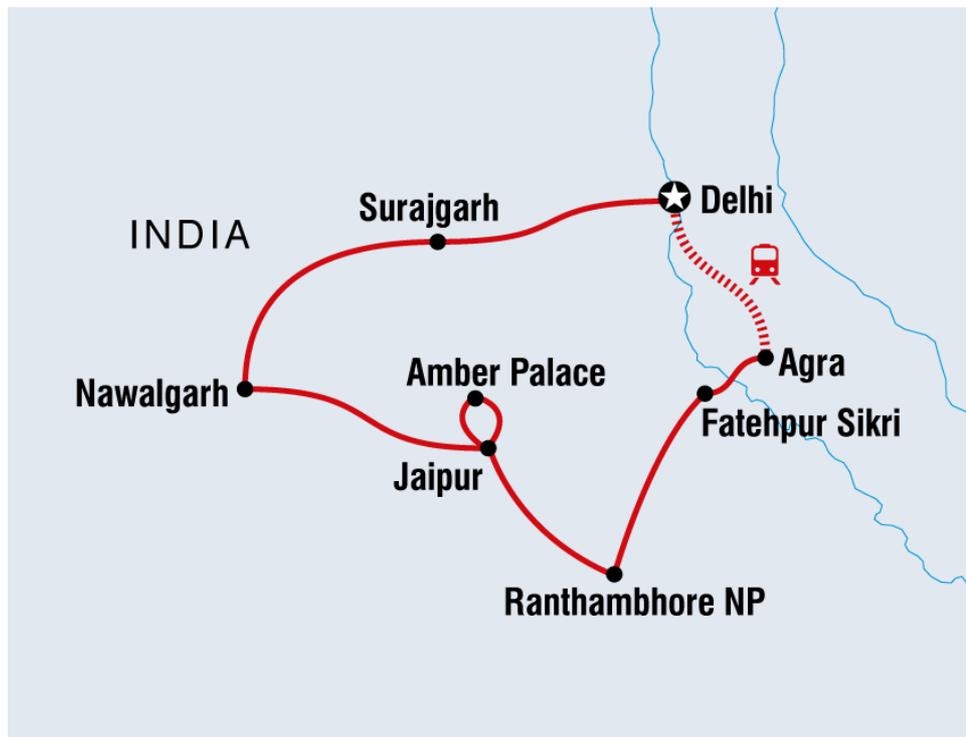




Northern India Family Holiday for solo parents

Overview & Itinerary

Start	Delhi, India
Finish	Delhi, India
Destination	India
Style	Original
Theme	Family
Code	HHFIS
Validity	01 Jan 2018 to 31 Dec 2018



Is this trip right for you?

- This trip is for solo parents travelling with their children only. If you're planning to travel on your own with your child, this trip might be just what you're looking for. It will give you a chance to travel with other solo parents!
- This trip involves some long bus and train rides, which can be tiresome but offer a quintessential experience of the Indian landscape and people.

- Sleeper trains are clean and air-conditioned and a great way to travel long distances while still getting maximum time in each place. Beds are padded berths with sheets, pillow and blanket provided (although some people prefer to bring their own sleeping sheet).
- We visit a number of temples on this trip, which requires a certain level of modesty. Please bring clothes that cover the arms and pants/skirts that go past the knees. A light scarf is also a good idea for covering shoulders and arms when it's hot.

Physical rating

●○○○○○

These trips are setup to involve and include all the family so no real physical preparation is necessary. The trips all have some degree of physical activity but nothing that is too strenuous. Please check the physical rating on the trip notes and if you need further explanation please contact one of our sales consultants who will provide you with more detailed information.

Joining point

Florence Inn

15-A/6 WEA Karol Bagh (near Karol Bagh Metro Station) Ajmal Khan Road Opposite Puja Park, Channa Market
Karol Bagh

Delhi

110005

INDIA

Phone: +91 11 45025500

Fax: +91 1142502108

Joining point description

Located in the Karol Bagh market area surrounded by a mix of local stalls, shops and restaurants. It is only a 25 minute ride by auto rickshaw (INR70-80 with bargaining) to get to the heart of Delhi, Connaught Place. The hotel features a restaurant and 24 hour room service, and rooms are equipped with AC, TV, fridge and telephone.
<http://www.florencegroup.in/>

Joining point instructions

Delhi's Indira Gandhi's International Airport is approximately 25km from Karol Bagh. One of the biggest airports in the world, it can be quite chaotic and can take some time to process your visa and collect your luggage.

The taxi ride from the airport to our starting point hotel takes approx 1 hour and costs between INR 500 - 600 (prepaid traffic police booths).

IMPORTANT: Please avoid taxi touts who tell you that they have a metered taxi parked outside the airport. Previous passengers have complained that they have been charged hefty amount for the transfers.

