



# MAIN TOURS



## SPLENDOURS OF INDIA, NEPAL & BHUTAN



**Tour Route:** Delhi (2) – Agra (1) – Jaipur (2) – Delhi / Kathmandu Valley (3) – Bhadrapur / Darjeeling (2) – Gangtok (2) – Kalimpong (1) – Phuentsholing (1) – Thimphu (2) – Punakha (1) – Paro (2) – Kolkata (1)

**Domestic Flight:** Delhi – Kathmandu; Kathmandu – Bhadrapur; Paro - Kolkata

**Tour Duration:** 20 nights / 21 days

### Day 1: Australia to Delhi (D)

Fly from Australia to New Delhi, the capital city of India. After clearing airport formalities, meet your local guide and transfer to your hotel for 2 nights stay.

### Day 2: Day in Delhi (B / L / D)

Today take a morning sightseeing tour of Old Delhi. Walk through the bustling bazaars of Chandni Chowk (silver street) to arrive at Jama Masjid, one of the largest mosques in India. Drive through the old walled city past the famous Red Fort. Then visit Raj Ghat, cremation site of Mahatma Gandhi.

This afternoon, enjoy a tour of New Delhi visiting the famous Qutab Minar, the tallest brick tower in India, built in the 12th century. Drive past President's House and Parliament House and take a photo stop at the famous India Gate. Also visit Gurudwara Bangla Sahib, a white marble and gold sikh shrine still in active worship.

### Day 3: Delhi to Agra (B / L / D)

This morning, drive to Agra, land of the Taj Mahal, one of the seven wonders of the world. En-route stop at Sikandra, the tomb of mughal emperor Akbar.

This afternoon, visit the white marble beauty and symbol of eternal love, the Taj Mahal. Taj Mahal displays the saga of love between Emperor Shah Jahan and his queen Mumtaz Mahal. Later, visit Agra fort, built in red sandstone with magnificent palaces and halls of public and private audience.

### Day 4: Agra to Jaipur (B / L / D)

After breakfast, drive to Jaipur, one of the most well planned cities of India. This capital city of Rajasthan, popularly known as the 'Pink City', was founded by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II, in 1727 A.D. En route to Jaipur, make a brief stop to visit Fatehpur Sikri, the red sandstone Mughal palatial complex. Within the complex lies a mosque built by the Mughal Emperor Akbar and dedicated to Sheikh Salim Chisti, a Muslim Sufi Saint who blessed Emperor Akbar with a son.

This afternoon, visit gem and carpet weaving factories, and shop for souvenirs. Jaipur is famous for its precious and semi-precious stoned jewels, enamelled ornaments, beautiful carpets and other artifacts and crafts.

### Day 5: Day in Jaipur (B / L / D)

This morning, visit Amber fort, a fine amalgamation of Hindu and Muslim architecture and ornamentation, built in the 16th century. To ascend up the fort, you may choose to walk, drive or take an elephant ride.

This afternoon, visit the City Palace and Jantar Mantar, the largest astronomical observatory built in stone. Also drive past Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds), a remarkable five storied building along the main street of the old city with semi-octagonal and delicate honey-combed sandstone windows.

### Day 6: Drive Jaipur to Delhi; Fly Delhi to Kathmandu (B / L / D)

Embark on an early morning drive to Delhi airport. This afternoon, board your flight to Kathmandu, Nepal.

Upon arrival in Kathmandu, check in at your hotel for 3 nights stay. Enjoy an evening at leisure in Kathmandu.

### Day 7: Day in Kathmandu (B / L / D)

Today, visit Swayambhunath Stupa, one of the world's oldest Buddhist chaityas, acclaimed to be more than 2500 years old. Also visit the Patan Durbar Square, in the historic city of Patan. Patan is known as the centre of fine arts and for the superb craftsmanship of its artisans. Patan Durbar Square has been acclaimed as one of the finest urban streetscapes in the world.

### Day 8: Day in Kathmandu (B / L / D)

Take an early morning excursion to Nagarkot (approx 2200 meters), for panoramic sunrise views of the snowy Himalayan peaks.

