



# Honeyguide

**WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS**

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## TIGERS, BIRDS & THE TAJ MAHAL

14 - 27 January 2015



### **Introduction**

This is a safari through the heartland of wild India, involving some indulgence & excitement. The focus of the holiday will be to observe the majestic tiger, other mammals and a good selection of birds in some of the best wild habitats of India. This is combined with a chance to see part of India, including the famous Taj Mahal. The holiday is paced reasonably leisurely, offering the traveller time to relax and enjoy the sightings without rushing through it, while at the same time not wasting too much time at the same places. The food is excellent with light lunches and elaborate dinners in Delhi and a slightly simpler fare in the sanctuaries. The colours of the Indian roads, the birds and mammals and the people make this a wonderful tour to experience.



## DETAILED ITINERARY WITH PROPOSED DATES

**Day 1            14<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2015, WEDNESDAY            NEW DELHI**

On arrival you will be driven to your hotel – Shanti Home (30 minutes drive). After checking in at – enjoy some rest. This afternoon you will be taken for a short tour of New Delhi. New Delhi is a confluence of cosmopolitan urban and traditional India. The monuments – mostly from the 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> century are an eclectic mix of old and new – the Indo-Islamic & Rajput architecture blends in with art-deco and European influences. New Delhi is a busy, fast-paced modern city that has slow, almost ancient little nooks warped in time and steeped in history. The tour will allow you to see a bit of this part of New Delhi.

**OVERNIGHT – SHANTI HOME; PREMIER ROOM, ALL MEALS INCLUDED.**

Website – [www.shantihome.com](http://www.shantihome.com)





**DAY 6            19<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2015, MONDAY            BHARATPUR**

Early this morning you will be driven to the sanctuary and on reaching you will be birding inside the sanctuary on foot and by rickshaw. Packed breakfast will be delivered to you inside the sanctuary, after the breakfast birding will be resumed till lunch – enjoy a hot sit down lunch inside the sanctuary (at a small restaurant) and then resume birding till late afternoon. Post birding you will be driven back to the lodge. Dinner will be at the lodge.

**OVERNIGHT – LAXMIVILAS HOTEL – SUITE ROOM; ALL MEALS INCLUDED.**

**DAY 7                            20<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2015, TUESDAY                            TO RANTHAMBHOR**

After an early breakfast you will be driven to Ranthambhor (7 hours drive). On arrival – you will have a quick lunch and then hop into the safari vehicle for your first safari to the core area of the national park – looking for tiger, leopard, sloth bear etc. and other birds. After safari you will be driven back to the lodge for an early dinner.

**OVERNIGHT – THE PUGMARK HOTEL – SUITE ROOM; ALL MEALS INCLUDED.**

Website – [www.thepugmarkresort.com](http://www.thepugmarkresort.com)





**DAY 8            21<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2015, WEDNESDAY            RANTHAMBHOR**

Morning and afternoon – enjoy safaris to the national park. Your leader will be advising you about the daily routine. Meals will be at the lodge. One day will be birdwatching in peripheral areas which are rich with species like Painted and Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, Great Thick-knee, Red-headed, Black-headed and House Bunting, several species of larks and pipits, a few species of waders and waterfowl, some raptors and also some mammals like the Caracal, Striped Hyena and Jungle Cat.

**OVERNIGHT – THE PUGMARK; STANDARD ROOM, ALL MEALS INCLUDED.**

**DAYS 9/11            TILL 24<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2015, SATURDAY            RANTHAMBHOR**

Enjoy morning and afternoon safaris to the national park – safaris will be in open 4 wheel petrol driven trucks with private guide. The park manages tourism judiciously with pre-allocated routes that one needs to follow. Though it can be frustrating at times, but overall it works well for everyone. You will be taken through this with a private guide and your tour leader.

**OVERNIGHT – OVERNIGHT – THE PUGMARK; STANDARD ROOM; ALL MEALS INCLUDED.**

**DAY 12            25<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2015, SUNDAY            RANTHAMBHOR/DELHI**

Enjoy a morning safari to the park. After a brunch at the lodge – you will be driven to the station to board the Golden Temple Mail (1230/1705 hours; air conditioned sleeper). On arrival at Delhi – you will be driven to the hotel for some rest and relaxation.

