



INDIA

Boutique Royal Rajasthan Tour - 18 days

including

Architecture, Bazaars, Carpets, Ceramics, Cuisine, Culture, Gardens, Silks, Temples & Textiles

13th – 30th November 2017

Optional Tours

Pre Tour – Textile Tour to Gujarat: 27th October – 9th November 2017

Post Tour – Mumbai: 30th November – 2nd December 2017

Post Tour – Kerala: 2nd – 7th December 2017

India's hot! And we are not talking about the weather! Come get a taste of Indian cuisine, absorb its many cultural flavours, relish its natural beauty and its historical sites. This journey travels through the classic sights and sounds of Rajasthan, India. Take a royal journey back in time and relive the days of the Maharajas, staying in some of India's premium & boutique Palaces and Havelis. We explore the former princely state of Rajasthan replete with magnificent forts and palaces, its fine cities and stunning desert scenery. Discover the Mughal and Imperial monuments of Delhi, marvel at the Taj Mahal in Agra, visit the Amber Fort and 'pink city' of Jaipur. Stop, take in a view of the 'blue city' of Jodhpur, plus the countryside hills and deserts of the golden city of Jaisalmer and be enchanted by the shimmering lake of Udaipur, the most romantic city in Rajasthan.

So join as a solo traveller, gather couple of friends or three, or maybe even a group of friends. We invite you to come and savour our Indian experience and share our passion of this exotic journey.

OVERVIEW:

Destination:	Delhi, Agra, Ranthambhore Park, Jaipur, Nimaj, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Rohet, Udaipur, Mumbai / Delhi
Commences in Delhi:	Monday 13 th November
Concludes in Udaipur:	Thursday 30 th November
Tour Style:	Deluxe Small Group Tours
Length:	18 days / 17 Nights
Accommodation:	5 & 4 Star Boutique & Modern Hotels
Meals:	Breakfasts; 17: Lunches; 3: Dinners; 9:
Leaders:	Western Tour Director and one or more local guides
Transportation:	Deluxe private chauffeur driven air-conditioned vehicles
Tour Grading:	Moderate: Suitable for travellers with an above average level of fitness and mobility

Boutique Tours & Travel offers comprehensive travel packages with just about everything on land included in one price. Accommodation, some meals, transfers, baggage handling, all major sightseeing and numerous cultural events are included. Before you travel, you may have questions about what to expect while on your tour. For further information about this tour, or assistance in booking this tour please contact us: info@boutiquetours.com.au

Our small group tours caters for 6 -14 guests. Please book early to ensure your place can be confirmed.

- Experience New & Old Delhi
- Discover Raj Gath, Qutab Minar
- Visit Red Fort, one of the oldest monuments of India
- Enjoy a rickshaw ride in Chandni Chowk
- Be overwhelmed by the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort
- Visit the Ranthambhore park & spot a Bengal tiger or two
- Perhaps experience an elephant ride to Amber Fort in Jaipur
- Walk Jaipur's old city and immerse yourself in the buzz of the bazaar
- Visit the Meherangarh Fort and gaze down on the 'blue city'
- Visit the 'golden city' of Jaisalmer
- Spend twilight on an exciting camel ride on the sand dunes at Sam Village
- Enjoy the sprawling lawns and manicured gardens with multitude of birds and dancing peacocks at Rohet Garh
- Enjoy a twilight boat ride on beautiful Lake Pichola
- Be captivated by Fateh Prakash Palace and visit the unique Crystal Gallery
- Enjoy fabulous fine dining with wonderful cuisine and regional delicacies.



ITINERARY:

DAY 1: Monday 13th November 2017: Arrive Delhi:

Welcome to Delhi; India's most vibrant city. You will be met at the airport and transferred to your hotel. Depending on your arrival time, you may have free time to explore Delhi. Your tour director is able to offer you a number of options including sightseeing and shopping. Later this evening, rendezvous at the hotel and meet fellow travellers. Dinner is available at the hotel. Optional Tour - Sound & Light Show at the Red Fort is also available.