A local social enterprise, Sakha Wings, runs an all-women taxi service which provides extra peace of mind and security for solo women travellers. To book a taxi with them, call +927 870 8888 or register on their website <http://sakhaconsultingwings.com/hire-a-cab.php>

Alternatively Intrepid offer a pre-arranged transfer service option. Enquire with your agent and advise your flight arrival details at least 14 days prior to your trip departure. If you have purchased an arrival transfer you will be met in the arrivals hall after clearing customs, your representative with sign board will be standing near the Costa Coffee next to gate no 5.

Please do not exit the gates, Costa coffee is just before the exit gate no.5.

If you have any problems and cannot locate our representative, or if your flight is delayed please call the following 24 hour numbers:

+91 9911 972 636

+91 9999 916 229

Failing the above please take a taxi to the hotel (using the instructions below) and advise your group leader. When you walk out of the exit door, you will easily be able to spot popular metered taxi counters such as Meru Cabs/Mega Cabs or Easy Cabs, show them your drop location and pay them as per the meter once you get to your hotel.

Check in time at hotel is 12 midday.

Problems and emergency contact information

In case of a genuine crisis or emergency, transfer or accommodation issues, you can reach our local India Intrepid office on their 24 hour number

For general contact details please use the following page: <http://www.intrepidtravel.com/ourtrips/contact/>

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip, it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local representative straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader/local partner may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction - if this is the case, please ask the leader to speak to their direct manager.

You may also choose to provide details in your online feedback, which we ask you to complete within 30 days of the end of your trip. But we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

Intrepid India: 91 9599914852, +919999005019

Itinerary

Day 1: Delhi

Namaste! Welcome to India. Begin your Indian adventure in the one of the oldest cities in the world, Delhi, a magical city of surprising contrasts. There's a Welcome Meeting today at 1pm – you can arrive any time before, as there are no activities planned. India's capital is an exciting, busy, and often chaotic city, but it's also one of the most interesting in the world – packed with historical sites, museums and galleries, shops and endless bazaars. After a chance to freshen up and have some lunch, take a guided sightseeing tour to explore the contrasts of Old and New Delhi. In the narrow streets of Old Delhi, everything competes for space – squeeze through the old city's fortified walls on the way to Jama Masjid. Dominating the city's skyline, the mosque is a social hub as much as a place of worship, and a fascinating insight into Delhi's way of life. Go with the flow on a rickshaw (own expense) through the throbbing streets, packed with buses, trucks, people and cows, on the way to the brilliantly coloured Red Fort. Then, leave the crowds behind and breathe a little easier in contrasting New Delhi – broad, tree-lined avenues, and former monuments to British power. Visit the main sights – Parliament House, President House, and India Gate, before returning to the hotel.

Accommodation

- Hotel Taj Princess or Similar (1 night)

Included Activities

- Delhi - Jama Masjid
- Delhi - Old Delhi tour
- Delhi - India Gate

Meals Included

There are no meals included on this day.

Day 2: Agra

Rise early to catch the morning sun and a train to Agra (approximately 3 hours). The city alternated with Delhi as the capital of the Moghul Empire, and it still grips to its glory days, inextricably linked with the most famous of India's rulers. When you arrive, take some time to relax after the early start until mid-afternoon, before heading out to see the city's big hitters.

Agra's not just all about the Taj Mahal, it's also home to one of the finest looking forts in India, a Friday Mosque and royal tombs. Sitting along the banks of the Yamuna River, Agra Fort is part stronghold, part palace and part prison. Built in 1565 by Emperor Akbar, it was converted to a palace by Emperor Shah Jahan, and it eventually became his jail when he lost power. Enter the dark red sandstone fort by crossing the (now empty) crocodile-infested moat. Search through throne rooms and tiny but incredibly decorated mosques, and climb to the top to get your first tantalising glimpse of the Taj across the river.

Accommodation

- Raj Mahal Palace or similar (1 night)

Included Activities

- Agra - Agra Fort

Meals Included

- Breakfast

Day 3: Ranthambhore National Park

Get up before the sun to see it rise over the Taj Mahal. Watch the iconic building bathed in early morning light. Many people believe it to be the most perfectly proportioned building ever constructed; at first glance it appears to be simply white marble, but closer inspection reveals that the surface is inlaid with semi-precious stones that form stylised flowers and bowers. This is truly magical. Best known as a monument to love and loss, the Taj is a beautiful example of Mughal architecture surrounded by trimmed English gardens.

Next, head east and pass the Kos Minar medieval milestones, which point the way to the abandoned city of Fatehpur Sikri (approximately 2 hours). Deserted after only a few years because there wasn't enough water, the incredibly well preserved 16th century royal complex is a haven of courtyards, pavilions, ornamental gardens, the striking Jama Masjid mosque, and home to the intricately carved Rumi Sultana palace. Continue on to Sawai Madhopur and Ranthambhore National Park (approximately 2 hours) – the 'Jungle Book' brought to life!