This afternoon, visit Kathmandu Durbar Square,

famous for its exquisite architecture and artistic embellishments. Then visit Pashupatinath Temple, a temple dedicated to Lord Shiva and one of the most sacred Hindu shrines in the world. Also visit Boudhanath stupa, which is the largest stupa in Nepal and one of the largest in the world.

### Day 9: Fly Kathmandu to Bhadrapur; Drive Bhadrapur to Darjeeling (B / L / D)

This morning you will be transferred to the airport to catch your flight to Bhadrapur. Drive from Bhadrapur to Darjeeling, often called the "Queen of the Hills".

This afternoon, enjoy a tea estate tour, visiting tea plantations and factory to learn about production and processing of Darjeeling tea. Enjoy an evening at leisure at this picturesque town in the foothills of Eastern Himalayas.

### Day 10: Day in Darjeeling (B / L / D)

Start the day with a morning excursion to Tiger Hill, for spectacular sunrise views over Mt. Kanchenjunga. The viewing tower here also provides unparalleled 360° views of the Himalayan panorama, Mt. Everest. This afternoon, ride the UNESCO world heritage Toy Train, to visit the Ghoom Monastery, located at the highest railway station of the world. Ghoom monastery, built in the 19th century, is one of the largest Buddhist monasteries. Later, enjoy a walk in the Botanical Gardens.

### Day 11: Darjeeling to Gangtok (B / L / D)

After breakfast, embark on a leisurely scenic drive to Gangtok, the capital city of Sikkim, located at an altitude of approx 1,750m. This afternoon visit the Enchey monastery with its collection of exquisite images and religious objects. Enjoy an evening at leisure in Gangtok.

### Day 12: Day in Gangtok (B / L / D)

After breakfast proceed for a city tour of Gangtok which includes a visit to Cottage Industries Institute (showcasing the beautiful Sikkim souvenirs like

carpets, hand carved tables and traditional handicrafts),

Research Institute of Tibetology (internationally acclaimed centre of Tibetan Studies & Research houses a vast collection of rare Buddhist books, manuscripts and over 200 Buddhist icons) and Do-Drul Chorten (Stupa).

Later, take a short drive to visit the Rumtek Dharma Chakra Centre and the nearby Rumtek Monastery.

**Day 13: Gangtok to Kalimpong (B / L / D)**

After breakfast, embark on a drive to Kalimpong, a landlocked town surrounded by 3 countries i.e. Tibet, Nepal and Bhutan, and located at an altitude of 1250m.

This afternoon, visit St. Theresa's Church and the Kalimpong Bazaar, which is noted for traditional handicrafts, wood carvings, thanka paintings, metal crafts, Tibetan jewellery, wooden masks etc.

**Day 14: Kalimpong to Pheuntsholing (B / L / D)**

Today, enjoy a scenic cross border drive from India to Bhutan. Phuentsholing is a thriving commercial centre lying at the base of the Himalayan foothills in Bhutan. The town portrays a fascinating mixture of Indian and Bhutanese people and cultures.

Today, visit Zangtho Pelri Lhakhang, a small temple built in the centre of Phuentsholing town. Later take a stroll around the town's market area.

**Day 15: Pheuntsholing to Thimphu (B / L / D)**

After breakfast, embark on a scenic drive to Thimphu. En-route, visit Kharbandi Gumpa, the beautiful monastery situated in a garden of tropical plants and flowers. The monastery contains paintings depicting scenes from the life of Buddha and statues of Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal and Guru Rimpoche. Also visit Simtokha Dzong, the oldest fortress in Bhutan, built in the 17th century. Simtokha Dzong now serves as a Buddhist university and houses the Institute for Language and Culture Studies.

Enjoy an evening at leisure in Thimphu.

**Day 16: Day in Thimphu (B / L / D)**

Thimphu, the capital city of Bhutan, is home to Bhutan's royal family, government offices, and various foreign missions. It is also the headquarters for a number of internationally funded development projects in Bhutan.

Today, visit the government-run handicrafts emporium and privately owned crafts shops. Also visit the Folk Heritage and National Textile Museum. After lunch, visit the National Library and the National Institute of traditional medicine (from outside). Also visit Tashichho Dzong, the beautiful medieval fortress which houses most of the Government offices and the King's throne room.