DAY 2: Tuesday 14th November 2017: Delhi: (B/D)

This morning we tour both the chaotic Old Delhi and the New Delhi. We visit some of old Delhi's dense network of homes, markets, mosques and alleyways. We explore the Jama Masjid, one of the largest mosques in Asia. We then visit Chandni Chowk by rickshaw. We walk the bazaar area where the local artisans still practice their crafts and here perhaps test your bargaining skills. Later we drive by the Red Fort a powerful symbol of the Mughal Empire and walk the grounds of the Raj Ghat, the simple but very moving memorial to Mahatma Gandhi. We explore Sir Edwin Lutyen's New Delhi, inaugurated in 1931 and home to Rashtrapati Bhawan, the official residence of the Indian President. We drive past the imposing India Gate (War Memorial Arch) and Parliament buildings. We visit two of the city's most significant World Heritage Sites, Qutab Minar, a masterpiece of perfect proportions, and the tomb of Emperor Humayun. This afternoon is at your leisure with options to visit markets and/or museums.

DAY 3: Wednesday 15th November 2017: Delhi - Agra: (B)

Following an early breakfast, we drive to Agra stopping en-route at Sikandra, the impressive tomb of the Mughal Emperor Akbar. Built in 1605–1613. From here it's a short drive to Agra. On arrival, we tour the imposing Agra Fort, a Palace established by the Mughal Emperor Akbar in 1565. A spectacular hilltop citadel with fabulous courtyards, fountains, gates, opulent chambers and it has breathtaking views of the River Yamuna. We then stopover in a shopping area to view some of Agra's major handicrafts products including Zari embroidery work, Brassware, Carpets, Jewellery and inlay work on Leather-ware. Agra is also well known for its sweets 'Petha' and 'Gajak' and saltish snack 'Dalmoth.

We cross the river to visit the tomb of Itmad-ud-Daula, sometimes known as the 'Baby Taj' and the least visited of Agra's three great monuments. It was the first to be covered in white marble and pietra dura.

Later this afternoon we continue on to the magnificent architectural masterpiece that is the Taj Mahal. We will explore the beautiful buildings and gardens overlooking the serene Yamuna River. It is arguably the greatest monument to love, built by Shah Jahan as a memorial to his wife Mumtaz, renowned the world over for its power and beauty. The craftsmanship is outstanding with semi-precious stones inlaid into the marble in beautiful patterns, a process known as pietra dura, the white marble reflects every change in light allowing the Taj to appear to change its hue according to the light and time of day. You will pinch yourself to believe you are here!!

DAY 4: Thursday 16th November 2017: Agra - Ranthambore: (B/D)

Then experience an early morning visit to the Taj Mahal, our final visit. The golden rays of the morning sun bathes the translucent white marble of this monument. WOW, it's a breathtaking experience. We return to our hotel for breakfast. Later we drive to Fatehpur Sikri, now ghost city. It was once the capital of the Mughal Empire from 1571 – 1585 when it was abandoned. The city was founded in 1569 by the Mughal Emperor.

We continue our drive to Ranthambhore National Park, which is well known as one of the best spots in the world to view Royal Bengal Tiger in its natural habitat. On arrival we'll check into our lodge.

DAY 5: Friday 17th November 2017: Ranthambore - Jaipur: (B/D)

We're up early this morning for our Jeep safari into the National Park. Perhaps sight a Royal Bengal tiger or two! And other wildlife including; sloth bear, crocodiles, eagles, peacocks, monkeys, deer, leopards and a large array of exotic birds and plant life. We later return to our Lodge for a late breakfast. We depart Ranthambhore and drive to Jaipur, the 'Pink City'. It is the state capital of Rajasthan. Founded in 1727 by Maharaja Jai Singh II, Jaipur is a highly distinctive and colourful city characterized by fine bazaars, intricately carved palaces, havelis and powerful forts. It is famous for its handicrafts and precious and semiprecious stones. It is now also famous as it was featured in both *Exotic Marigold Hotel* movies.

Tonight, enjoy a delicious Rajasthani dinner.



