



# The Colours and Culture of North India

16 Days | 2 - 18 November

India is a country of contrasts and this tour of the Punjab, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh offers some fascinating and unique travel experiences.

## Highlights

- The experience of travelling on the regular services of Indian Railways
- World Heritage Kalka-Shimla narrow gauge railway
- An insight into the cultures and religions of India
- Beautiful mountain and riverside scenery
- The Sikh Golden Temple in Amritsar
- The Taj Mahal in Agra

Starting and ending in Delhi we visit the hill station of Shimla, the city of Chandigarh designed by Le Corbusier, Amritsar, home to the Golden Temple, the bustling holy city of Haridwar on the banks of the River Ganges, the New Age ashram town of Rishikesh, and Agra, whose pride and joy is the Taj Mahal. A rail highlight is the World Heritage Kalka-Shimla narrow gauge railway on which will have two journeys.

Our tour manager is Jenny Downing. Contact [jenny@ptg.co.uk](mailto:jenny@ptg.co.uk)

**Day 1 Saturday 2 November (D)** We catch the evening British Airways flight from Heathrow direct to Delhi. There is also a direct flight from Birmingham and connecting flights from Manchester, Glasgow and other UK airports.

**Day 2 Sunday 3 November (D)** Arrive Delhi and transfer to the Ashok Country Resort for a three night stay. Our afternoon sightseeing tour through New Delhi includes the India Gate war memorial, the imposing Rashtrapati Bhavan, designed by Edward Lutyens and formerly known as Viceroy House, Humayun's Tomb and the Qutab Minar, India's tallest stone tower.

**Day 3 Monday 4 November (B,D)** This morning we visit Old Delhi on a sightseeing tour which includes the Jama Masjid, India's largest mosque, and Raj Ghat which is a moving memorial to Mahatma Gandhi, 'Father of the Nation'. Afternoon at leisure. Ashok Country Resort.

