



INDIAN SOJOURN
MUMBAI TO DELHI - 8 Days / 7 Nights
Mumbai – Vadodara – Udaipur – Jodhpur – Agra – Sawai Madhopur – Jaipur – Delhi

Welcome to Indian Sojourn, a spectacular train journey in inimitable royal style and luxury on one of India's iconic trains, the Deccan Odyssey. The Odyssey will take you on an 8-day extravaganza, through the fascinating, ever-changing vistas of a colourful, vibrant and ancient India, from its premier metropolis Mumbai to its capital city Delhi, traversing ancient kingdoms and their historic traditions as you view the beautiful monuments of Vadodara, the lakes and palaces at Udaipur, catch a glimpse of the ancient traditions of the Bishnois of Jodhpur, visit the glorious Taj Mahal at Agra, attempt tiger spotting at Ranthambore and explore the effervescent city of Jaipur. A railroad journey like none other, in a land like no other, we welcome you on board the Deccan Odyssey.

Day 1 Saturday

Board the Deccan Odyssey at Mumbai – on to Vadodara

Welcome aboard the Deccan Odyssey.

Early this evening assemble at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus at approximately 1530 hours to complete the registration process and check in formalities for your *Indian Sojourn* journey, as you receive a traditional Indian welcome and enjoy a refreshing welcome drink.

After completion of all formalities, you will be shown to your delightful cabins. As you settle in, the Deccan Odyssey shall depart Mumbai for Vadodara

Dinner on board

Overnight on Deccan Odyssey

Day 2 Sunday

Vadodara

Today you arrive at the capital of the Gaekwads - Vadodara, located along the seasonal river Vishwamitri.

Breakfast over, you will disembark and proceed to visit Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site and the only complete and unchanged pre-Mughal Islamic city in India. This concentration of largely unexcavated archaeological, historic and living cultural heritage properties is cradled in an impressive landscape. Marvel at the Jami Masjid (Great Mosque) built in 1513 representing a perfect blend of Hindu and Muslim architecture which was a model for later mosque architecture in India.

Drive back to Vadodara for a leisurely lunch on board the Deccan Odyssey.

After lunch, you will visit the Maharaja Fateh Singh Museum, originally constructed as a school for the Maharaja's children. Today, art lovers can view a large number of works of art displayed in the museum including a collection of the paintings of Raja Ravi Varma and other renowned European Masters as well as a collection of sculptures in marble and bronze.

Enjoy high tea at the resplendent Laxmi Vilas Palace, built in 1890, and the residence of the Royal family even today. Reputedly four times the size of Buckingham Palace, its overwhelming Durbar Hall boasts a Venetian mosaic floor, Belgian stained glass windows and walls with intricate mosaic decorations. The palace also houses a remarkable collection of old armoury and sculptures in bronze, marble & terracotta by Fellici. Witness a folk performance typical of the region as you savour some of the special delicacies from the Royal kitchens.

Return to the Deccan Odyssey as it heads for Udaipur.

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner on board; High tea at Laxmi Vilas Palace

Overnight on Deccan Odyssey

Day 3 Monday

Udaipur

The Deccan Odyssey rolls into Udaipur in the morning. Set on the shores of the placid Lake Pichola, Udaipur, known as the City of Lakes, is easily one of the most romantic cities of India, surrounded by scenic hills. Enjoy your breakfast as you admire the picturesque landscape of the Aravali hills.

You will then disembark to visit the famous City Palace, the largest palace complex in Rajasthan, with its scalloped arches, fretted balconies, and cupolas, which also houses the spectacular Crystal Gallery. The tour of this magnificent city is completed with a boat cruise on the tranquil waters of Lake Pichola.

Return to the Deccan Odyssey for lunch.

Later embark on a Walking Tour through the Old City of Udaipur. Sample the exquisite variety of handicrafts ranging from toys, bewitching puppets, wall hangings, cloth lanterns, handmade papers, jewellery, paintings, painted wooden boxes, pottery, brassware and terracotta sculptures.

