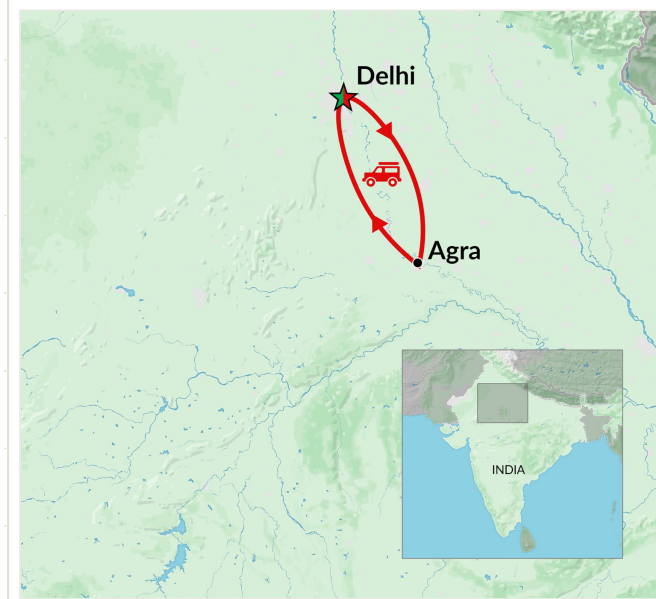


# Golden Triangle & Rishikesh Express

|              |                                          |
|--------------|------------------------------------------|
| COUNTRY(IES) | India                                    |
| TOUR TYPE    | Small Group                              |
| TRANSPORT    | AC car/minibus                           |
| GROUP SIZE   | Min: 2   Max: 15                         |
| DURATION     | 8 days                                   |
| STARTS       | Delhi, India                             |
| ENDS         | Delhi, India                             |
| MEALS        | Breakfasts - 7, Lunches - 0, Dinners - 0 |



## HIGHLIGHTS

Old Delhi sightseeing, the Taj Mahal and Red Fort in Agra, Amber Fort in Jaipur, Jaipur Sightseeing, Spiritish Rishikesh and Haridwar, Ganges Aarti Ceremony

## Itinerary

### DAY 1

### Welcome to Delhi, transfer to hotel included

Once you arrive in Delhi, you'll be met by one of our local staff, who will transfer you to your hotel. Once you're settled in, we'll run through the tour itinerary for the next few days, brief you on the local area and arrange a time to collect you tomorrow.

#### OVERNIGHT

Delhi hotel

#### MEALS

None

**DAY 2****Sightseeing Tour of Delhi before driving to Agra**

Your day begins with an immersive tour of Delhi, taking you through its rich architectural heritage and historic landmarks. The morning starts at Jama Masjid, one of India's largest and most impressive mosques, followed by a photo stop at the nearby Red Fort to admire the grand exterior of this UNESCO World Heritage-listed Mughal fortress. You will then pay your respects at Raj Ghat, the peaceful garden memorial dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi, before heading south to explore Qutub Minar, a stunning UNESCO World Heritage Site featuring the world's tallest brick minaret. The morning concludes with a scenic drive through the heart of the capital, passing key national landmarks including India Gate, Parliament House, and Rashtrapati Bhavan.

After stopping for lunch, you will set off on a scenic four-hour drive to Agra. Upon arrival in the evening, you will check into your hotel and relax for the remainder of the night.

**OVERNIGHT**

Agra hotel

**MEALS**

Breakfast

**DAY 3****Visit the beautiful Taj Mahal and Agra Fort. Drive to Jaipur**

Begin your day with an early morning visit to the Taj Mahal, one of the most iconic and breathtaking monuments in the world, as it catches the first rays of sunlight. Afterward, explore the majestic Agra Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage Site renowned for its imposing red sandstone walls and extraordinary showcase of Mughal grandeur.

In the afternoon, embark on a scenic five-hour drive to Jaipur, the historic capital of Rajasthan. Upon arrival in the 'Pink City', transfer to your hotel and settle in for the evening.