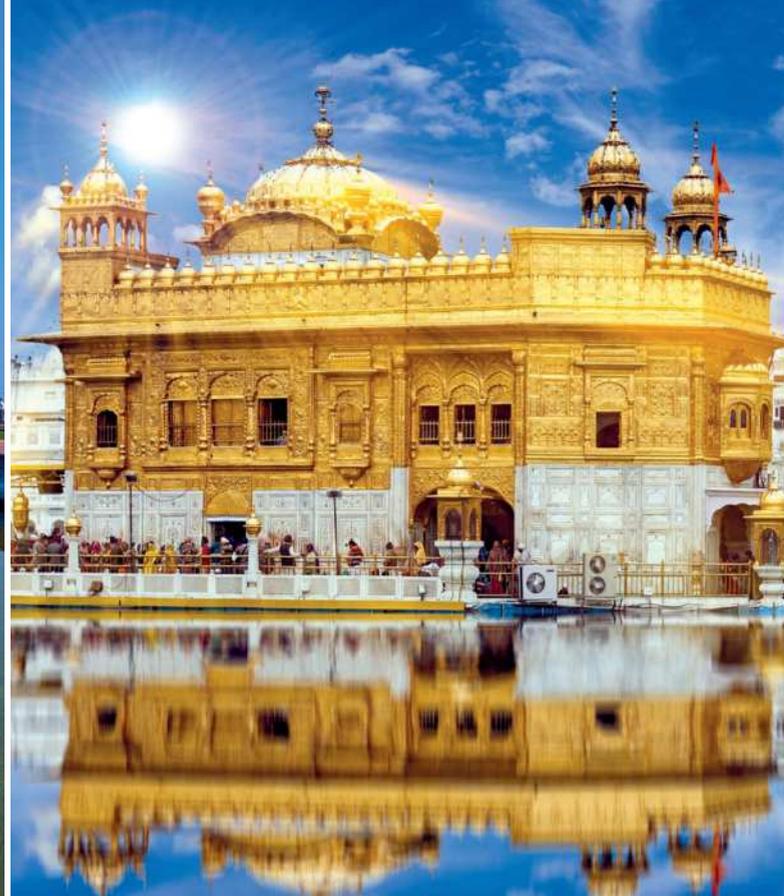
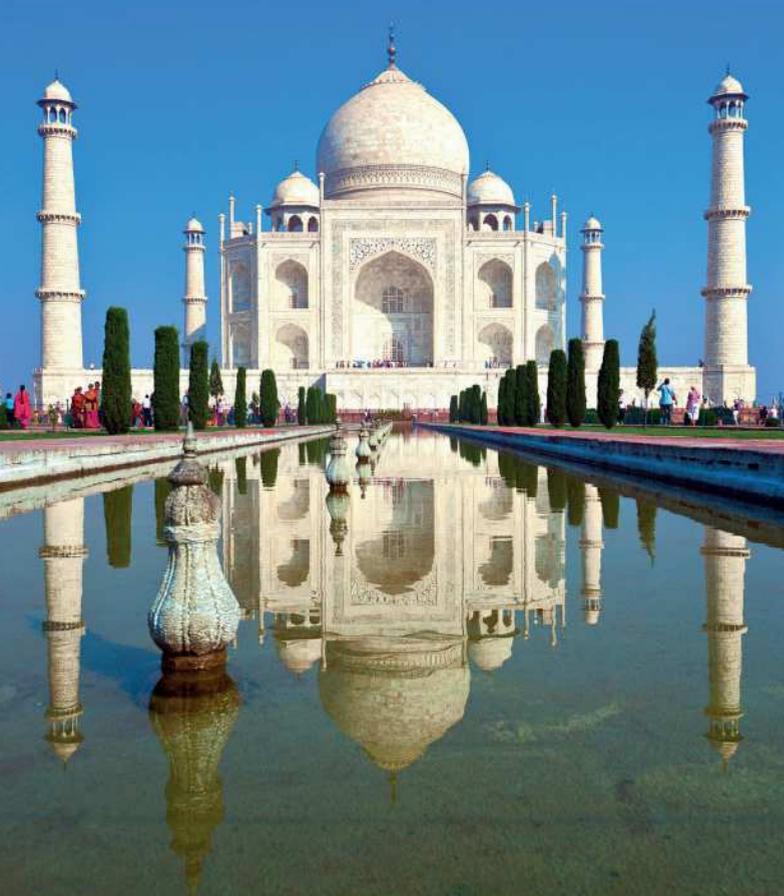
**Day 4 Tuesday 5 November (B,Packed Lunch,D)** An early morning departure on the Himalayan Queen Express to Kalka where we transfer to the narrow-gauge Toy Train to Shimla in the foothills of the Himalayas. Taking a trip on the historic UNESCO World Heritage Kalka-Shimla toy train is like travelling back in time. The railway, built by the British in 1903 to provide access to their summer capital of Shimla, provides one of the most scenic train journeys in India as it gradually winds its way steeply upwards along the narrow track, through rugged mountains and pine forests. We arrive in Shimla in the late afternoon and transfer to the Eastbourne Hotel.

**Day 5 Wednesday 6 November (B,D)** The 19th-century British colonial government could not cope with the heat of the Indian summers and searched the foothills of the Himalayas for a cool retreat. Some 2,100 m (6,889 ft) above sea level, they found the ideal climate in the tiny hamlet of Shimla, which was conveniently surrounded by a pine forest for building materials. The village blossomed into a thriving British hill station, where croquet on the lawn, rounds of golf, and afternoon tea on the terrace whiled away the days. Our sightseeing today takes us through the Mall with its historic neo-Gothic buildings from the colonial era, including Viceroy Lodge and Christ Church, as well as the Jakhoo Temple. Eastbourne Hotel.

**Day 6 Thursday 7 November (B,D)** After breakfast we re-join the Toy Train to Dharampur (approx. 3hrs journey) before continuing by road to the quaint and colourful town of Kasauli which dates from the British Colonial era. We will have a gentle walking tour of Kasauli this afternoon.

**Day 7 Friday 8 November (B,D)** We travel by road to Chandigarh, capital of the states of Punjab and Haryana. When the Swiss architect Le Corbusier was commissioned with the job of designing Chandigarh in 1950, he conceived a people-oriented city of sweeping boulevards, lakes, gardens and grand civic buildings, executed in his favourite material: reinforced concrete. And thus Chandigarh came into being: turn the clocks forward and the parks, monuments and civic squares are still here. Our half day sightseeing tour will include the Rock Garden designed by Nek Chand, who used scrap materials in its construction, the Rose Garden and Sukhna Lake. James hotel/Fern Residency/Lemon Tree hotel.