Accommodation

- Raj Palace Resort or Similar (1 night)

Included Activities

- Agra - Taj Mahal
- Fatehpur Sikri

Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Dinner

Day 4: Ranthambhore National Park

Ranthambhore National Park is one of the premier national parks of India – a place where nature has reclaimed ancient fortresses and temples, and that is also teeming with wildlife to spot. You will make a couple of game drives during your stay here, with hopes of getting a sighting of the majestic Bengal tigers that survive among the ruined forts and temples, stalking through the jungle. Game drives take place early in the morning and in late afternoon, as this is when animals are most active. Even if the tigers are being too stealthy, the park is filled with other animals like gazelle, hyenas, sloth bears, crocodiles, jackals, three types of antelope (nilgai, sambar and chital) and leopards to watch out for.

Notes: During the hot summer months, Ranthambhore National Park is closed between 1 July and 30 September each year. Therefore, during this time, we alter our itinerary and take the opportunity to visit the nearby Swai Mansingh Sanctuary instead. A wide variety of interesting wildlife resides here, including hyena, sloth bear, wild boar, panther and cheetah. While there is the rare chance to spot a tiger, this should not be expected. An exciting wildlife walk and a game drive will be included here.

Accommodation

- Raj Palace Resort or Similar (1 night)

Included Activities

- Ranthambore NP - Wildlife safaris

Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner

Day 5: Jaipur

Enjoy a leisurely start to the day before heading northwest to Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan (approximately 2 hours). Surrounded by a wall dripping in an earthy red colour in the style of the Mughal sandstone cities. Walk through the Pink City's streets, busy with camels, motorbikes, rickshaws, and past traditionally dressed Rajput men wearing colourful turbans and sporting magnificent moustaches, as monkeys climb wires overhead. Jaipur, like Delhi, has both old and new parts, although you will concentrate on the old. Your free time here in the friendly, busy city is perfect for haggling to your heart's content, the bazaars and backstreets filled with textiles, precious and semi-precious gems, and blue pottery. You can also hit the streets for raj kachori chaat – a big fluffy chaat served with chutney, yoghurt, chilli and potato. Then cool off with a lassi from Lassiwala on MI road, Jaipur's oldest and most famous lassi shop.

Accommodation

- Hotel Mahal Khandela or similar (1 night)

Included Activities

- Jaipur - Jantar Mantar Observatory

Optional Activities

- Jaipur - Hawa Mahal photo stop - INR200

Meals Included

- Breakfast

Day 6: Jaipur

Visit the sprawling City Palace, once home to the Maharaja, an amazing complex that's home to various colourful courtyard gates, fascinating museums displaying royal costumes and weaponry, and guards whose moustaches are almost as impressive as the building itself. The palace continues to be a royal residence even after the Jaipur kingdom merged with the Indian Union in 1949. Continue on to the 18th century Jantar Mantar– not a series of elaborate sculptures but actually an observatory filled with instruments to track the stars. Then it's on to the distinctive five-storied Hawa Mahal, or Palace of Winds, with its detailed honeycombed façade filled with concealed windows. The impressive view makes it the most photographed building in the country after Taj Mahal. Royal maidens once watched the streets below through the fabulous jali (lattice screens), which hid them from prying male eyes. Today snake charmers and fortune-tellers ply their trade below the same hideaway. The rest of the day is free to explore further, or find a spot to people watch and relax.

Accommodation

- Hotel Mahal Khandela or similar (1 night)

Included Activities

- Jaipur - City Palace

Meals Included

- Breakfast

Day 7: Nawalgarh

Climb the twisting roads of the Aravalli Hills and round the final bend to see the massive Amber Fort loom into view (approximately 30 minutes). Pass Maota Lake before turning uphill, past the elephant stables, to Jai Pol 'Victory Gate'. This is the ancient capital of the Kachhawaha Rajputs, who gave their loyalty to Moghul overlords. From the spoils of war they gradually built a fabulous complex of royal rooms, which now make up the Amber Fort. The fallen empire's legacy, the opulent palace is packed with elaborate rooms of lavish murals, frescoed arches and delicate jali work. Don't miss the sparkling Mirror Palace, covered floor-to-ceiling in thousands of reflective tiles, and look down over picturesque Moata Lake.

Later, head deeper into the princely state of Rajasthan to Nawalgarh, leaving the city behind for a more relaxed village vibe (approximately 4 hours). Catch glimpses of life in the most colourful of India's regions – sari-clad women carrying terracotta pots of water, bangles tinkling as they walk. If the sun's still up, take a walk around the village, meet the locals and maybe accept the challenge of a game of cricket!

Accommodation

- Hotel Roop Niwas Kothi or Similar (1 night)

Included Activities

- Nawalgarh - Haveli Museum

Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner

Day 8: Shekhawati Region

Travel to Alsisar, located in the Shekhawati region and uncover the artistic heritage of the area (approximately 1.5 hours).