DAY 6: Saturday 18th November 2017: Jaipur: (B)

Arise early this morning for our excursion to the majestic Amber Fort. Perhaps take an elephant ride on the ramparts. (Optional) It too is a beautiful Palace with ornate mosaics, mirrors, coloured stone inlays, intricately painted murals, temples and cooling courtyard watercourses.

Later relish in a guided walking tour through the old city to explore the colourful markets and bazaars where one can shop for jewellery, beautiful gems, semi-precious stones, kundan and minakri work (enamel work on gold), cotton fabric including sanganeri prints, tie-dye, and fine kota doria, The exotic blue pottery, enamel ware and brass ware, make excellent souvenirs and gift items. The bazaars between the Badi (Large) and Chhoti (Small) Chaupar (Square) in the old city of Jaipur feature some of the best photo opportunities that the city has to offer. Our guide will lead us through the labyrinth of colorful alleys where artisans make puppets, bangles, and other local handicrafts.

Discover the magnificent Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds) with its pink sandstone. This five story high façade is just stunning. We will visit the Jantar Mantar Observatory, a UNESCO World heritage site - a stone astrological and astronomical Observatory built by Maharaja Jai Singh in the 18th century.

DAY 7: Sunday 19th November 2017: Jaipur – Nimaj, (Chhatra Sagar) (B/L/D)

We depart on our next journey to Nimaj and check into Chhatra Sagar Camp where the tents are pitched on a dam overlooking a lake teeming with birds, in the heart of rural Rajasthan. It's stunning. This afternoon is at your leisure for you to discover the surrounds, enjoy nature walks or be more adventurous and take one of the many safaris on offer or perhaps relax at the hotel and enjoy a moment of quiet reflection.

Day 8: Monday 20th November 2017: Nimaj: (Chhatra Sagar) (B/L/D)

This morning we visit some of the local villages and gain an insight into their local life and culture.

Experience the locals warm hospitality, and enjoy truly delicious traditional Rajasthani meals cooked with farm fresh vegetables in the family kitchen. Delicious. This evening includes a bonfire with entertainment by the local people of their old folk-lore music. Optional: This afternoon there is an optional cooking class if you wish to join in.

Day 9: Tuesday 21st November 2017: Nimaj (Chhatra Sagar) – Jodhpur: (B)

After breakfast, we drive to Jodhpur, the gateway to the Thar Desert and the one time capital of Marwar. The city was founded in 1459 by Rao Jodha, who chose the site due to its strategic location on the influential Delhi-Gujarat trading route and it is home to the dominating Meherangarh Fort.

On arrival, check into our hotel before a late afternoon walk through the ancient city to explore the narrow streets, bustling bazaars, richly decorated temples and houses including the Museum and clock tower at the market. This evening is at your leisure.

DAY 10: Wednesday 22nd November 2017: Jodhpur: (B)

We explore the city of Jodhpur including a visit to the Mehrangarh Fort. The Meherangarh Fort stands high above the blue painted houses of the town below and is protected from the desert by a huge 10km wall, guarded by towers and fortified gateways. We also visit Jaswant Thada, built for Maharaja Jaswant Singh II in 1899; this imposing white marble memorial marks the site of a royal crematorium. This afternoon is free at your leisure.

DAY 11: Thursday 23rd November 2017: Jodhpur: (B/L)

This morning we visit the arid country side on a jeep safari. The scrub land is dotted with villages with mud and thatched homes. The Bishnois people are dessert farmer with communities of potters and weavers. We shall observe and interact with local villagers through our specialist guide and learn about the flora and fauna and the Bishnois cultural beliefs.

"The essence of India lies in her villages" – Mahatma Gandhi



DAY 12: Friday 24th November 2017: Jodhpur – Jaisalmer: (B/D)

This morning we leave Jodhpur and drive through the desert to the ancient city of Jaisalmer, means the 'the hill of the Fort of Jaisal' It is also called the "Golden City" of India because of the yellow sand that gives a yellowish-golden tinge to the city. We stop along the way at the village of Khichan to see the feeding ground for the beautiful demoiselle crane.

