

**School of Design
College of Architecture and Environmental Design
Arizona State University**

Winter Study Abroad Program: India

General Description:

The School of Design at Arizona State University offers the following three-week program in India. This is a program designed to study Northern and Western Indian history and contemporary culture. It offers two courses that examine the design, architecture, religion, communication systems, and society of the Asian subcontinent through excursion, field studies, experience, analytical studies and workshops in collaboration with local design school.

Objective:

The course structure, with guided field expeditions, seminars and in-depth analysis and synthesis of the cultural issues will broaden the participants global awareness and further their individual areas of study.

Methodology:

Through excursion, field studies, experiences, lectures, seminars, museum studies, cultural events, analytical studies and workshops with local design school students and faculty examine the living traditions of an ancient civilization that play an important role in the contemporary global culture and continue to establish a critical presence in global economy.

Course Description:

DSC 494 A | 594 A India: Cultural and Social Issues 3 Credit Hours

Indian Culture, People, and Modes of Communication
Ethnicity
Mogul and Contemporary Indian Architecture
Indian Religions and its Cultural Influences
Cultural and Social Issues
 Perceived from Western Perspective,
 and the roles that they play in globalization

DSC 494 B | 594 B India: Cultural and Commercial Issues 3 Credit Hours

Indian Culture, People, and Modes of Communication
Ethnicity
Product and Service Globalization
Market Places
Cultural and Commercial Issues
 Perceived from Western Perspective,
 and the roles that they play in globalization

This program guides participants to both urban and rural India, where they examine the living traditions of an ancient civilization through its evolving traditional and commercial community. During the first two weeks of the program, the students participate in expeditions to Indian archaeological and historical cities (Delhi, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Jaipur, Jaisalmare, and Udaipur), sites, museums, and cultural exhibitions. The three credit hour

components consist of seminars, lectures, and contextual analysis. This part of the program introduces students to the textual and cultural traditions of India. Students examine aspects of pre-colonial society through the lens of place, monument, and social commentary. Designed to facilitate student access to local civilization and provides a basis for further study for enrolled students. Participants photographically document their observations, record their findings, sketch, draw, and maintain journals.

The final one-week of the program is devoted to the analysis and synthesis of issues identified during the first two weeks. Participants in the program will travel to Ahmedabad and work with local students at a reputed design institution. They will interact and collaborate in a workshop that identify social and economic issues from both Western and Eastern perspectives. The group will then propose possible avenues of change and growth from the perspective of globalization.

Housing:

During their three-weeks in India, students house in double rooms in modest hotels or similar residences. This accommodation may include breakfast. In the final segment of the Program, which consists of one-week stay at Ahmedabad, participants normally reside in comfortable hotel, student dorm, or local residence hosted by families.

Credits:

As a participant in Winter Study Abroad Program: India students receive three credits for either of the courses that meet the university's global awareness requirement. If student have already met that requirement, they may use these credits as electives.

Registration and Tuition:

Participants remain registered full-time in the University and pay regular tuition plus Arizona State University | Winter Study Abroad Program: India fee and the study abroad administrative fee. The program fee includes travel (air-fare, local group transportation within India), accommodation, partial board, and some excursion costs.

Financial Aid:

Students retain financial aid eligibility. However, University Financial Aid may not underwrite some expenses. On the other hand, since students cannot work in India, the self-help component of financial aid package does not include a term-time employment factor. Please contact your Financial Aid Advisor at ASU for further information.

Eligibility:

Arizona State University | Winter Study Abroad Program: India designed for undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students in good standing who are beyond their first year at the University. While the Program stipulates no minimum grade-point average, applicants present a transcript demonstrating that they are serious students who will make the most of this opportunity.

Application:

Access the application form for Arizona State University | Winter Study Abroad Program: India on the web (Insert web address here). To apply participants submit a general study abroad application electronically, then download the supplementary application specific to this program and submit it on paper during Fall semester. (Deadline is on the first Monday of October) Participant who accept an offer of admission secure placement with

a \$200 deposit and \$150 non-refundable due on or before the first Monday of October. Applications after that date considered only if placement is available.

Cost:

\$2500 (subject to change) includes hotels, buffet breakfast, and local ground transportation, excursion entrance fees. This does not include airfare to India, undergraduate / graduate / doctoral tuition and fees for 3 credits.

Further Information:

Interested students and participants invited by **Professor Mookesh Patel** (Coordinator of Winter Study Abroad Program: India) to discuss the program further at the following location:

College of Architecture and Environmental Design
School of Design | Graphic Design (Rm. ARCH 214)
Tempe, Arizona 85281.2105

Contact:

E-mail: mookesh@asu.edu

480.965.2037
480.965.4135

Statements contained in this document are subject to change without notice.