**OVERNIGHT**

Jaipur hotel

**MEALS**

Breakfast

**DAY 4****Jaipur Sightseeing - Amer Fort, Jantar Mantar & City Palace**

Spend your day discovering the vibrant 'Pink City' of Jaipur on a guided tour, starting with a visit to the hilltops to explore Amer Fort, a stunning fortress celebrated for its artistic Hindu-style elements, grand courtyards, and intricate architecture. Next, venture to Jantar Mantar, a UNESCO World Heritage Site featuring the world's largest stone sundial and an extraordinary collection of 18th-century astronomical instruments. Conclude your sightseeing at the majestic City Palace, an opulent royal residence that seamlessly blends Rajasthani and Mughal art through its exquisite courtyards, museums, and historic displays.

Spend your evening at leisure to unwind, or take the opportunity to immerse yourself in the local culture by shopping across Jaipur's famous bustling bazaars, globally renowned for their authentic handicrafts, vibrant textiles, traditional block prints, and fine gemstone jewellery.

|                                  |                           |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>OVERNIGHT</b><br>Jaipur hotel | <b>MEALS</b><br>Breakfast |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|

**DAY 5**

**Return to Delhi. Free time.**

Following breakfast, embark on your drive back to Delhi. Upon arrival in the capital, transfer directly to your hotel for check-in. The remainder of the day is free for you to relax at your leisure—whether you choose to unwind at the hotel, enjoy a restful evening, or step out for some last-minute shopping and exploration.

|                                 |                           |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>OVERNIGHT</b><br>Delhi hotel | <b>MEALS</b><br>Breakfast |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|

**DAY 6**

**Drive to Haridwar and explore the city. Evening Aarti Ceremony. Drive to Rishikesh**

After breakfast, depart early on a drive to Haridwar (approximately 240 km / 4 hours), one of India's most sacred pilgrimage cities where the holy River Ganges emerges from the Himalayas onto the northern plains. Upon arrival, immerse yourself in the city's rich spiritual heritage with visits to key sites including Kusha Ghat—a revered bathing embankment—the peaceful Shantikunj Ashram, and the intricate glass artwork of Pawan Dham. You will also visit the ancient Daksh Mahadev Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva, and ascend to the hilltop Chandi Devi Temple atop the Neel Parvat for sweeping views across the river valley.

As dusk falls, gather along the steps of Har Ki Pauri to witness the deeply moving Ganga Aarti ceremony. Experience the electric atmosphere as priests chant mantras, swirl large brass lamps ablaze with fire, and release floating leaf boats carrying flowers and oil lamps across the dark waters of the Ganges. Following this unforgettable ritual, take a short drive to Rishikesh (approximately 26 km / 45 mins), the global capital of yoga, where you will check into Hotel The Great Ganga and unwind for the evening.

The day ends with a 45 minute drive to Rishikesh where we'll spend the night.

|                                     |                           |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>OVERNIGHT</b><br>Rishikesh hotel | <b>MEALS</b><br>Breakfast |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|

**DAY 7**

**Exploring Spiritual Rishikesh**

After breakfast, embark on an immersive sightseeing tour of Rishikesh, the world-renowned center for yoga and spiritual seeking nestled along the foothills of the Himalayas. Begin by crossing the iconic Ram Jhula, a historic iron suspension bridge spanning the rushing emerald waters of the sacred Ganges, offering panoramic river views and

leading to bustling markets lined with spiritual bookstore cafés and traditional shops.

Continue to the iconic Beatles Ashram (Chaurasi Kutia), hidden quietly within the lush Rajaji Tiger Reserve. Here, wander among the stone meditation huts and vibrant psychedelic murals where the English rock band composed many of their famous tracks during their 1968 Transcendental Meditation retreat.

Afterward, visit the expansive Parmarth Niketan Ashram, one of the region's premier spiritual centers, celebrated for its peaceful gardens, intricate statues, and serene atmosphere along the riverbanks. Throughout the day, explore several of Rishikesh's ancient temples, taking in the unique blend of mountain air, devotional chanting, and timeless spiritual heritage that defines this tranquil Himalayan town.

