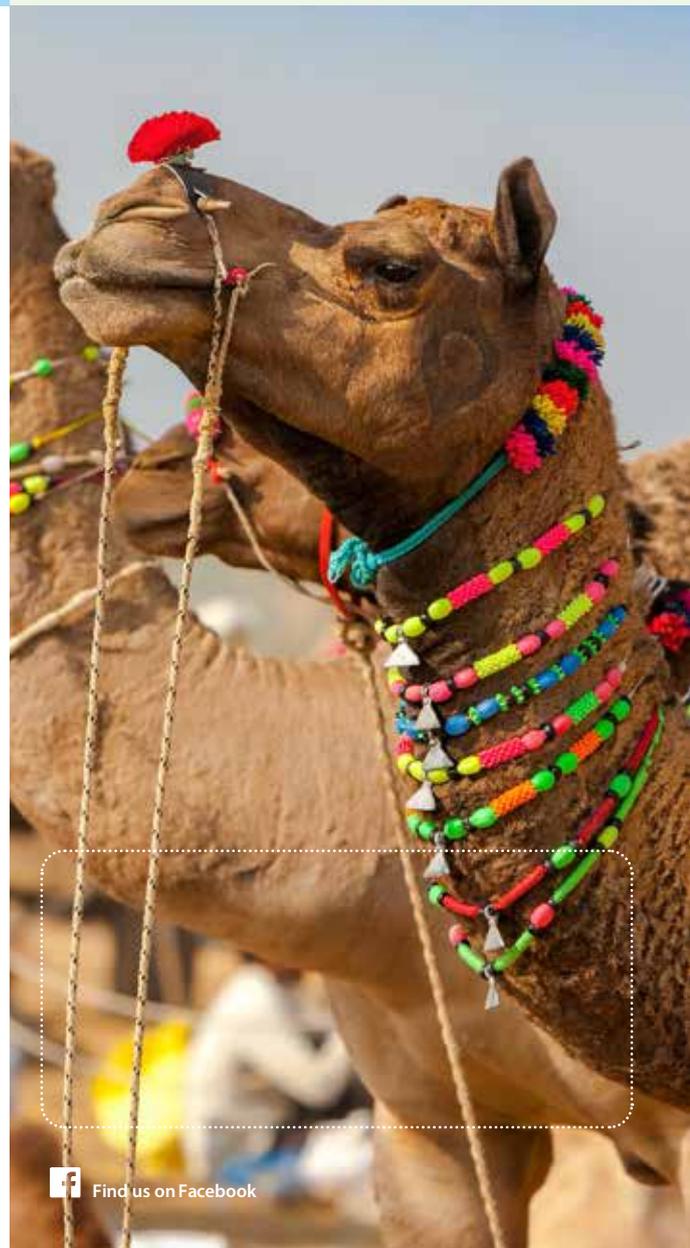
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