Jaisalmer is situated in the great Thar Desert atop the roughly triangular-shaped Trikuta Hill. It has an extraordinary medieval feel and a unique atmosphere. Founded in 1156 by Prince Jaisal, the town grew to be an important stopping point on the trade route across the Thar Desert from India to the West. It was from this trade that Jaisalmer's wealth and renown grew.

DAY 13: Saturday 25th November 2017: Jaisalmer: (B/D)

The original Jaisalmer, is the yellow sandstone fort. It is an imposing sight as it towers magnificently over the new city. Discover the painstakingly latticed havelis and mansions with their grand facades. The Nathmalji-ki-haveli, Patwon-ki-haveli and Salim Singh-ki-haveli are fine examples of the stone carver's skill. We visit some of the beautiful palaces, temples and havelis. Its bazaars are a reminder of the old camel caravans when the region was a trading emporium for splendid carpets, horses from Arabia and wines from Shiraz. You can shop for fine pattu shawls, mirror work and embroidered articles, wooden boxes, trinkets, silver jewellery and curios. Later this afternoon we visit to Sam Sand Dunes and enjoy a sunset camel ride in the surrounding sand dunes. (Optional – extra cost) This evening enjoy dinner and a cultural programme before returning to our hotel.

DAY 14: Sunday 26th November 2017: Jaisalmer – Rohet: (B/D)

This morning we drive to Rohet which is situated on the banks of a lake and set in the midst of rural surroundings. "Rohetgarh", a magnificent classified Heritage Hotel that has been home to the current owner's ancestors since 1622. It has sprawling lawns and manicured gardens invite a multitude of birds and dancing peacocks.

DAY 15: Monday 27th November 2017: Rohet – Udaipur: (B)

We depart this morning for Udaipur. Our scenic drive brings us to the beautiful Ranakpur Temple, one of the biggest and most important Jain temples in all of India, set in a remote and peaceful valley of the Aravalli Hills. The main temple is the Chamukha Temple with its 29 halls supported by 1,444 pillars, no two of which are alike!

We continue our journey onto Udaipur. Udaipur is amongst the most romantic cities of India and is surrounded by the magnificent landscape of the Aravali Hills. It's also known as the Venice of the East. Udaipur is an enchanting image of white marble palaces, placid lakes and green hills. It is an oasis of colour in a stark and arid region. Udaipur, with a glorious history is home to the grand palaces, beautiful lakes, temples and ancient forts, traditional Rajasthani cuisine and the traditional architecture providing a true insight to the local culture and heritage. This evening is at your leisure.

DAY 16: Tuesday 28th November 2017: Udaipur: (B)

This morning we tour the picturesque city of Udaipur. We visit the City Palace, an impressive complex of several palaces standing atop the banks of Lake Pichola. Of interest is the attractive Mor Chowk court, the Manak Mahal or 'Ruby Palace', the Chini ki Chitra Mahal and the Queen's Palace. Continue onto the Fateh Prakash Palace to visit the unique Crystal Gallery overlooking the grand Durbar Hall. We walk through the old town to view the impressively carved Jagdish Mandir temple. In the afternoon we rendezvous and enjoy a cruise on Lake Pichola to admire the serene beauty of Udaipur.

DAY 17: Wednesday 29th November 2017: Udaipur: (B/D)

Today is at your leisure. There are a number of options for you to choose from today or perhaps just walk through the picturesque backstreets, browse the local bazaars and shop for local folk art. Later this evening we will rendezvous for our farewell dinner.



DAY 18: Thursday 30th November 2017: Depart Udaipur: (B)

Our small group tour concludes on after breakfast. For most guests today it is time to say farewell to new-found friends and India. Depending on your departure itinerary, you may have time for some last-minute shopping. We are able to organise our private guide to accompany you.

Transfers to the airport for your onward or homebound journey are able to be arranged including flights to Delhi / Mumbai or elsewhere.

Please don't hesitate to contact Boutique Tours & Travel for further travel arrangements.