OVERNIGHT

Rishikesh hotel

MEALS

Breakfast

DAY 8

Return to Delhi where the tour ends

Following breakfast, set out on a comfortable return drive to Delhi (approximately 5 hours), enjoying the changing countryside as you leave the serene foothills of the Himalayas behind and head back toward the capital. Upon arrival in Delhi, your memorable journey comes to an end with a direct transfer and drop-off at your chosen hotel or the international airport, leaving you with unforgettable memories of India's grand heritage and spiritual sanctuaries.

OVERNIGHT

N/A

MEALS

Breakfast

INCLUDED

- All accommodation in mid-range hotels
- All transport and transfers in AC vehicles
- 24-hour airport arrival transfer service
- Sightseeing tours and activities as per the itinerary
- Services of a local tour leader and specialist local guides
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary

EXCLUDED

- International flights (available on request)
- Visa fees
- Travel insurance (compulsory, [get a quote here](#))
- Departure Airport Transfer in Goa
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tipping Kitty (5000 INR - approx US\$ 55) (excludes guide)
- Entrance fees (7500 INR - approx US\$ 80)
- Any other items not mentioned above

Tour Options

Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting. However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements. Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements , full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

*No additional options available for this tour.*

## Important Notes

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### 1 Accommodation

We use good quality hotels rated at the Indian 3 and 4-star level on this tour as well as some carefully selected heritage properties. These heritage hotels are often converted from former palaces or merchant houses and are full of historical character, though they may feel a little dated. They are often a highlight of your stay.

The specific hotels listed on our website are our preferred hotels for our small-group tours. However, these may be changed from time to time based on current availability and other logistics. In this event alternative hotels of a similar standard will be used. If you would like to guarantee any particular hotels for your trip, please contact us to request a tailor-made tour.

Accommodation is based on twin or double en-suite rooms with air conditioning. All couples will receive a private double room.

Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour.

### 2 Transport

Our trips feature a mix of different transport options. We want you to feel like you're really experiencing the country you're travelling through, but at the same time finish journeys refreshed enough to enjoy the next stage of the tour. Due to the somewhat chaotic nature of Indian roads, we only use private vehicles for all road journeys on this tour. While we love travelling on Indian railways, the circular route of this tour means that adding a train journey (for example between Delhi and Jaipur) adds to the cost as the vehicle will be driving that route anyway. Many of our other India tours do include rail journeys.

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### **3 Transfers**

The tour price includes a 24-hour airport meet & assist service in New Delhi airport, your arrival airport-hotel transfers and all other transfers. On the final day of this tour, you have the option of being dropped off at Delhi Airport or at a central Delhi location.

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### **4 Group Size/Tour Leaders/Guides**

We are committed to being a small group operator, as we feel this gives everyone in the group the best chance to get to know their fellow travellers and to hear and make the most of their guide. There's no point in us providing great guides if you've got to peer over 30-40 shoulders to see them! So, we won't ever put you in a 50-seater coach with 49 other people and just one guide. Instead, we set our India small-group Express departures to have a maximum of 15 travellers. The minimum group size is 2.

In India we provide a fully trained, local English-speaking tour leader/driver to accompany our groups. On this tour they will accompany you throughout the whole loop from Delhi/Agra/Jaipur/Rishikesh/Delhi. On groups of 6 or more, a guide will accompany you for the duration of the tour, for groups of 2 to 5, you will have a driver and local guides in each city.

At Encounters Travel we have a policy of aiming to use only local Indian guides and reps. We feel this gives you the best experience of the country and the sites you are seeing.

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### **5 Entrance Fees**

The tour price does not include entrance fees to the tourist sites mentioned in the itinerary. This allows for fluctuations in the prices set by the local authorities, which do change from time to time.

Please refer to the tour exclusions where an approximate amount to budget is mentioned to cover these entrance fees (this includes one visit to the Taj Mahal). You will also need to cover the cost of entrance to any other extra sites that you may wish to visit that are not listed in the main tour itinerary. Your guide will offer to collect the entrance fee cost from everyone at the start of the tour and pay on your behalf, or you can arrange them yourself as you go along.