Information for web site: (including the above)

Program Orientation: First Monday of November

Academic, cross-cultural, health, safety and program orientation conducted by the academic co-coordinator and other contributors on the First Monday of November.

Material includes:

- Program itinerary
- Organization and logistics
- Attitudes and tools for immersion in another culture
- Academic and personal expectations
- Evaluation methods and criteria
- Open discussions:
 - Cultural Anthropology of Northern India
 - Social customs and caste hierarchies
 - Excursions: Delhi, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Jaipur, Jaisalmer, and Udaipur
 - Religious traditions of Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism and Jainism
 - Gender and women's studies in the modern Indian context
 - Indian Arts
 - Rajasthan Folk Arts
 - Temple Art
 - Mogul and Contemporary Architecture
 - Workshop/studio and Home-stay Program in Ahmedabad
 - Kite Flying Festival

Reading:

These interdisciplinary courses require readings that provide appropriate context.

Lectures:

Lectures and discussions generally include:

- History and Politics,
- Pre-modern, colonial and modern history of India
- Contemporary political and social issues including identity issues around secularism and communalism
- Rajput and Mogul cultural history
- Partition and the problems of postcolonial state formation
- Geography, Economics, and Communication
- Land and people of India
 - Cities of Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Jaipur and Udaipur:
 - Environmental issues and desertification
 - Role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)
 - Religious sites and environmental protection
 - Impact of the rise of the middle class
 - International tourism on land use
 - Patterns of economic migration

Projects:

These courses emphasize learning across cultures from field experience:

Introduction to the Independent Study Project and Group Study Project

Material includes cross-cultural adaptation and skills building; project selection and refinement; appropriate methodologies; field study ethics; developing contacts and finding resources; developing skills in observation and interviewing; gathering, organizing and communicating data; maintaining a work journal.

Independent Study Projects

Conducted in Ahmedabad appropriate to the project. Sample topic areas: iconography of temple architecture; classical or folk dance and music; local folklore and folk culture; painting; scripts and languages; religious festivals; education; etc.

Group Study Projects

Conducted in Ahmedabad appropriate to the project collaboration and workshop with students and faculty at the local design school.

Tentative Itinerary:

India

27 December 2004 to 16 January 2005

Leave Phoenix 27 December 2004

Arrive Delhi 29 December 2004

- Delhi 03 days
Capital of India: 29 - 31 December 2004

Red Fort

Red Fort is laid out along the river Yamuna as an irregular octagon, surrounded by a wall of about 2.4 km in circumference and is built of red sandstone. The Mughal king Shah Jahan transferred the capital from Agra to Delhi and the Fort completed in 1648. The fort has two main entrances, the Delhi Gate and the Lahori Gate, which faces the famed Chandni Chowk market. The Fort has Diwan-e-am, and Diwan-e-Khas where the king would grant audience to the public and important people respectively. Rang Mahal is the water-cooled Apartment for the royal ladies. In the basement of the fort is a market where traditional Indian goods purchased at nominal rates. Another attraction is Light and Sound show held in the evenings.

Qutab Minar

A Muslim King, Qutub-ud-din Aibak in 1199 A.D, built this magnificent structure in the southern part of the capital. Another Muslim King Iltutmish completed a part of it, which he could not finish. Minar is 72.5 m high and has as its base a mosque. In front of the imposing structure is an Iron Pillar built in the 5th century A.D. that has not rusted ever since built.

India Gate

Straight down the road from Rashtrapati Bhavan is India Gate, which is primarily a memorial to Unknown Soldier. Designed by Lutyens, the 42 meter high structure is a war memorial in honor of soldiers who died during the Second World War. The structure has an eternal flame (Amar Jawan Jyoti) to honor the memory of the unknown soldiers.

Old Fort (Indraprastha — Purana Qila)

The ruins of this fort are located on a small hill, which once stood on the bank of the river Yamuna. Legend has it that the fort marked the site of Indraprastha, the magnificent capital of the Pandavas, though Sher Shah Suri carried out the construction any time between 1538 to 1545 A. D. The structure houses a mosque, which has a double storied octagonal tower. People believe that the Mughal King Humayun fell from the tower accidentally and died. A lake is at the foot of the hill where the Delhi Tourism arranges boating and organizes Sound and Light Show.

Bahai Temple (Lotus Temple)

It is a very recent architectural marvel of the Bahai faith and visible from several spots in south Delhi. It is lotus shaped, made up of marble, cement dolomite, and sand, and rightly given the name.