**Day 8 Saturday 9 November (B,D)** A morning departure by train to Amritsar arriving mid-morning. Afternoon at leisure to explore this busy city centre in the heart of the Punjab with the Sikh Golden Temple as focal point. The city is the spiritual and cultural centre of the Sikh religion and is home to the Harmandir Sahib, also known as the Golden Temple, one of the world's great sights. We stay at the Golden Tulip Hotel.



**Day 9 Sunday 10 November (B,D)** We start the day with a blessing at the Golden Temple. Our sightseeing tour then continues with a visit to Jallianwala Bagh, site of the Amritsar massacre on 13 April 1919, when under the command of Colonel Reginald Dyer, British troops were commanded to fire on civilians. The public garden has a memorial, in the shape of an eternal flame, in memory of those who lost their lives. Golden Tulip Hotel.

**Day 10 Monday 11 November (B,D)** A very early departure on the Shatabdi Express to Haridwar and onwards by road for the short journey to Rishikesh where its impressive ashrams are set against a forest background. Afternoon at leisure. Hotel Divine for the first of our three night stay.

**Day 11 Tuesday 12 November (B,D)** A private yoga session has been arranged for those who would like to take part this morning. During the afternoon we visit some of the many ashrams and temples of this most vibrant town. Ever since the Beatles rocked up at the ashram of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in the late '60s, Rishikesh has been a magnet for spiritual seekers. Today it styles itself as the 'Yoga Capital of the World', with masses of ashrams and all kinds of yoga and meditation classes. Most of this action is north of the main town, where the exquisite setting on the fast-flowing Ganges, surrounded by forested hills, is conducive to meditation and mind expansion. Hotel Divine.

**Day 12 Wednesday 13 November (B,D)** Today there is an opportunity of take a locally guided walk to the waterfalls in the Rishikesh valley. Transport is available for those who do not wish to walk. Hotel Divine.

**Day 13 Thursday 14 November (B,D)** After breakfast we take the short journey by road back to Haridwar. Afternoon at leisure. Haridwar is a wonderfully colourful people watching venue and, like Rishikesh, is one of India's seven Hindu holy cities. This evening we will observe, and participate in, the Hindu religious ritual of Aarti on the banks of the Ganges. Godwin Hotel (two nights).

**Day 14 Friday 15 November (B,D)** This morning we visit some of the various temples around Haridwar,

including the Mansadevi Temple, reached by cable car. Godwin Hotel

**Day 15 Saturday 16 November (B,D)** An early morning departure on the Jan Shatabdi Express to Delhi arriving mid-morning. Ashok Country Resort (two nights). Afternoon at leisure.

**Day 16 Sunday 17 November (B,D)** We take the morning train to Agra for a visit to the famed Taj Mahal, the mausoleum commissioned in 1632 by Shah Jahan to house the tomb of his wife Mumtaz Mahal. We return to Delhi by train in the late afternoon for our farewell dinner. Ashok Country Resort.

**Day 17 Monday 18 November (B)** Transfer to Delhi Airport for our flight to the UK.

## Prices (per person)

- 16 day tour including flight from London: £2,525
- 16 day tour including flight from Birmingham, Manchester or Glasgow: £2,575
- Own travel to/from Delhi (15 days): £1,950

## Options

- Single room supplement: £560
- A flight supplement may apply for late bookings

## Deposit

- £1,000

## Flights

- BA0257 18.55 Heathrow to Delhi (arr 08.50)
- BA0256 11.05 Delhi to Heathrow (arr 15.10)
- AI0114 19.45 Birmingham to Delhi (arr 10.35)
- AI0113 13.05 Delhi to Birmingham (arr 17.00)
- BA1399/0257 15.05 Manchester, via Heathrow, to Delhi
- BA0256/1398 11.05 Delhi, via Heathrow, to Manchester
- BA1489/0257 15.25 Glasgow, via Heathrow, to Delhi
- BA0256/1488 11.05 Delhi, via Heathrow, to Glasgow

## Special Offer

Do both India tours for a special discount