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### **6 Dates & Prices**

We run small-group departures on our Indian tours throughout the year, with less frequent start dates during the hot and wet monsoon months of May to September. All departures are guaranteed to run with a minimum of 2 travellers. Departure dates and prices are listed on our website (please check the website for up-to-date prices and special offers).

Private and tailor-made tours are available on any dates and may be adjusted to fit your personal requirements, available time and budget.

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## 7 Express Tours

Designed to highlight the best of India in a shorter timeframe, our Express Tours deliver unforgettable experiences without compromising on quality. You'll stay in comfortable 3- to 4-star hotels (detailed in the accommodation section for each tour). By partnering with trusted local operators on select departures, we are able to offer these immersive itineraries at an exceptional value.

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## 8 Health and Vaccinations

You should ensure you are fully insured for medical emergencies including emergency evacuation and repatriation.

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to the country you are visiting and where you are travelling from. We recommend you contact your GP/medical practitioner or a travel clinic for current information on vaccinations needed for your destination. You should ensure that you are up to date with vaccines and boosters recommended for your normal life at home, including for example, vaccines required for occupational risk of exposure, lifestyle risks and underlying medical conditions. In addition, additional courses or boosters normally recommended for the countries in this region are:

**India:** Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. **Malaria map.** Yellow Fever certificate: Yellow fever rules for India are quite complicated and lengthy. Please read the **WHO guidance**.

**Malaria:** Vaccinations are not available against Malaria, which is a disease transmitted by mosquitoes that can be very serious and sometimes fatal. You should avoid mosquito bites by covering up bare skin with clothing such as long sleeves and long trousers and applying insect repellents to exposed skin. When necessary, sleep under a mosquito net. Mosquitoes are most active during and after sunset. You should consult with your GP/medical practitioner/travel clinic about the most appropriate malaria prophylactic medication to take for the regions you are visiting. In general the north eastern regions of India including Assam and Orissa are considered high risk, while the rest of India is generally considered low enough risk that anti-malarial tablets are not necessary for most travellers doing relatively short tours.

**Yellow Fever:** This disease is spread by infected mosquitoes that bite during the day. A Yellow Fever Certificate of vaccination may be required as a condition of entry depending on which country you are arriving from, or that you have travelled or transitted through recently (including connecting flights with stopovers of over 12 hours). You can view this **US CDC information** about where the virus is present and follow the links to further information detailing which countries need you to have a Yellow Fever vaccination as part of their entry requirements. Please ensure you have this certificate with you and to hand if necessary.

Please inform us of any pre-existing conditions such as diabetes or asthma and any prescription medicine you may be taking. We also need to know about any food allergies or physical disabilities that you may have.

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## 9 What to take

**Luggage:** Suitcases are fine, though you may find rucksacks or large bags are more practical. You should also bring a small daypack/bag to take out during the day. Your main luggage will be left in the hotel during your sightseeing trips - you will not need to carry it far, and there are nearly always porters to assist.

**Luggage allowances:** Most international airlines restrict you to between 20kg and 23kg per person of luggage to go in the hold of the plane. Domestic flights often have smaller allowances around 15kg. As airline rules vary we recommend that you take no more than 20kg of luggage if your tour just includes international flights, and no more than 15kg if there are any domestic flights included in your itinerary. Please ask us for details if you are unsure about luggage allowances on your tour. Any excess baggage fees will be your responsibility to cover. Most airlines allow between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage so we suggest that you take no more than 5kg unless you have confirmed that your airline(s) will allow more than this.

**Clothing:** The weather is mainly hot most of the year with significant variations from region to region. The coolest weather lasts from around the end of November to the beginning of March, with fresh mornings and evenings, and mostly sunny days. The really hot weather, when it is dry, dusty and unpleasant, is between March and June. Monsoon rains occur in most regions in summer anywhere between June and early October.

**NOTE:** India is very traditional and some heads will turn if you dress provocatively in public. Short tops, short skirts / shorts, tight or body revealing clothes etc should be avoided. You might invite unwanted attention from certain men who stare and pass comments at women to amuse themselves. More detailed climate information is available on the India Country Guide page on our website.