**Day 17: Thimphu to Punakha (B / L / D)**

This morning, drive up to Dochu-la pass (approx 3,100 mts) to enjoy fabulous views and admire the beauty of Bhutan and the East Himalayan ranges.

Punakha was the winter capital of Bhutan for over 300 years until the time of second King. Today, visit Punakha Dzong, which was built in 1637, and established the central monastic body with 600 monks. Punakha Dzong is one of the most impressive Dzongs in the Kingdom of Bhutan. Later, also visit the newly built stupa, Khamsum Yulley Namgyel Chorten.

**Day 18: Punakha to Paro (B / L / D)**

This morning, embark on a leisurely drive to Paro. Upon arrival in Paro, visit Ta Dzong, a circular fortress built in the mid 17th century and now converted into Bhutan's National Museum, that houses an excellent

collection of Bhutanese antiquities. Later, walk down a hillside trail to visit Rinpung Dzong, Paro's remarkable fortification built in 1646 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal.

**Day 19: Day in Paro (B / L / D)**

After breakfast hike to Taktsang Gumpa (Tiger's Nest) - a small monastery clinging on a rock cliff 900 metres above the valley floor. It is said that a great guru flew from Tibet on the back of a tigress and meditated here, hence the monastery is also called 'Tiger's Nest'.

Later, drive up the valley to view the ruins of Drukgyel Dzong. It was from here that the Bhutanese repelled several invading Tibetan armies during the 17th century.

Whilst returning to Paro this afternoon we visit Kyichu Lhakhang, one of the oldest and most sacred temples of the Kingdom built in the 7th century.

**Day 20: Paro to Kolkata (B / L / D)**

This morning, you will be transferred to the airport to catch your flight to Kolkata. This afternoon, take a city tour of Kolkata visiting Jain temple, the white marble Victoria Memorial and Kali temple. Drive past Fort William and Secretariat buildings. Also visit local markets where you get the opportunity to meet local artisans making idols of Hindu gods.

**Day 21: Kolkata to Australia (B / L / D)**

Enjoy a day at leisure in Kolkata for some last minute shopping and enriching experiences in this culture and tradition rich city. This evening, you will be transferred to the airport to catch your flight back home.

**PRICE INCLUSIONS**

- International and India domestic economy airfares.
- Australia/India/Nepal/Bhutan airport and departure tax.
- Accommodation on twin sharing basis at 4\*/ heritage hotels or best available hotel in the region.
- All meals included (i.e. breakfast, lunch and dinner).
- All monument entrance fees included.
- Meeting and assistance on arrival and departures
- Local English Speaking Guide for sightseeing tours. English speaking escort to accompany the group for minimum group size of 8 passengers.
- Chauffeured air-conditioned vehicles for all transfers, excursions and sightseeing tours.
- All currently applicable taxes.
- Elephant ride at Amber fort, Jaipur, subject to availability else, jeep ride will be provided.
- Toy train ride to Ghoom monastery from Darjeeling, subject to availability.
- India/Nepal/Bhutan visa fee, Bhutan tourism development fees, government royalty and taxes.

**PRICE EXCLUSIONS**

- Air fuel surcharge \$380 at brochure printing (subject to airline fluctuation).
- Expenses of personal nature like laundry, telephone, fax, internet, beverages, camera / video camera fee at monuments, medical expenses.
- Local payments in domestic currency, such as tips and gratuities.
- Any other services not mentioned in Price Inclusions above.



**DEPARTURES**

**Splendours of India, Nepal & Bhutan (Departure from SYD/MEL/BNE/ADL)**

Departure dates below are guaranteed on minimum of 4 passengers or above	Twin share price
17Nov.2009;23Feb.2010;16Mar.2010;	AU\$ 6,480
27Apr.2010; 25May.2010; 24Aug.2010; 07Sep.2010	AU\$ 6,620
01Dec.2009; 26Jan.2010; 22Feb.2011; 29Mar 2011; 26Apr 2011	AU\$ 7,150
23Nov 2010; 07Dec2010; 25Jan 2011	AU\$ 7,480
Land Only AU\$ 5600; Single room supplement: AU\$ 1,500	