The semi-arid village of Alsisar is painted with legendary stories with its many hand painted havelis. Our

accommodation for this evening is the breathtaking palace of Alsisar "Alsisar Mahal" which was built in the 17th century. With its grand courtyards, colourful dining arcades and heritage rooms it will be a highlight of your trip. And the kids will love the pool!

Accommodation

- Alsisar Mahal or Similar (1 night)

Meals Included

- Breakfast

Day 9: Delhi

After breakfast this morning, leave the countryside behind and get back into the beating rhythm of Delhi by mid-afternoon (approximately 9 hours). Use the rest of the day however you like. Practice your bargaining skills in Chandni Chowk in the maze of shops and kiosks that sell everything imaginable, buy local crafts straight from the hands of the artisan in Janpath market, or gobble down street chaats – snacks like deep fried fritters and flatbread.

Hear the story behind the man at Gandhi's house, see one last ancient structure at Qutb Minar, or relax in the Mughal gardens. No doubt your leader will arrange one 'last supper', where you can look back over the trip of a lifetime and get your head around all the wonders you've witnessed.

Accommodation

- Hotel Taj Princess or Similar (1 night)

Optional Activities

- Connaught Place Market - Free
- Delhi - Gandhi's Delhi Urban Adventure - INR2700
- Delhi - Home-Cooked Experience Urban Adventure - INR4000

Meals Included

- Breakfast

Day 10: Delhi

There are no activities planned for the final day and you are able to depart the accommodation at any time. Please check the 'Finishing Point Hotel' section for checkout times and luggage storage possibilities.

Meals Included

- Breakfast

Finishing point

Florence Inn

15-A/6 WEA Karol Bagh (near Karol Bagh Metro Station) Ajmal Khan Road Opposite Puja Park, Channa Market
Karol Bagh

Delhi

110005

INDIA

Phone: +91 11 45025500

Fax: +91 1142502108

Finishing point description

Located in the Karol Bagh market area surrounded by a mix of local stalls, shops and restaurants. It is only a 25 minute ride by auto rickshaw (INR70-80 with bargaining) to get to the heart of Delhi, Connaught Place. The hotel features a restaurant and 24 hour room service, and rooms are equipped with AC, TV, fridge and telephone.

<http://www.florencegroup.in/>

Finishing point instructions

Delhi's Indira Gandhi's International Airport is approximately 25km from Karol Bagh. One of the biggest airports in the world, it can be quite chaotic so please leave plenty of time to arrive and check in. On arrival at the airport all check in luggage will be x-rayed and sealed. Also ensure at check in that your hand luggage is tagged. (This is a mandatory in order to clear security.)

A taxi to the Delhi Indira Gandhi Airport takes about 1 hour and should cost between INR 450 -500. Hotel reception or your leader can help you arrange a taxi.

A departure transfer from our hotel to the airport is available if arranged at the time of booking. Please advise your flight arrival details at least 14 days prior to your trips start date. If you have pre-booked a departure transfer with us it is vital that you reconfirm your pick-up time from the hotel before departure day. Please ask your leader to contact our transfer provider or alternatively contact them directly on +91 9911 972 636.

Check-out time from the hotel is 12 noon. If you are departing later, you can arrange luggage storage at the hotel.

Itinerary disclaimer

Occasionally our itineraries are updated during the year to incorporate improvements stemming from past travellers' comments and our own research. The information given in this itinerary may be slightly different to that in the brochure. It's very important that you print and review a final copy of your Essential Trip Information a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans. If you have any queries, please contact your travel agent or our staff. We are here to help you! Please note that while we operate successful trips in this region throughout the year, some changes may occur in our itineraries due to inclement weather and common seasonal changes to timetables and transport routes. This can happen with little notice so please be prepared for modifications to the route. The order and timing of included activities in each location may also vary from time to time.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

A selection of optional activities are listed in the day-to-day itinerary. This isn't an exhaustive list and should be used as a guide only. Prices are approximate and are for entrance only and don't include transport to and from the sites or local guides unless indicated. All activities are subject to availability and it may not be possible to do all the activities listed in the time available at each destination. Where activities are considered medium or high risk, we work with operators whose safety and credentials we have sighted and assessed. This means that it is possible that you may find the same activity cheaper with another operator on the ground, however we cannot vouch for the safety or quality of that operator. Activities not listed above have not been assessed by us and as such our staff and leaders are unable to assist you with booking these activities. The decision to partake in any activity not listed is at your own discretion and risk.

Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! We rely on your feedback. We read it carefully. Feedback helps us understand what we are doing well and what we could be doing better. It allows us to make improvements for future travellers.

<http://www.intrepidtravel.com/feedback/>

Essential Trip Information

Important notes

Please note that these trips are for adults and children travelling together and there must be at least one child under 18 with you.

Solo Parents: This trip can only be booked with parents travelling solo with their children. Many foreign countries require additional specific documentation to be carried by parents travelling alone with one (or more) child. We recommend that all passengers check the entry requirements for children before travelling by contacting the embassy or consulate of the country you plan to visit.