**Suggested List:** This is a guide only - there's no problem if you bring more or less with you. Cheap comfortable clothing is also readily available in India and laundry is inexpensive. It is also worth having some smarter clothes for going out. Towels are provided and laundry services are available in all the hotels we use.

Men: Lightweight trousers, shorts, light shirts & t-shirts, Swimwear

Women: Light cotton skirts/dressers, loose-fitting trousers, light shirts or t-shirts, loose shorts, Swimwear

Men & Women: Jumper/sweatshirt/fleece, Long sleeved shirt(s) (for cool nights, protection from the sun & mosquitoes, and visits to religious sites etc), Handkerchiefs, socks & underwear, Comfortable trainers/sandals for daily wear, Other shoes/sandals for evening wear, Sunhat or headscarf (headscarfs come in handy for some sights which require women to cover their head)

First Aid: Although First Aid and medication is readily available in India, it may be very different to what you are used to so individuals should consider bringing along their own personal kit. Your personal kit might include: Sunscreen, sunblock & aftersun, Insect repellent/relief, Antiseptic cream/spray, Plasters and a bandage, Lomotil or Imodium against diarrhea, Pills against nausea, Aspirin for heat-stroke (or hangovers) Your kit should also include your brief medical history, including allergies, blood group, drug vaccinations etc. We suggest bringing copies of prescriptions if you will be carrying medicines on board your flight.

**Toiletries:** Razor, soap & box, shampoo, Toothpaste, toothbrush & container, Sanitary items

**Note:** If you wear contact lenses, you should consider taking or wearing glasses instead, as lenses can be uncomfortable and/or cause infections in hot and humid climates.

**Other useful items:** Sunglasses, Small Torch, Money belt, Camera and equipment, Toilet paper (this is not always

provided in public toilets so it is a good idea to carry some spare tissues in your bag. It should be placed in the basket beside the toilet, not flushed away, for you might block the pipes).

**IMPORTANT:** As it can get extremely hot in India, and the sun can burn very quickly, it is very important to ensure you are protected from the sun with sun-cream & sun-hats, and do not get dehydrated.

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## 10 Money

Rupee (INR; symbol Rs) = 100 paise. Notes are in denominations of Rs 2,000, 1000, 500, 200, 50, 20, 10 and 1. Coins are in denominations of Rs 10, 5, 2 and 1, and 50 paise (Rs 0.5). Note: The import and export of local currency is prohibited. Sometimes smaller vendors will not take bills larger than Rs 500. It is best to carry a range of rupee notes if you are shopping at bazaars and local markets.

Note: You must present your passport whenever you change currency or travellers cheques. Commission for foreign exchange is becoming increasingly rare; if it is charged, the fee is nominal.

Credit cards: In major cities, the full cadre of banks cards are generally accepted including debit cards, American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa. However, in smaller towns and villages, choice is generally narrowed to cash or MasterCard and Visa.

ATM: 24 hour ATM machines can be found in all the major cities and most large towns. Visa, MasterCard, Cirrus, Maestro and Plus are amongst the most commonly accepted cards.

Travellers cheques: These are gradually getting less accepted but may still be changed at larger banks and some larger hotels. The most widely accepted currencies include US Dollars and Pounds Sterling. Some banks may refuse to change certain brands of traveller's cheques whilst others may exchange quite happily.

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## 11 Booking & Payment

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website (via the Dates & Prices tab on the tour page). You may make a deposit or full payment online, or just hold a reservation if you prefer (full payments are due 8 weeks before departure). We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking. Payments may be made by debit or credit card (subject to a card processing fee), or by making a bank transfer, or posting us a cheque/bank draft. Full details will be provided in your booking confirmation email. Please [contact us](#) if you would like any more information or have any questions before making a booking.

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## 12 Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and are committed to providing our customers with financial protection to provide peace of mind and to allow you to book with confidence.