**OVERNIGHT – RADISSON BLU MARINA; SUPERIOR ROOM, ALL MEALS INCLUDED.**

**DAY 13                    26<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2015, MONDAY    NEW DELHI**

After an early breakfast you will walk to the Janpath (2 kms walk) to attend the Republic day parade – which is a very colourful and spectacular event. This is attended by national and international dignitaries – so one needs to be present there in advance and get the best seats to see and photograph the various events. After this walk back to the hotel for lunch. Today afternoon – you can consider enjoying a birdwalk in the nearby Okhla Bird Sanctuary (30 minutes drive from the hotel). After the bird-walk you will be driven to a family home for dinner. Learn about Indian cuisine with the family before you settle down for the dinner.

**OVERNIGHT – RADISSON BLU MARINA; SUPERIOR ROOM, ALL MEALS INCLUDED.**

**DAY 14                    27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2015                    , TUESDAY    NEW DELHI/OUTBOUND**

After breakfast, driven to the airport to connect to your flight back home.

**Check out time – 1000 hours.**

**Price: to be decided, but likely to be in the region of £3300 per person in a twin room  
Single supplement £500**

**INCLUDES –**

- ✂ International air fare (e.g. BA Heathrow to Delhi)
- ✂ Accommodation for 13 nights on full board basis.
- ✂ All meals over 13 nights.
- ✂ Transportation as mentioned below in air-conditioned vans.
- ✂ Escort from India – leading the tour.
- ✂ International escort from Honeyguide Wildlife Holidays
- ✂ Entrances to national parks.
- ✂ 8 Exclusive safaris in Ranthambhor in open mini trucks.
- ✂ Birding guide at Bharatpur.
- ✂ Train fare in air-conditioned coach from Sawai Man Singh (Ranthambhor) till New Delhi.

**EXCLUDES –**

- ✂ Personal expenses, laundry, bar expenses.
- ✂ Additional meals if any – like small snacks etc while on tour.
- ✂ Gratuities– see guidance on page 12
- ✂ Camera charges in case applicable.

A FEW PHOTOGRAPHS FROM A PREVIOUS HOLIDAY



## **TRANSPORT INFORMATION**

### **For 8–12 Passengers –**



### **Volkswagen Crafter – Diesel**

The Volkswagen Crafter, introduced in 2006, is the largest 3 to 5 tonne minivan with spacious layout and comfortable seats. The drive is smooth and it handles bends and the bumpy Indian roads very well. The large windows and the low seating makes it an ideal van for wildlife and bird lovers.

### **For 4 – 7 Passengers –**



### **Tempo Traveller – Mini Van - Diesel**

Manufactured by Indian company, Bajaj, this spacious minivan is a good option for small groups of 3-6 passengers. It is a durable vehicle that has good height and leg room.

## **GENERAL INDIA TRAVEL INFORMATION**

### **Visa Formalities**

For visiting India, all foreigners are required to acquire their visa in their home country. No visa is granted upon arrival in India.

### **Passport**

You must be in possession of a valid passport, which will not expire for at least six months after your journey is due to end. It should have to clear pages for entry and exit stamps as well as your visa. A wise precaution is to carry a photocopy of your passport kept separately, extremely useful in the event of loss or theft.

### **Insurance**

While travelling in India it is important that you obtain good personal travel insurance from an insurance agent in your country. A suitable policy will include an unlimited amount for medical, hospital and additional health associated costs. Most policies cover loss of baggage, personal money (usually limited) delay and curtailment. Do make sure your policy covers you for unexpected cancellation of your trip in this unlikely event you will then be covered for financial cost.

You should carry your insurance policy with you at all time, preferably in your relevant details in a separate place, with your passport photocopy.

### **Foreign Exchange**

Visiting foreigners can exchange money at international airports where 24-hour exchange facilities are available, through banks and approved moneychangers. Or, one may change money at the big city hotels.

One can also change money at national or international banks such as Standard Chartered, Citibank, Bank of America, Hong Kong Bank and others in the major metro cities. Most of these have 24-hour ATMs. American Express and Thomas Cook offices may be found in major metros and tourist cities.

Bank timings are usually from 1000 hrs to 1700 hrs on weekdays and 1000hrs to 1400 hrs on Saturdays. Please remember that not all banks will exchange foreign currency or travellers cheques particularly in small towns.

Exchange money only through authorized banks or Money Changers. Insist on a receipt/encashment certificate when changing money. Retain all receipts to facilitate re-conversion of unspent money on departure from India. The current exchange rate of the American Dollar to the Indian Rupee is 1 US \$=Rs 50/-.

### **Travellers Cheques/Credit Cards**

Travellers' Cheques should be of well-known brands like Thomas Cook, American Express and Visa. Large establishments generally accept Major Credit Cards like American Express, Master Cards, Diners Club, Visa, etc, including hotels, shops and airlines.