Minimum age for children on this trip is 5 years old.

A discount of 10% applies on this trip to children 17 years and under at time of travel.

This trip starts at 1pm on Day 1.

TAJ MAHAL: Using mud pack therapy the Archaeological Survey of India is planning to clean the four small canopies around the main dome of the Taj Mahal from the start of April 2018. This will be followed by the cleaning of the main dome but that could take some time as ASI is yet to calculate its load bearing capacity. The ASI's science branch officials have stated that cleaning the four canopies will take approximately 2 months while main dome cleaning will be completed in phases. We will continue to update as information becomes available.

Passport and visas

Visas are the responsibility of the individual traveller. Entry requirements can change at any time, so it's important that you check for the latest information. Please visit the relevant consular website of the country or countries you're visiting for detailed and up-to-date visa information specific to your nationality. Your consultant will also be happy to point you in the right direction with acquiring visas. Visas can take several weeks to process, so familiarise yourself with any requirements as soon as you have booked your trip to allow for processing time.

INDIA:

An E-Tourist Visa (eVT) Facility is available for holders of a passport for a number of countries. This facility allows travellers to pre-register and pay for their visa prior to travel to India. The Visa is collected upon arrival at one of 16 designated airports in India. Please note strict guidelines on the below website.

<https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>

An E-Tourist Visa (eVT) visa on arrival is available for select nationalities including but not limited to the following Australian, Canadian, New Zealand, German, UK and USA passports.

Passport holders from these countries can apply for an E-Tourist Visa (eVT) to have their visa issued upon arrival at 16 major airports in India.

Please follow the instructions at - <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html> and complete the application for your E-Tourist Visa.

- Please be aware of strict conditions regarding application and travel (check under ELIGIBILITY section).
- E-visas are only available for entry of up to 60 days. If you plan to be in India longer you will need to apply for a tourist visa at an Indian visa application centre in your home country.
- Please note that travellers entering India overland from Nepal are required to apply for a visa in advance their home country. Visas will not be issued on the Nepal/Indian border.
- The E-Tourist Visa DOES NOT apply to travellers entering India overland. Please check your trip notes if you are crossing a border between India and Nepal.
- Indian visas are difficult and time consuming to obtain in Nepal.

Tourist visas are available in Single and Multiple Entry. Be sure to check the date you require a visa from and the length of time you will need to cover, especially if you change countries during your trip.

For your visa application you need to include the following information under the local contact section towards the end of the application. :

PEAK India
25/3 East Patel Nagar
New Delhi 110008
Phone: +91 11 4500 6400

Please note that this information can change at any time. Please always refer to <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>

This is the official visa online site. There have been reports of other non-official websites that are in fact operated by visa companies - it is at your own risk if you choose to use other parties to process your e-visa.

Medical and health information

All Intrepid travellers need to be in good physical health in order to participate fully on this trip. When selecting your trip please make sure you have read through the itinerary carefully and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please note that if, in the opinion of our group leader or local guide, any traveller is unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group, Intrepid Travel reserves the right to exclude them from all or part of a trip without refund.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information or for any necessary vaccinations and anti-malarial requirements before departure. We recommend that you carry a first aid kit as well as any personal medical requirements (including a spare pair of glasses) as they may not easily be obtained at the locations on this trip. For legal reasons our leaders and guides are prohibited from administering any type of drugs including headache tablets and antibiotics. Please ensure that you are adequately prepared.

DRINKING WATER:

As a rule we recommend you don't drink tap water, even in hotels, as it contains much higher levels of different minerals than the water you may have at home. For local people this is not a problem as their bodies are used to this and can cope, but for visitors drinking the tap water can result in illness. Generally this isn't serious, an upset stomach being the only symptom, but it's enough to spoil a day or two of your holiday. Bottled water is widely available and your leader can recommend safe alternatives when available. Water consumption should be about three litres a day. Rehydration salts, motion sickness tablets, and diarrhoea blockers are available from many pharmacies.

DENGUE FEVER:

Instances of dengue fever have been reported in this region. This virus is transmitted by mosquitoes. There is no vaccination against it, but there are preventative measures that you can take such as wearing long clothing, using repellent and being indoors particularly around dusk and dawn.

Food and dietary requirements

While travelling with us you'll experience the vast array of wonderful food available in the world. Your group leader will be able to suggest restaurants to try during your trip. On our camping trips we often cook the region's specialities so you don't miss out. To give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat, generally not all meals are included in the trip price. This also gives you more budgeting flexibility. As a rule our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There's no obligation to do this though.

All meals are included whilst on the trek and on the houseboat.

You can eat out very cheaply in India, but there are also more expensive restaurants options. In most of the towns there is a good choice of restaurants and a choice between Indian and Western style food. Tea and soft drinks are very cheap. Mineral water is widely available. Please note that service in restaurants can be quite slow.