We have therefore partnered with Trust My Travel Ltd., which provides financial protection services to over 2000 partners around the world. Funds paid to us by our customers are protected via an Insurance policy held by Trust My Travel. Each traveller and the description of services sold is declared against Trust My Travel's insurance policy directly against our financial failure. In the event of our insolvency, you will be refunded for any unfulfilled products

and/or repatriation to the UK (where applicable). Please see [our website](#) or [booking conditions](#) for more information.

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## **13 Responsible Tourism**

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However, it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.

The following are a few simple tips that require very little effort on your part but which will help ensure that any effect you have on the locations you visit is positive rather than negative.

- Don't prejudge: Things in different countries will almost certainly be different. That doesn't make them worse or inferior, just different.
- Communicate: Don't expect locals to speak your language. Take the trouble to learn a few words or phrases of the local language. Don't worry about sounding silly. Most locals are patient and accommodating and appreciate you making the effort to communicate in their language.
- Conserve energy: Be careful not to waste valuable resources. Use local resources sparingly. Switch off lights, air-conditioning and fans when you leave the hotel room and don't waste water. Remove superfluous packaging. Many countries have far less efficient waste disposal systems than ours. Remove packaging from newly acquired items before leaving home.
- Don't litter: No matter how untidy or dirty the country you're travelling in may look to you, avoid littering, as there is no need to add to the environment's stress. Many of the countries we visit have a tough challenge dealing with rubbish and waste. Please consider taking home as much plastic waste as you can (e.g. water bottles).
- Choose environmentally friendly products: By using environmentally friendly (bio degradable) sun creams, shampoos and detergents you can help reduce pollution.
- Respect local customs and traditions: As you are a guest in these countries, you should also comply with the local customs. If you are friendly and well mannered, the locals will reciprocate and it will only enhance your experience. It's important to follow dress and behaviour guidelines especially when visiting religious or sacred sites (your tour leader will advise you how best to do this).
- If a client commits an illegal act the client may be excluded from the tour and Encounters Travel shall cease to have responsibility to/for them. No refund will be given for any unused services.

All porters are employed and equipped following guidelines set by the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG).

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## **14 Follow Us Online**

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and information.

[www.facebook.com/encounterstravel](http://www.facebook.com/encounterstravel)

<https://x.com/encounterstravl> (yes, without the 'e')

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## 15 Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all of our tours and needs to cover personal accident & liability, medical expenses and repatriation, travel delay & abandonment. We also strongly recommend that you take out cover against cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Personal medical insurance does not normally provide sufficient cover and is generally not suitable for travel on our tours. You will not be able to join your tour if you have not provided us with details of your insurance or if you arrive without cover in place (no refunds will be due in this event).

Considering travel insurance for your trip? [World Nomads Travel Insurance](#) offers coverage for more than 150 adventure activities as well as emergency medical, lost luggage, trip cancellation and more.

If your tour includes car hire, or if you plan to arrange a hot air balloon flight locally or do some scuba diving during your tour, you should check the small print in your policy to make sure these are covered (these are covered in our policy). Please also check the maximum altitude that you will be reaching and that full cover including emergency evacuation is provided up to this altitude.

If you are taking expensive camera gear or other electronic equipment with you then please check the coverage and the fine print of your policy to ensure that you have sufficient cover.

*IMPORTANT: We must have your travel insurance details (policy number and type of insurance) before you depart or you may not be allowed to join the tour. If you haven't told us already, please let us know the details when you can. You should take a paper copy of your insurance policy with you as you may be asked to show this at the start of the tour.*

### Covid-19

**Before purchasing any travel insurance, please check the coverage provided for situations related to Covid-19, and for the rules about government travel advice. Your normal policy may not be suitable.**

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## 16 Before you travel

It is important when considering and preparing to travel anywhere in the world that you have a good understanding of the country you are visiting, its laws and customs, and the possible risks and situations that may occur. This includes specific risks related to your itinerary (eg. does it involve water & can you swim, are you fit enough for the activities included), as well as more general risks such as terrorism and natural disasters.

General details and links to more information about health risks, visa requirements, money, and travel insurance are given in these tour notes. We recommend that you re-read all these before your departure as well as the small print of your travel insurance policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not.