Thereafter you return to the Deccan Odyssey for a relaxed evening and dinner as we depart for Jodhpur.

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner on board

Overnight on Deccan Odyssey

Day 4 Tuesday

Jodhpur

This morning as the Deccan Odyssey travels through the stronghold of the Marwar region, enjoy a relaxing morning on board as you breakfast, unwind and experience the striking panorama of the Thar Desert, arriving at Jodhpur.

The morning is at leisure on board the Deccan Odyssey, but those who wish to step out have the option of visiting a weavers' village, a potters' village as well as a Bishnoi village. The Bishnoi tribe, indigenous to India, follow the 29 principles laid down by their Guru about 540 years ago, to protect trees and wildlife ensuring a healthy eco-friendly social life for the community. Take a peep into their lives where traditions and skills are passed down unchanged through generations **OR** enjoy spa facilities at a hotel.

Lunch on board the Deccan Odyssey

Following lunch, set out once again to explore the magnificent city of Jodhpur, also known as the Blue City, after the vivid blue-painted houses that surround the Mehrangarh Fort. Set like a pearl amidst the stark desert, this former capital of Marwar boasts some of the finest architecture from the Rajput era, renowned for its superb forts and glorious palaces.

Experience glimpses of the lifestyle of the residents as you explore the city. Walk through the bustle of the Old Clock Tower market, past old havelis and houses, continue to the magnificent Mehrangarh Fort, the pride of Jodhpur. Marvel at the intricate carvings and expansive courtyards of the several palaces inside as well as the amazing view of palanquins, arms, paintings, costumes and the arts and crafts of a bygone era at the museum.

In the evening enjoy a wide array of sumptuous Marwar barbeque delights served in the royal courtyard of Mehrangarh Fort as you admire the cityscape from atop.

Having taken in your share of the sublime beauty of Jodhpur, return to the **Deccan Odyssey** and head for Agra

Breakfast & Lunch on board; Barbeque at Mehrangarh Fort.

Overnight on Deccan Odyssey

Day 5 Wednesday

Agra

Arriving at Agra, you will realize that the Mughals were not just the greatest dynasty to rule India but also its greatest builders. After a leisurely breakfast on board, you will visit the Taj Mahal, which was Emperor Shah Jahan's gift of love to his beloved wife, Mumtaz Mahal, and is truly the world's most wondrous monument. The making of the Taj Mahal is as much a fable as the edifice itself. It took 20000 men 22 years to build this unrivalled mausoleum and its exquisite white marble was brought from 200 miles away by caravans of elephants and camels.

Lunch at a City Hotel.

After lunch your tour of Agra continues as you visit Itmad-ud-Daulah, a marble mausoleum built by Nur Jahan, the wife of Emperor Jahangir, in memory of her father, Ghiyas Beg. Sometimes called the 'Baby Taj', it is beautifully conceived in white marble, mosaic and lattice.

Thereafter proceed to Agra Fort, another outstanding example of Mughal architecture, and the seat of Mughal reign and administration for three generations. The present structure owes its origins to Emperor Akbar who had its first buildings of red sandstone erected on the eastern bank of the river Yamuna. His grandson Shah Jahan, the most artistic and prolific builder of the dynasty, later added the impressive marbled private quarters and the mosque while Aurangzeb added the outer ramparts. A visit to the *Diwan-e-Am*, 'Hall of Public Audience' and the Royal Pavilions is not to be missed.

Later, you have the opportunity to visit the local markets to admire the exquisite Pietra Dura (marble inlay) artefacts and Mughal ornaments **OR** as an optional activity you may avail of spa facilities at a hotel before completing your tour of this historical city.