Vegetarian meals dominate but there is always scope for the hardened meat eater. The food is usually not too spicy but often delicately flavoured with cardamoms, cloves and mustard seeds.

Accommodation

Hotel (9 nights)

Accommodation is clean and simple. You'll mainly stay in small, locally-run, 2-3 star hotels and guesthouses, which reflect the character of the area, generally these will be a twin room with private facilities. Sometimes you'll stay in larger, more comfortable hotels or occasionally rustic accommodation with basic facilities. We use a variety of accommodation on most trips; chosen for their value for money, location and atmosphere. We also try and incorporate unique accommodation experiences, such as a night with a local tribe, or sleeping under the stars in the desert.

GENERAL ROOMING CONFIGURATIONS:

Family of two - All family groupings of two will be put into a twin room.

Family of three - Wherever possible we will put you in a triple room. Please be aware that in some places triple rooms are in short supply. This means that, in practice, a triple room will often simply be a twin room with a mattress on the floor or a further bed squashed in. Where it is impossible to provide a triple room, you will have to decide which of your party takes the single room.

Family of four or more - You will most likely stay in two twin rooms. If and wherever possible we will aim put you in a quadruple room. Whilst we will do our very best to ensure that families are roomed close together (in some cases, we can arrange adjoining rooms), we can't guarantee this. Most family holidays occur during peak season and we sometimes have little to no control over where you will be put. You need to come prepared for this.

Transport

Cycle rickshaw, private mini van, train

LONG TRAVEL DAYS

As we cover lots of ground on this trip, expect some long travel days on local trains and buses. This is an opportunity to mix with the locals and enjoy the scenery out the window. Travel schedules are known to change with little notice. Not all transport may have air conditioning.

OVERNIGHT TRAINS

Sleeper trains in India are typically four to six berth compartments (dependant on seasonality and the journey). Privacy is mainly kept using curtains, and most compartments are air-conditioned

We believe that the vehicles you use pay an important part in your holiday so where possible we include a wide variety of vehicles from local remorks or tuk tuks in Asia to feluccas on the Nile as well as the ubiquitous air conditioned minibus.

Money matters

India has very good opportunities for shopping, especially for locally made goods, and during your trip it is highly likely that your local guides will take you to emporiums as well as workshops where these goods are made. Many people find this a great opportunity to buy local handicrafts, silk, jewellery and carpets. Guides will often assume that visitors will want to go shopping, it is very much part of the culture, but if you do not wish to go please make this clear to your local guide at the time.

The receipt of commissions or kickbacks in exchange for recommending particular shops or services is ingrained in the culture of the tourism industry. Rather than turning a blind eye to this unavoidable issue in some areas, Intrepid has established a centralised fund whereby contributions from recommended suppliers are collected and distributed back into the business. Intrepid aim to provide the best value trips in the market, and this fund assists in keeping operating costs and trip prices low to you.

A priority in establishing this fund is that the experience of our traveller - you - is not compromised in any way. Please let us know via the feedback form completed after your trip if we are successfully meeting this objective.

The official currency of India is the Indian Rupee (INR). It's symbol is ₹

The most convenient and cheapest way to obtain local currency is via an Automated Teller Machine (ATM), which are readily available in most towns.

Look for Bank of India or ICICI ATM's. Our experience has shown they are the most reliable ATM's to use for withdrawals. Your tour leader should be able to direct you to these banks.

Foreign currency notes that are old, torn or faded can be very difficult to exchange, so please bring clean bills, and small denominations are most useful.

The use of credit cards can be restricted, mainly to major hotels, shops and establishments.

SPENDING MONEY:

When it comes to spending money on the trip, every traveller is a little different. You know your spending habits better than we do, so please budget a sensible amount for things like meals not included, drinks, shopping, optional activities and laundry. It's always better to bring a little more than you think you'll need. Also make sure you've read your trip details thoroughly so you know what's included in the trip price and what isn't. This should make budgeting a little easier. You'll find this info in the Inclusions section of your Essential Trip Information (that's this document).

INDIA:

Restaurants: Local markets and basic restaurants - round your bill up to the nearest INR20. More up-market restaurants we suggest 10% to 15% of your bill.

Local guides: Throughout your trip you may at times have a local guide in addition to your leader. We suggest INR100 per day for local guides.

Porters: Throughout your trip you may at times have a porter in addition to your leader. We suggest INR50 per day for porters.

Drivers: You may have a range of drivers on your trip. Some may be with you for a short journey while others may be with you for several days. We would suggest a higher tip for those more involved with the group however a base of INR100 per day is generally appropriate.

Local transport: For a city tour we suggest INR50 per day.

Your Group Leader: You may also consider tipping your leader for outstanding service throughout your trip. The amount is entirely a personal preference, however as a guideline US\$2-4 per person, per day can be used. Of course you are free to tip more or less as you see fit, depending on your perception of service quality and the length of your trip. Remember a tip is not compulsory and should only be given when you receive excellent service.

DEPARTURE TAX

All departure taxes should be included in your international flight ticket.