You should take copies of your important travel documents with you and ideally also store them online securely as a backup. Make sure that you have given us your emergency contact details and told that person where and when you are travelling. Ensure you take enough money with you and that you have access to emergency funds.

Finally, you should read through and stay updated with the current [official government travel advice](#) for your destination. We are registered partners with the UK Foreign Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign which provides further useful and invaluable information.

## 17 Reduce Plastic Waste with Water-to-Go Filter bottles

Traveling responsibly means minimizing plastic waste, but staying hydrated on the go is essential. At Encounters Travel we are committed to reducing single-use plastics, which is why we've partnered with Water-to-Go. Their portable filtration system removes over 99.9% of contaminants from any non-saltwater source, turning even questionable water sources into safe drinking water.

Given that tap water is un-safe to drink in many of the countries in which we operate, we recommend purchasing a Water-to-Go bottle prior to departure. This will help you avoid the use of single use plastic bottles and keep you hydrated on the go.

Save big! Get a huge 25% off your Water-to-Go bottle and other Water-to-Go products (such as filters, lids, and carriers). Use code **ENCOUNTERS25** at checkout (valid in the UK, USA and Canada).

### How Water-to-Go Technology works:

- Their reusable, BPA free water bottles contain their own unique 3-in-1 filtration technology effectively providing clean safe drinking water from any non-salt water source around the world.
- Three different (1 traditional and 2 nano) technologies are combined in one filter cartridge to remove up to 99.9999% of microbiological contaminants in water.

### The three technologies used in a Water-to-Go filter are:

- Mechanical filtration – A tiny pore size, so small contaminants can't fit through.
- Electrical – A positive charge reduces the pore size even further and attracts contaminants like a magnet, trapping them inside the filter.
- Activated Carbon – Unlike most carbon based filters, instead of using adhesives to glue the carbon particles together, (which vastly reduces the carbon's efficiency) it is contained within the membrane, helping to reduce contaminants whilst eliminating bad tastes and odours. Try filtering water from your tap at home and taste the difference!

### Water-to-Go filter bottles deliver safe, healthy water worldwide

- Water-to-Go filters remove bacteria, viruses, waterborne disease, protozoa, heavy metals such as lead as well as harmful chemicals.
- Their filters remove Chlorine and Fluoride from tap water.
- The filter will eliminate harmful contaminants from the water but allow beneficial minerals such as sodium and magnesium to pass through leaving you with the healthiest water possible.
- Water-to-Go filters have been independently tested against internationally recognised standards by industry specialists including The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (UK), BCS Laboratories (USA), Bangalore Test House (India) and IMI (China).

## Use Water-to-Go products and you'll be healthier, wealthier and helping to make the world a better place!

- Depending on filter size, each Water-to-Go filter is able to replace 260 or 400 single-use plastic water bottles!
- They ensure you have access to safe water anywhere in the world without ever having to buy environmentally damaging bottled water.
- Their water bottles deliver safe, clean drinking water at just 5p per litre.
- The filter membrane is biodegradable and the shrouds are recyclable.
- The water bottles are used and approved by everyone from backpackers to commuters, gym users to expecting mums. Perfect for everyday, outdoor and travel.

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### 18 Private & Tailor-made Tours

While our group departures offer a fantastic way to explore with like-minded travellers, we understand that some guests prefer a more exclusive experience. Most of our group tours can be booked on a private basis, allowing you to enjoy the same expert-led routes with your own dedicated party. The primary advantage of choosing a private arrangement is the flexibility it provides; we can easily customise the itinerary to include your preferred style of accommodation or adjust the pace to suit your needs. Private tours can be run on the same start days as our group tours, or on other dates. However, some activities within our trips are restricted to particular days of the week - we will advise you on anything like this that we need to work around. Pricing will be based on the number of travellers in your party, and any customisations you may like to make.

For those seeking something truly unique, our specialist sales team is available to collaborate with you on a completely tailor-made tour, designed from the ground up to match your specific interests, accommodation level and requirements.

To request a quotation for a private or tailor-made tour, please [contact us](#).

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### 19 International Flights

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don't include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we'll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included on the first and last days of the tour. Most of our Indian tours start and finish at Delhi airport (DEL).