Please contact Boutique Tours & Travel for further information and any other travel arrangements.

INCLUSIONS:

- Private International & Domestic airport arrival and departure transfers for all guests
- 5, 4 & 3 Star Modern & Boutique Hotels; or a mix of both
- Meals as indicated in Itinerary; B = Breakfast: L=Lunch: D=Dinner: SD=Special Dinner
- Luxury chauffeur driven private air-conditioned vehicles for all our transportation
- Australian Tour Manager to oversee all activities.
- Services of one or more Professional tour guides
- Entrance fees to all activities, tours, excursions and shows as per the itinerary
- Rickshaw Ride in Delhi
- Entrance to Ranthambhore National Park
- 1 Game drive – sharing jeeps with Naturalist Guide from Game Park
- Cooking demonstration class at Chhatra Sagra
- Elephant Ride at Amber Fort
- Private Jeep safari to Bishnoi Village near Rohet. (4 people sharing in one jeep)
- Short Camel ride in desert at Jaisalmer
- Private Boat Cruise at Lake Pichola (Subject to the water level)
- An exclusive information travel package
- Bottled water during overland transportation

Not included:

- International air or train fares
- Arrival / Departure Taxes, levies and other charges
- Domestic Flights - economy class: Udaipur – Mumbai / Delhi (price and availability for upgrade available on request)
- Internal / Domestic Flight - Upgrade to Business Class
- Passport & Visa Fees
- Personal Travel Insurance
- Gratuities to guides & drivers and hotel staff
- Additional local guides
- Excess baggage charges
- Cost of any 'Luggage Delivery' via FedEx or postal services
- Personal expenses and internet charges
- Alcoholic Beverages



TOUR DATES & LAND PRICES:

INDIA Boutique Royal Rajasthan Tour - 18 days – 13th – 30th November 2017

Hotels:	4 / 5 * Lux / Deluxe	5 / 4 / 3 * Lux/ Deluxe
Delhi:	The Metropolitan 4*	The Metropolitan 4*
Agra:	Four Points by Sheraton 4*	Four Points by Sheraton 4*
Ranthambore	The Pugmark Hotel 3½ *	The Pugmark Hotel 3½ *
Jaipur:	ITC Rajputana 5*	ITC Rajputana 5*
Nimaj:	Chhatra Saga 4* Tents	Chhatra Saga 4* Tents
Jodhpur:	Ratan Vilas 3*	Ratan Vilas 3*
Jaisalmer:	Gorbandh Palace 4*	Gorbandh Palace 4*
Rohet:	Rohetgarh 3*	Rohetgarh 3*
Udaipur:	Taj Lake Palace 5*	Kankarwa Haveli 3½ *
Twin Share:	AU\$6700.00 PP	AU\$5600.00 PP
Single Supplement:	AU\$2750.00	AU\$1450.00

You can mix and match to make up your own combinations of hotels.
If you wish to make it cheaper – I will organise a new quote for you.

Single travellers may request to share. Please advise at time of booking.

Pre & Post Tour Accommodation & Travel:	Price & details available on request
International Airfares:	Price & details available on request
Insurance:	Price & details available on request

Exchange Rates:

All tour prices are current at the time of publication. To reflect significant fluctuations in exchange rates or the imposition of new government taxes that impact on the cost of providing its services, Boutique Tours & Travel reserves the right to adjust prices as may be necessary at any time. Accordingly, Boutique Tours & Travel in receiving any payments does not undertake that the price payable will thereafter remain unchanged.



India - Travel Information:

Accommodation:

All our hotels are excellent 5 and 4/3 star modern and boutique hotels. We highly recommend our hotels as they have excellent services and facilities. All rooms have modern facilities, private bathrooms with double or two twin beds.

Climate & Clothing:

The climate in India is warm to hot all year around. The rainy season is June till October. The general rule is to bring comfortable clothing including lightweight cottons. Comfortable walking shoes are essential as is a light waterproof jacket. We provide a detailed packing list to all our guests prior to departure.