Budget for meals not included: 180.00

CONTINGENCY FUNDS:

We try to plan for every eventuality, but there are still some things beyond our control. Please make sure you have access to an extra US\$500 for emergencies (e.g. severe weather, natural disasters, civil unrest) or other events that result in unavoidable changes to the itinerary (e.g. transport strikes or cancellations, airport closures). Sometimes these things necessitate last minute changes to enable our trips to continue to run, and as a result there may be some extra costs involved.

Packing

What you need to bring will vary according to the trip style you have chosen, the countries you are visiting and when you are travelling. Generally speaking you should pack as lightly as possible. On the vast majority of our trips you are expected to carry your own luggage, although you won't be required to walk long distances with it (max 30 minutes).

Many travellers carry their luggage in a backpack, although an overnight bag with a shoulder strap would suffice if you travel lightly. Smaller bags or backpacks with wheels are also convenient although we recommend your bag has carry straps. You'll also need a day pack/bag to carry water and a camera etc for day trips.

Below we have listed the essentials for this trip:

<https://www.intrepidtravel.com/packing-list>

CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT:

Below is a suggestion of what you might find useful to take on this trip.

- * Lightweight, cotton clothing is most suitable
- * Lightweight windproof/waterproof outer shell – for cold early mornings
- * Warm mid-layer (fleece or wool), hat, gloves and a scarf are essential – game drives in the morning are cold!
- * Comfortable shoes
- * Sun-hat
- * Trainers/sandals for relaxing
- * Swim wear
- * Sunglasses, high-factor sunscreen and lipsalve
- * Waterbottle
- * Personal first aid kit
- * Insect repellent
- * Torch

A laundry service may be available, but we recommend you take biodegradable detergent so you can wash clothes as you choose.

For departures between 1 November and 28 February only:

- * Warm mid-layer (heavy fleece / woollen sweater)
- * Lightweight windproof/waterproof outer shell
- * Hat, gloves and scarf
- * Thermal underwear

WATER BOTTLE

Consider bringing your own water bottle to refill along the way. The sale of bottled water contributes to an enormous environmental problem around the world. In addition to the water in bottles, the production of a 1 litre plastic bottle takes 2 litres of water and 200ml of oil. A large proportion ends up in limited landfill or discarded in waterways and natural environments. Although it can be difficult to avoid bottled water when travelling, please use the water dispensers which are provided at some of our accommodation or simply refill with tap water (your leader will advise whether tap water is safe to drink in your destination). When unable to avoid bottled water it is better to buy the largest available and distribute into your smaller bottle for the day.

Climate and seasonal information

HOT WEATHER:

Heat and humidity during summer (Apr-Jun) in India can be particularly oppressive with temperatures reaching 45 degrees C/113 degrees F.

Group Leader

All Intrepid group trips are accompanied by one of our group leaders. The aim of the group leader is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. Intrepid endeavours to provide the services of an experienced leader however, due to the seasonality of travel, rare situations may arise where your leader is new to a particular region or training other group leaders.

Your leader will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the places visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. At Intrepid we aim to support local guides who have specialised knowledge of the regions we visit. If you were interested in delving deeper into the local culture at a specific site or location then your leader can recommend a local guide service in most of the main destinations of your trip.

Safety

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure and ensure that your travel insurance covers you for all areas your itinerary covers. Please refer to our website's safety page for links to major travel advisories and updates on safety issues affecting our trip.

We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe-keeping of your passport, air tickets, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of our hotels have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

Your leader will accompany you on all included activities, however during your trip you'll have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your leader will assist you with the available options in a given location, please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your Intrepid itinerary, and Intrepid makes no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgement when selecting an activity in your free time. Please also note that your Leader has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it's deemed necessary due to safety concerns.

For more details on the type of conditions and safety standards you can expect on your trip, please refer to Intrepid's operational safety policy on our website. We recommend that you take a moment to read through this information before travelling, and would appreciate any feedback on how well it's being implemented in the field:

<http://www.intrepidtravel.com/contact-us/safety>

TRAFFIC AND DRIVING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROAD:

Depending on where you come from please note that drivers in this part of the world may drive on the opposite side of the road from what you are used to. Look both ways before crossing any road. Traffic can be a little more chaotic than you might be used to at home. Be aware!

PETTY THEFT AND PERSONAL SAFETY:

While travelling there is always the risk of pick-pocketing and petty theft, particularly in the more touristy cities. We recommend that you exercise caution when walking alone at night and encourage you to walk together and only on main, well-lit thoroughfares. Be particularly vigilant on public transport. Simple measures like carrying your day pack on your front, not hanging your bag over the back of your chair or on the floor and wearing a money belt will reduce any chance that your valuables should go missing.

FESTIVALS - HOLI & DIWALI:

Travelling in India and Nepal during Holi can at times be unsafe - drinking and drug use is more widespread during this holiday. Your leader/guide will advise your group on what places to avoid on the day. It may be necessary to alter your itinerary for the day.