We do also sometimes advertise flight inclusive packages from selected airports. Where these are shown on our website, prices are correct at the time of quoting, but are subject to continued availability of the fare used. Prices will be reconfirmed at the time of booking, and we will also provide the flight times and airline details before tickets are issued.

Flight inclusive prices are based on the cheapest Economy ticket class available which is generally non-refundable and non-changeable unless the flight is cancelled for reasons such as Covid-19, in which case the airlines are more

flexible. More flexible ticket options, as well as Premium Economy and Business Class tickets are available on request for an additional supplement. Any changes made to flight inclusive bookings will be subject to the airline rules on your ticket.

### **Flight CO2 Emissions:**

Traveling by air is an amazing way to explore the world, but flights also contribute to carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions that impact the environment. By considering the airline's CO2 emissions when you choose your flight, you can help minimize your travel footprint.

When selecting your international flights and airline, we do therefore recommend that you try and also take into account the flight CO2 emissions. Some airlines and flight search websites (eg. Google Flights, Skyscanner) do publish this information, so you can compare between your flight options and make an informed decision.

Thankfully, many airlines are working towards sustainability efforts, and choosing a greener option allows you to contribute to positive change while still enjoying your incredible adventure.

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## **20 Tipping - India**

Haggling is a traditional necessity, so it's wise not to pay too much regard to initial prices. Instead fix an item's value in your mind then negotiate towards it unhurriedly and don't be afraid to simply walk away if the price isn't right. Once you have offered a price though, you should be prepared to pay it as you may cause offence if you then back out.

While an accepted part of the culture and customs in India, tipping is always optional, and the amounts paid should reflect excellent service. We are often asked for advice on common amounts, and for assistance with tipping. Some suggested guidelines are given below.

**Restaurants and taxis:** Local markets and basic restaurants - leave the loose change. More up-market restaurants we suggest 5% to 10% of your bill.

**Local guides:** Throughout your trip you may at times have a local guide in addition to your tour guide. We suggest USD 5-10 per person per day for local guides.

**Drivers:** You may have a range of private 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, for example if you don't have an extra accompanying guide. However USD 3-6 per person per day is generally appropriate.

**Tour Guides:** To answer your next question. . . as a guideline for tour guides who accompany you on the entire tour, we suggest you allow around USD 5-10 per person per day, but ultimately, as with all the tipping described above, it's up to your satisfaction with their service and your personal budget. You should not feel pressured to tip any particular amount.

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## **21 Passports and Visas - India**

Your passport expiry date must be at least 6 months after your time in India finishes. Do not bring a full or almost expired passport. You must also have a machine-readable passport or you may be denied entry. If you have an old-

style manually issued passport you will need to replace this with a new machine-readable passport before you travel.

Most nationalities (including UK, USA, European, Australian, Canadian) will need to arrange their Indian tourist visa in advance. A new online e-visa system is available which makes the process more straightforward than before. You can make your application online at [indiavisaonline](https://indiavisaonline.gov.in).

Visa requirements for India can and do change regularly and we suggest that you arrange your Indian visa early and re-check your specific visa requirements prior to travel for any changes.

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## 22 Voltage

In Nepal, India and Sri Lanka, sockets are mainly two round pronged and 230 volts (Type C,D,M). In Bhutan a range of different sockets can be found, including two and three round pronged and three flat pronged (Type D,F,G).

Universal adaptors are available in most airport shops if you don't have one already. Standard UK-European adaptors will work fine, though sometimes they may feel a little loose in the sockets. All hotel rooms have electrical sockets where you can re-charge cameras, phones etc. Hair dryers are sometimes available on request from the hotel reception if not in your room already but cannot be guaranteed.

If you have US appliances (110 volts) you will need a voltage converter as well as a plug adapter.

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## 23 Time

The time in India and Sri Lanka is GMT plus 5 1/2 hours.

The time in Nepal is GMT plus 5 3/4 hours.

The time in Bhutan is GMT plus 6 hours.

The time in Tibet is GMT plus 8 hours.

Daylight saving adjustments are not applied.