Currency & Money Matters:

The currency is the Indian Rupee (INR), which is divided into 100 paise (singular paisa). Major currencies can be changed at banks, and authorised bureaux de changes. It is advisable to refuse torn notes, as no one will accept them apart from the National Bank. It is best to change money into small denominations. Major credit cards are widely accepted, particularly in tourist orientated establishments. ATM's are not generally available.

Electricity:

The electrical current in India is 250 volts AC. 50Hz. A variety of power outlets are used in India, but most plugs have two or three round pins.

Insurance:

You must obtain Comprehensive Travel Insurance as a condition of travelling with Boutique Tours & Travel. We recommend that you purchase insurance at the time of Booking. (Reasonable rates available on BT&T Website front page)

Language:

Hindi is the official language. French is also spoken but English is fast becoming the language of the younger generation.

Meals:

Our hotel offers a wonderful selection of dishes at their buffet breakfasts with a wide variety of both menu and venue for lunches and evening meals.

Medical Services & Facilities:

Our hotels have access to a doctor if required. They can also assist guests with purchasing of medicine. The international hospitals in India are very good and have western trained medical and surgical specialists. Dental care is also available.

Passports & Visas:

To enter India you require a passport valid for at least six months beyond the date of entry and with at least two blank pages. A visa is required for most guests and will be organised prior to departure.

Pre & Post Tour Accommodation:

Boutique Tours & Travel suggests that you may like to arrive a day before the start of your tour to allow time to relax and refresh. You are also very welcome to linger longer after the tour is completed. Boutique Tours & Travel has negotiated special overnight rates at many hotels for both pre and post tour accommodation. Please request when booking.

Time Zone:

Despite the size of the country, the standard time throughout India is GMT +5.30.

Tippling:

A tip from you to the guides and drivers is required.

Tour Group:

Our small group tours provide you with a good balance of group activity and personal discovery.

Transport:

Most of our road journeys between major cities are longer than 3 hours so we include modern Luxury sedan cars and minibuses for this tour. They are spacious and comfortable so we can all enjoy the journey.

Water & Beverages:

Our hotels offer bottled water in your room, and bottled water is provided when travelling in our transfers between cities. Most teas are available with most meals. Alcoholic beverages are not included in the cost of this tour.



Recommended Reading:

Mobile libraries are carried in the minibus when the group is at least seven people in size. Libraries include guide books, books about local history, and fiction written by local authors. Feel free to use these books at any time during the tour. Books worth reading include those outlined below.

General Resources for India

- *A Suitable Boy* by Vikram Seth
- *City of Joy* by Dominique Lapierre
- *God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy
- *A Fine Balance* by Rohinton Mistry
- *Eat Smart in India* by Joan Peterson and Indu Menon
- *Hinduism: An Introduction* by Dharam Vir Singh
- *Sahib: A British Soldier in India from 1750 – 1914* by Richard Holmes
- *Maharanis: The Lives and Times of Three Generations of Indian Princesses* by Lucy Moore
- *The Sceptre and the Veil: Autobiographies by Indian Maharanis* by Ranjana Harish
- *A Malgudi Omnibus* by R K Narayan
- *The Argumentative India: Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity* by Amartya Sen
- *The Ruling Caste: Imperial Lives in the Victorian Raj* by David Gilmour
- *The Age of Kali: Travels and Encounters in India* by William Dalrymple
- *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* by Louis Fischer
- *White Mughals: Love and Betrayal in Eighteenth Century India* by William Dalrymple
- *City of Djinn: A Year in Delhi* by William Dalrymple
- *The Honourable Company: The History of the English East India Company* by John Keay
- *India: A History* by John Keay
- *Holy Cow: An Indian Adventure* by Sarah MacDonald
- *The Jewel in The Crown* by Paul Scott
- *A Passage to India* by E M Forster

Guide Books

- *Lonely Planet Guide to India*
- *The Rough Guide to India*
- *Lonely Planet Guide to South India*
- *Footprint Guide to India*
- *South India Handbook: The Travel Guide (Footprint)*
 - *Rajasthan and Gujarat Handbook: The Travel Guide (Footprint)*