**ATMs** are available at various locations in Bangalore, Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Hyderabad and Madras, and some of the smaller metros along popular travel circuits, and user cards must be compatible with Amex, Cirrus, Maestro, MasterCard, Visa/Visa Electron/Visa Plus

### **Payments**

All foreign nationals must pay their hotel bills in foreign currency (cash, traveller's cheques or even by credit cards). This can be paid in Rupees if the visitor has a receipt to show as a proof of currency exchange.

### **Dress**

Most of the hotels are smart but not hugely formal and the smart casual label is the best description for suggested dress code. Do carry a warm coat/jersey for early morning starts and especially for any train journeys, as the onboard air-conditioning can be very severe. Places of religious worship should be respected by covering shoulders and above the knee – it is therefore advised that on any days of sightseeing or exploration that you follow this guide line to be on the safe side. It is strongly advised that you carry a hat for sightseeing and exploring to keep off the mid-day sun.

### **Dress Code for National Parks**

Please wear appropriate colours when in any National Park or Tiger Reserves – these should be muted earthy colours. You may also like to carry a sun hat and sunglasses with you. Please note from mid November until end JANUARY, the early morning and evening games drives can be cold – this is attributed largely to the wind factor of the ‘open air’ jeep. We highly recommend you to carry fleeces, jackets, hats, gloves and scarves. By about 8/9am, the sun is out and you will begin ‘de-layering’ and be comfortable in a t-shirt for the majority of the midday.

### **Currency**

India’s currency is 'Rupee', abbreviated as 'Rs'. One Rupee is equal to 100 paise. Coins are in various small denominations of 10, 25, 50 Paise (these are rarely in circulation these days) & 1, 2, & 5, Rupees. Notes (Bills) are in denominations of 10, 20, 50, 100, 500 & 1000 Rupees.

### **Shopping**

India can be described as a shopper's paradise with products such as hand-woven rugs, inlaid marble, semi-precious stone jewellery, silk fabrics, brassware, etc. India's diversity is expressed through the creation of master craftspeople. Each state has a unique handicraft to proudly reflect the inherited and improved skills to near perfection. Souvenir shops and art & craft emporiums are to be found everywhere. Consult your guidebook or the local guides and people. Usually the "pavement markets" do not guarantee the products and they do not accept credit / debit cards. Genuine products can only be guaranteed at a government showroom or branded showroom. Shopping can be one of the ways to interact with a local. For people who like to bargain, shopping is a true pleasure. For others, fixed priced stores are a relief.

Whatever transaction you prefer, we hope your purchase that was made in India, will remind you of your trip. Yes, the guides do take you to shops and showrooms, while you are on tour. You can say "no" when you don't want to visit the shops or not interested in shopping with a guide. But when you do visit the store with the guide, you do not necessarily pay a higher price for a substandard product. As this is a worldwide phenomenon, we accept it too with its "blues". What we have done is, selected a few stores both privately owned & government owned (but in both cases Government recognized) at important destinations, where we are sure of two things;

1) Quality of the product 2) The product if too heavy should be delivered at your doorstep without any extra cost even if the extra cost needs to be added to the price of the product. As for price, some are fixed price & some are bargain shops. So go ahead and enjoy the shopping – and please ask our advice at any time.

### Tipping

It is usual to tip the waiters, porters, guides and drivers. Tips are not included in the bills, whether of hotels, transport companies or any other suppliers. At hotels and restaurants, about 10% of the bill is usually acceptable.

Though we give below the general guidelines, it is to be remembered that tipping is a sign of gratification for good service, and therefore please view the below guidelines as the middle ground, which can be adjusted depending on the level of service you feel you have received. Please note the below amounts are per couple/ individual traveller.

### Guides, Escorts and Transport

Guide (Full Day)	Rs 500 – Rs 800 per day
Guide (Half Day)	Rs 400 – Rs 600 per day
Tour Escort	Rs 500 – Rs 1000 per day
Driver for the tour	Rs 300 – Rs 500 per day
Driver for local duties	Rs – 500 per day

### Hotels/ Restaurants

Bell Boy	Rs 30 – Rs 50 per member of staff
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### **Room Service**

**& Restaurants**                      About 10% of the bill total (Unless service is mentioned as included)

### Electricity

In India voltage is 220 volts AC, 50 cycles, though some areas also have DC supplies. Visitors are advised to check the voltage before using electrical appliances. Socket sizes vary, so it is as well to take a set of plug adapters, available from most electrical stores. **Please do carry a flat to round adapter for the tour as most pinholes in India are round.**

### Prohibited Articles

The Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act bans all forms of wildlife trade. Violations of the provisions of the Act are punishable with heavy fines and imprisonment up to 7 years. Foreigners are, therefore, advised not to buy any wildlife or wildlife products or derivatives especially ivory articles, fur and skin articles derived from wild animals such as Shahtoosh.