Homerun's Tomb

This tomb, built by emperor Humayun's wife, took eight years to complete. The emperor's wife Begai Begum buried in the tomb has a structure first of its kind built in the center of a well-planned garden. The combination of white marble and red sand stone is an influence on later Mughal architecture and regarded as a prototype of the famed Taj Mahal of Agra.

Jantar Mantar

Within the Connaught Place lies Jantar Mantar observatory built by the Rajput King of Jaipur, Sawai Jai Singh in 1724 with masonry instruments to observe the movements of the stars and the planets.

Safdarjung Tomb

The garden tomb built in 1753-54 soon after Safdarjung died is red and brown sandstone with double storied towers in the corners and one of the last examples of Mughal architecture.

Museums: (We will visit selected few of the following:)

National Museum

Collection of Indian bronzes, terracotta and wood sculptures dating back to the Mauryan period (2nd-3rd century BC), exhibits from the Vijayanagar period in south India, miniature and mural paintings, and costumes of various tribal people.

National Gallery Of Modern Art

The gallery near India Gate at the eastern end of Rajpath was the former residence of the Maharaja of Jaipur. It houses an excellent collection of works by both Indian and colonial artists.

Nehru Museum

The residence of the first Indian Prime Minister, Teen Murti Bhavan, converted into a museum. Photographs and newspaper clippings on display give a fascinating insight into the history of the independence movement. It forms the subject of a light and sound show along with facets of Nehru's life.

Rail Transport Museum

This fascinating collection of India's railway engines is exotic. Exhibits include an 1855 steam engine, still in working order, and a large number of oddities such as the skull of an elephant that charged a mail train in 1894 and lost life.

Tibet House

This small museum in the Institutional Area is a fascinating collection of ceremonial items brought out of Tibet when the Dalai Lama fled following the Chinese occupation. There is a shop selling a wide range of Tibetan handicrafts.

International Dolls Museum

6000 dolls from 85 countries are on display in this museum in Nehru House on Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg. Over a third of them are from India. One exhibit section comprises 500 dolls dressed in costumes worn all over the country.

Crafts Museum

This museum contains a collection of traditional Indian crafts in textiles, metal, wood and ceramics. It is part of a 'village life' complex where you can visit rural India without ever leaving Delhi.

Gandhi Darshan

This is a display of paintings and photos about the Mahatma's life and deeds. The Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, also at Raj Ghat, has displays of some of Gandhi's personal possessions.

Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum

This museum is the former residence of Indira Gandhi. On display are some of her personal effects, including the sari (complete with blood stains) that she had on at the time of her assassination. A crystal plaque in the garden, flanked constantly by two soldiers, protects a few brown spots of Mrs. Gandhi's blood on the site where she fell after shot by two of her bodyguards in December 1984.

Nehru Planetarium

It holds film shows on the solar system.

National Science Centre Museum

It has working science exhibitions as well as exhibits on the history of architecture.

- **Agra** **01 day**
The City of Love: **01 January 2005**

The Taj Platform

The reign of Shahjahan from 1628 to 1658 was the golden age of Mughal architecture in India that produced a series of noble buildings. But, the most prominent and undoubtedly magnificent of all these was Taj Mahal built by him in the memory of his favorite wife Mumtaz Mahal. There are very few buildings in the world with which so many of legends and literature has been produced and so many architects to take credit of the design of this symbol of love. Architecturally, Taj was the greatest piece of architecture that Mughals produced, but it is a natural growth from the tomb of Humayun and to a lesser extent from certain other, prominent is the Tomb of Itmad-ud-Daulah in Agra itself. But it is far superior to any of them in the dignity of its grouping and disposition, in the masterly contrast between the central dome and the slender minarets, in the chaste refinement and painstaking craftsmanship of its details, and above all in the splendor of its materials. The design of Taj is more Persian and less Indian than any building we have encountered, but it is again difficult to find any thing of Taj's stature in Persia (Iran). Broadly, the Taj complex can be divided in four distinct parts to understand its design and architecture. These are:

The Taj Gateway

Befitting the most beautiful symbol of love, the Taj, is the gateway to this great monument. Taj Mahal looks like a miniature on the landscape from a distance, but appears to grow as you start to approach it. But, the minute you would enter the open square before the main entrance, you will be surprised to find the Taj Mahal disappear from your sight. Actually, the Taj is hidden by a massive red sandstone gateway within this square. The massive Taj Gateway was completed in the year 1648 and stands 30 m high. Small cupolas or chhatris tops the gateway. From a distance the Taj Mahal looks like a miniature on the landscape, which appears to grow as you approach it. However, as you enter the open square before the main entrance to the Taj Mahal, you will be surprised to find the Taj disappear from your sight. From within this square the Taj is hidden by a massive red sandstone gateway. Symbolic of the divide between the material and the spiritual, the gateway is decorated in calligraphy with verses from holy Koran. The original door of the gateway was made out of the solid silver and there are letters inscribed on it from top to bottom. All the letters appear to be of same size to the naked eyes. Actually, the engravers enlarged and stretched the lettering as their distance from the ground increased, creating an illusion of uniformity to the naked eyes.

