

NORTHERN INDIA

March 17 – 29, 2019

13 Days / 12 nights

\$2945

Single supplement \$655



Day 1, March 17 ARRIVE DELHI

Upon arrival in Delhi, a driver will meet and assist you at the airport and then transfer you to your hotel. The rest of the day free at leisure until meeting for our intro dinner.

O/N Ashok Country Resort (Dinner)

Day 2, March 18 MORNING BIRDING TOUR IN SULTANPUR BIRD SANCTUARY, DRIVE TO BHARATPUR

After an early breakfast, we will drive about 50 km to Sultanpur for a morning of birding. Sultanpur National Park is a bird paradise for bird watchers, famous for both migratory and resident birds. Migratory species reach here after covering incredible distances from Europe, Siberia and Central Asia. Migratory birds start arriving in the park in September and use the park as a resting place until the following March-April. A total of around 250 bird species have been reported in the park. We will proceed to Bharatpur after lunch in order to stage for the next morning's birding, arriving in time for dinner. (210 km, 4 hrs)

O/N Hotel Sunbird (BLD)

Day 3, March 19 BHARATPUR

Having arrived the night before, we will have a full day to spend at Keoladeo National Park or Keoladeo Ghana National Park, formerly known as the Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, in Rajasthan. This park, declared a protected sanctuary in 1971, is a famous avifauna sanctuary and World Heritage Site where thousands of rare and highly endangered birds such as the Siberian Crane come during the winter season. Over 230 species of birds are known to have made the National Park their home. It is also a major tourist center with scores of ornithologists arriving here in the hibernal season.

O/N Hotel Sunbird (BLD)

Day 4, March 20 BHARATPUR

We will enjoy a second full day birding in Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary.

O/N Hotel Sunbird (BLD)**Day 5, March 21 BHARATPUR – CHAMBAL (125 KMS/03 HRS)**

We will enjoy a last morning of birding at Bharatpur, emphasizing species we might have missed at this point. After lunch, we will drive to Chambal (125 km, 3 hours) where we will check in to the hotel upon arrival. Once we are settled into our rooms, we will enjoy a bit of birding on the grounds before enjoying dinner at the hotel.

O/N Chambal Wildlife Safari Lodge (BLD)**Day 6, March 22 CHAMBAL**

This morning we will enjoy a Jeep Safari of the Sarus Trail. The Sarus Crane Conservation Reserve starts around 30 km from the Chambal Safari Lodge, extending to about 100 km. It is a widespread wetland area, interspersed by cultivated fields, where large numbers of Sarus Cranes breed. Although not a protected area, since 1999 the Supreme Court of India, recognizing its importance as a habitat, has designated the area a reserve with restrictions on development. Several species of wetland birds and raptors are also found along the course of this safari.



In the afternoon we will take a different type of Safari, using boats to explore the Chambal River. Set against a stunning backdrop, framed by the ravines and sandbanks, the calm waters of the Chambal River are best explored on boats. The gentle pace of the River Safari is designed to provide spectacular sightings of the gharials, muggers & turtles basking in the sun, the many migratory and resident birds flying sorties, and with some luck we might enjoy glimpses of the Gangetic river dolphins breaking surface.

O/N Chambal Wildlife Safari Lodge (BLD)**Day 7, March 23 CHAMBAL**

This morning we will take a second open-jeep safari, this time to The Blackbuck. The Blackbuck jeep safari heads southwest towards the countryside between the Chambal and Yamuna ravines, where we can expect excellent sightings of Blackbuck deer and numerous dry land birds including the Indian Courser. It is also a fascinating journey through remote hamlets and habitations, a world that is strangely as connected as it appears removed from modern India. In the afternoon, we will drive to Agra to stage for our tour of the Taj Mahal.

O/N Hotel Atulyaa Taj (BLD)**Day 8, March 24 AGRA – RANTHAMBORE (270 KMS/06 HRS)**

We will take advantage of smaller crowds by timing our visit to the Taj Mahal early in the morning, before breakfast, which is also the perfect time to take some stunning photos in the early morning light. We will return to our hotel for breakfast and then pack up for the drive to Ranthambore National Park, one of the largest national parks in northern India. Surrounded by the Vindhyas and Aravalis Hill Ranges, it is situated 14 kilometers from Sawai Madhopur district and about 180 kilometers from Jaipur of southeastern Rajasthan in India. Ranthambore is considered one of the best places to view the powerful and majestic predator, the Indian Tiger, in the wild. The Ranthambore Tiger Reserve spreads over approximately 1410.64 sq. km. including both the core and buffer areas. Upon arrival, we will check in at our hotel and then enjoy dinner at the hotel.

O/N Ranthambore Regency (BLD)

Day 9, March 25 RANTHAMBORE

Today we will enjoy two jeep safaris, one in the morning and another in the afternoon, increasing our chances for some great sightings of tigers and other wildlife.

O/N Rathambore Regency (BLD)

Day 10, March RANTHAMBORE

We will have another morning in jeeps to maximize our chances of exceptional tiger sightings. In the afternoon, we will bird nearby Surwal Lake.

O/N Rathambore Regency (BLD)

Day 11, March 27 RANTHAMBORE

We will enjoy one more day at Rathambore. Our activity for the day will depend on how successful our tiger sightings have been, and could include another jeep safari, either morning or afternoon, and we will make an effort to “sweep up” any bird species we might have missed in the area.

O/N Ashok Country Resort (BLD)

Day 12, March 28 TRAIN TO DELHI

Early this morning, we will transfer to Sawai Madhopur Railway Station to board our day train to Delhi at 7:05 AM. When we arrive in Delhi at 12:30 PM, we will be met by a driver who will transfer us to our hotel, where we will have lunch and a relaxing afternoon. We will enjoy a farewell dinner at the Ashok Country Resort.

O/N Ashok Country Resort (BLD)

Day 13, March 29 DEPART DELHI

Final departure transfer to airport to board your flight for onward journey.

Price Includes:

- Accommodation on full board basis
- Bottled water throughout the tour
- Meeting and assistance
- Arrival/departure transfers
- Sightseeing tour of Taj Mahal in Agra with local English speaking guide and entrance fee
- Private AC min Coach with driver throughout
- Three (possibly 4) private Jeep Safaris in Ranthambore
- Two Jeep safaris and River safari in Chambal.
- Train fare for Sawaimadhapur (Ranthambore) / Delhi.
- Services of bilingual birding guide, March 18 - 28
- All applicable taxes
- Services of 2 **Cheepers!** Tour leaders (Jim and Cindy Beckman)
- Pre-trip gift package including customized checklist
- Post-trip electronic final checklist and photo collection

Price Excludes:

- International airfare to Delhi
- Travel and medical insurance (highly recommended)
- Personal expenses such as tips, laundry, telephone, beverages other than water, camera fees, etc.
- Gratuities



Train No. & Schedule:

Sawaimadhopur / Delhi : 12059 NZM JAN SHATABDI : 0705 HRS/1230 HRS

HOTEL USED

DELHI	ASHOK COUNTRY RESORT
BHARATPUR	HOTEL SUNBIRD
CHAMBAL	CHAMBAL WILDLIFE SAFARI LODGE
AGRA	HOTEL ATULYAA TAJ
RANTHAMBORE	RANTHAMBOR REGENCY