### Photography

Visitors to India find varied subjects for photography including people, monuments, wildlife, festivities, and landscapes. Note, however, these formalities, in respect of photography:

- Special permission of the Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, is required for use of tripod and artificial light on monuments.
- Special permission of Government of India is required for any photography for the purpose of publicity and commercial use.
- Photography is prohibited in tribal areas.

- Taking photographs of airports, railway stations, bridges, military installations, and from the air is prohibited.

### **Visiting Places of Worship**

Removing one's shoes before entering temples, mosques or Gurudwaras (Sikh Temple) is essential. Avoid taking leather goods of any kinds (bag, belt etc) and cigarettes into places of worship, as these are often not permitted. Do not wear shorts or sleeveless tops in places of public worship.

### **Inoculations/Vaccinations:**

Before traveling to India it is advised that you get vaccinations for tetanus, hepatitis, and typhoid. Consult your doctor before taking them / also take advice on other vaccinations for meningitis and tuberculosis. Most vaccination courses are completed within four weeks, best taken before the trip. Malaria preventive course may be taken before your trip, but again you should consult your doctor.

### **BOOKS -**

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>AUTHOR</b>
Lives of Indian Princes and Plain Tales from the Raj	Charles Allen
The Great Moghuls	Bamber Gascoigne
The Wonder that was India	A L Basham
Freedom at Midnight and City of Joy	Collins and Lapierre
Over the High Passes	Christina Noble
Kim and Plain Tales from the Raj	Rudyard Kipling
Heat & Dust	Ruth Praver Jhabwala
Midnight's Children and The Moor's Last Sigh	Salman Rushdie
Chasing the Monsoon	Alexander Fraters
An Indian Summer	James Cameron
No Full Stops, Raj to Rajiv and The Heart of India	Mark Tully
City of Djinns	William Dalrymple
The Age of Kali	William Dalrymple
White Mughals	William Dalrymple
The Last Mughal - The Fall of a Dynasty, Delhi 1857	William Dalrymple
Travels on my Elephant	Mark Shand

Queen of the Elephants	Mark Shand
A Passage to India	E M Forster
The God of Small Things	Arundhati Roy
A Fine Balance	Rohinton Mistry
Tiger	Stephen Mills
The Idea of India	Sunil Khilnani
<b>WILDLIFE GUIDE BOOKS</b>	
<b>MAMMALS</b>	Mammals of India - Vivek Menon
<b>BIRDS</b>	Birds of the India: Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Srilanka & the Maldives - Carol & Tim Inskipp with collaboration from Sarath Kotagama and Shahid Ali
	Field Guide to the Birds of South Asia - the Ripley Guide - Rasmussen, P. C. & J. C. Anderton - 2 <sup>nd</sup> Edition
<b>BUTTERFLIES</b>	The Book of India Butterflies - Issac Kehimkar
<b>SNAKES &amp; REPTILES</b>	A Photographic Guide to Snakes and Other Reptiles of India - Indraneil Das
<b>PLANTS, FLOWERS &amp; GRASS FLOWERS</b>	Common Indian WildFlowers - Issac Kehimkar
	Trees of Delhi - Pradip Kishen
	Jungle Trees of Central India - Pradip Kishen (yet to be published).
<b>GENERIC BOOKS ON WILDLIFE</b>	
The Bandhavgarh Inheritance	Bittu Sahgal
The Sunderbans Inheritance	Bittu Sehgal, Sumit Sen & Bikram Grewal
The Fall of a Sparrow	Ali.S
The Temple Tiger and more man-eaters of Kumaon	Corbett Jim
Man-eaters of Kumaon	Corbett Jim
Wild India : The Wildlife and Landscapes of India	Guy Mountfort & Hashim Tyabji
Indias Wild Wonders	Bedi Rajesh
Tiger : The Ultimate Guide	Valmik, Thapar
Tiger! The Story of the Indian Tiger	Sankhala, Kailash
The Story of Asia's Lions	Divyabhanusinh, Chavda
Tiger Heaven	Singh, Billy Arjan
The Bharatpur Inheritance	Grewal, Bikram & Sehgal, Bittu