Diwali (a lunar festival generally held from mid October to mid November every year) is celebrated by local people letting off fireworks in the street. It can be very noisy for several days with extra pollution caused by fireworks. As there are no restrictions on buying fireworks in India there are often injuries caused by people exploding them inappropriately.

During this festival your leader/guide may be required to alter your itinerary to avoid large crowds gathering and using fireworks.

A couple of rules

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on our trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land, but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for Intrepid travellers. Intrepid's philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter and in particular, the local people who make our destinations such special places. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our group leader has the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

Everyone has the right to feel safe and secure on their trip. We don't tolerate any form of violence (verbal or physical) or sexual harassment at Intrepid, either between passengers or involving our leaders, local operators or locals.

Sexual relationships (consensual or otherwise) between a leader and a passenger are unacceptable. If you ever feel another person is behaving inappropriately please inform us immediately by contacting the emergency contact number detailed in these trip notes.

Travelling on a group trip

As you travel on a group trip you will be exposed to all the pleasures and maybe some of the frustrations of travelling in a group. Your fellow travellers will probably come from all corners of the world and likely a range of age groups too. We ask you to be understanding of the various needs and preferences of your group - patience with your fellow travellers is sometimes required for the benefit of everyone's travel experience. Remember too that you have responsibilities to the group. If you are requested to be at a place at a certain time, ensure that you don't keep the rest of the group waiting. We have found time and time again that the very best trips we operate are those where the dynamics within the group work well - this takes just a little effort on your part. Due to privacy reasons we are unable to provide you with contact details and any personal information about your fellow travellers booked on your trip prior to departure.

A single supplement is available on this trip, please refer to your booking agent for further information.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory for all our trips. We require that, at a minimum, you are covered for medical expenses including emergency repatriation. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects.

When travelling on a trip, you won't be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance and the insurance company's 24 hour emergency contact number has been seen by your leader.

If you have credit card insurance your group leader will require details of the participating insurer/underwriter, the level of coverage, policy number and emergency contact number rather than the bank's name and credit card details. Please contact your bank for these details prior to arriving in-country.

<http://www.intrepidtravel.com/insurance.php>

Responsible Travel

We believe strongly in low impact or rather positive impact tourism. Broadly speaking this means that we try to minimise the negative aspects of tourism on the local cultures and environments that we visit and highlight the positive aspects. Please visit our website for further details and suggestions on how you can be a responsible traveller.

<http://www.intrepidtravel.com/ourtrips/rt/responsibletraveller>

LOCAL DRESS:

When packing be aware that dress standards are conservative throughout Asia, especially outside major cities. To respect this and for your own comfort, we strongly recommend modest clothing. This means clothing that covers your shoulders and knees. Loose, lightweight, long clothing is both respectful and cool in the predominantly hot Asian climate. In many rural areas in Asia women will need to wear modest clothing even to swim. Singlets, tank tops and topless sun bathing are all unacceptable. When visiting religious sites men often need to wear long trousers and women a long skirt or sarong.

The Intrepid Foundation

Since Intrepid Travel commenced operating in 1989 we've been committed to giving something back to the communities we visit. One way has been through our support for local humanitarian, development and conservation projects. Many of our travellers want to contribute something too. Whilst it is often tempting to give hand-outs to those less fortunate, this has the potential to promote a culture of begging and dependency. Handouts are not a sustainable way for individuals or communities to live. That's why we established The Intrepid Foundation - to make it easier for travellers wishing to give back to communities in an effective and meaningful way.

The Intrepid Foundation is a not-for-profit fund offering a selection of excellent grassroots organisations which you can contribute to. All donations to The Intrepid Foundation will be matched by Intrepid Travel dollar for dollar (up to AU\$1,000 per donor and a total of AU\$400,000 for all donors in each financial year, excluding emergency appeals). And every cent gets there as Intrepid Travel pays for all the administration costs. Donating is simple and secure. Please ask your leader for information on the projects we support through The Intrepid Foundation or go to our website:

<http://www.theintrepidfoundation.org/>

Organisations and projects currently supported by The Intrepid Foundation in India include:

* Pollinate Energy is a social business with a simple mission – to improve the lives of India’s urban poor by giving them access to affordable, clean energy products. Pollinate identifies and trains local people, their Pollinators, who have provided solar lights and cook stoves to over 8,000 families and counting.

www.theintrepidfoundation.org/projects/pollinate-energy/

* Asha Ka Jharna (AKJ) provides services to disabled children and adults. They run three special schools, currently assisting around 160 children, and an old-age home for the short-stay of elderly people. AJK also provides vocational training, participates in diagnostic camps and distributes aids and appliances to physically disabled persons.

www.theintrepidfoundation.org/projects/asha-ka-jharna/

For more information, or to make a donation please visit: www.theintrepidfoundation.org/projects/?projectcountry=india