Late evening, you return to the Deccan Odyssey for dinner and your onward journey to Sawai Madhopur

Breakfast on board; Lunch at a City Hotel; Dinner on board

Overnight on Deccan Odyssey

Day 6 Thursday

Sawai Madhopur – Ranthambore National Park

Sawai Madhopur, in Rajasthan is the alighting point for the famous Ranthambore National Park, and India's efforts to conserve the dwindling tiger population can be seen here. The park is one of the finest tiger reserves in the country and the most likely place to spot one of these majestic animals.

Enjoy an early morning breakfast before you set out for your morning game drive.

Ranthambore is home to several other species as well; you can see herds of *Chital* and *Sambhar* deer as well as wild boar, *Nilgai* antelope and *chinkara* gazelles. There are also sloth bear, a few leopards and crocodiles. Extensive bird life includes jungle fowl, partridges, quails, the crested serpent eagle, woodpeckers, flycatchers etc. There are also water birds like storks, ducks and geese at the lakes and waterholes. If it's your lucky day, you could spot a tiger lolling around lazily in the sun, or feverishly hunting down deer around the lakes!

When you're done with the jungle, return to the comfort of the Deccan Odyssey. Feel free to share the spoils (of your photo-shoots!) over a leisurely lunch before you set out for a village safari.

The people of Rajasthan's villages are mostly tribals who subsist on farming and hunting. These friendly folk are warm and welcoming, happy to show guests around their villages, giving deep insights into their daily lives. The women here wear bright colours to offset the drab desert, and most people live in mud huts. Visit a local home for a and interact with the family.

After a fulfilling afternoon, proceed for high tea at the Sawai Madhopur Lodge, the former hunting lodge of the erstwhile royal family of Jaipur.

After high tea, it is time to head back to the Deccan Odyssey where you can relax with a drink before dinner on board, as the Deccan Odyssey sets off for Jaipur, the Pink City.

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner on board; High tea at Taj Sawai Madhopur Lodge

Overnight on Deccan Odyssey

Day 7 Friday

Jaipur

Legendary for the triumphs of its proud *Rajputs*, Jaipur, the City of Victory, is surrounded by the rugged Aravali hills - crowned by formidable forts - and beautiful palaces, mansions and gardens. Royal processions and parades, in all their splendour, graced these palaces and forts once. The city is a colourful oasis in the desert and you will notice a timeless quality to Jaipur's *bazaars* and its people.

After breakfast you drive to Maharaja Mansingh's 17th century masterpiece, the Amber Fort that overlooks the beautiful Maota Lake. The fort is a sprawling complex of courtyards, halls and rooms adorned with beautiful paintings, precious stones and mirrors. Behold the *Sheesh Mahal*, 'Hall of Mirrors', where a single lamplight reflects in many mirrors, and lights up the entire room, creating a dazzling effect.

En-route to Amber Fort visit the Palace of Winds, otherwise known as the *Hawa Mahal*, famous for its intricate pink sandstone carving and a beautiful view of the city.

Thereafter you will visit the famous City Palace of Jaipur, an overwhelming complex of exquisite palaces, gardens and courtyards, decorative art and carved doorways. The palace museum houses collections of rare manuscripts, armoury, costumes and carpets. Walk across to the adjacent *Jantar Mantar*, the astronomical observatory built in the 18th century by Sawai Jai Singh. A wondrous achievement for its time the observatory gives accurate readings even to this day.

Lunch at a City hotel.

Following lunch you may choose to participate in one of the **optional tours**. Enjoy spa facilities at a palace hotel **OR** have the opportunity to explore the colourful bazaars of the Pink City which offer a wide range of ethnic handicrafts produced in the city-centre and its outskirts.

After your full day of delving in the royal past of Jaipur you will return to the Deccan Odyssey for dinner on board as it departs for Delhi.

Breakfast on board; Lunch at a City hotel; Dinner on board

Overnight on Deccan Odyssey

Day 8 Disembark in Delhi

Disembark in Delhi

Early this morning, after breakfast, you will disembark at the Delhi Cantt Railway Station.

Bid farewell to the Deccan Odyssey as your royal passage through the grand vistas of India comes to an end.

Breakfast on board