The actual function of this magnificent gateway was to prevent people from getting any glimpse of the tomb inside until they are right in the doorway itself. The tomb is visible from here only and the view stuns the eyes as one walks forward. The dwarfing images of people moving around the tomb 70 m high are excellent and the best that you can get.

The Taj Garden

The garden in Islamic Style of architecture is not just another feature it has a well-defined meaning and it symbolizes the spirituality. According to the holy Koran, a garden is symbolic of paradise. Islam being a religion that was founded in the region of Arabia always gave value to the vision of a lush green, well laid out, and watered garden and in due course came to symbolize Islam. In Islam, it is believed that there are four rivers in paradise, one of water, other of milk, the third of wine, and fourth of honey. From this concept the char bagh style of garden planning took root. On leaving the entrance gateway, you can view a sprawling garden in front of you going all the way up to the plinth of the Taj. The Taj Garden covers most part of the Taj Complex. Out of a total area of 580 m by 300 m, the Taj Garden alone covers 300 m by 300 m. The guiding principle in creating this garden is one of the symmetry and it can be experienced everywhere. Though the garden is now maintained regularly, it is still a patch on the original royal garden. The char bagh, separated by the watercourses originating from the central, raised pool, were divided into 16 flowerbeds, making a total of 64. There were 400 plants in each bed. All the trees, either cypress (signifying death) and fruit trees (signifying life) were planted to maintain symmetry. The channels were stocked with colorful fish and the gardens with beautiful birds. Royal guests were

invited to the tomb - so the stables and guesthouses were also built. The garden today is only peaceful region in the entire complex and the best for framing photos of the tomb with foliage.

The Taj Mausoleum

The Taj Platform

Taj Mahal is placed on a high plinth that can be approached from a central path within the garden. Height of the plinth is 6.7 m and the total area covered by it is around 95 sq m. There is a double staircase facing the entrance to the tomb and they are only way to reach to the top of the plinth. You are needed to remove your shoes here, though you can have your shocks on, as the white marble gets very hot. You can have the best views of the surroundings from this pedestal including the lush green char bagh in the front and the riverfront at the backside. And the feeling of closeness to towering structure of Taj from this place is unmatched. Four minarets each having a height of 41.6 m and capped by a small cupola flank the four corners of the plinth. Minarets do not have the decorative motive here, but they also provide balance to the tomb. Minarets used in this way first appeared in India with Akbar's tomb at Sikandra. Latter they were used at the tomb of Itmad-ud-Daulah and further refined here. The minarets were placed in such a way that even in the case of a mishap, they do not fall over the main structure. There is another important aspect of the minarets, which signifies its spiritual important. There is a letter written on each of the minaret, which when put together spell the word ar-rahman or all merciful - one of the many names of Allah.

Taj Tomb from Outside

The main tomb is square in shape and beveled at corners. Length of each side of the Taj is 56.6 m with a large central arch flanked by two pointed arches. Smaller domes rise at each corner while in the center is the main dome. The main dome of the Taj Mahal is a double dome actually and marks the continuation with first Mughal experiment with the concept of double dome at Humayun's Tomb in Delhi 90 years earlier. Main purpose of creating double dome was to enhance height of the structure and was Central Asian in origin. The main dome resembles to a huge pearl. This was done purposefully following a saying of the prophet that describes the throne of God as a dome of pearl supported by four pillars. Calligraphy has been used to carve the verses of holy Koran, beautifully carved panels in bas-relief, and superb inlay work is all there to enhance the exterior beauty of the tomb.

Inside the Tomb

From inside the mausoleum is comprised of a lofty central chamber, a crypt or maqbara immediately below this, four octagonal corner rooms originally intended to house the graves of other family members. But Aurangzeb, son of Shahjahan failed to honor this wish. The Central Chamber houses the replica tombs while the actual ones are being in the crypt. It was a tradition in the Mughal era to have a private as well as public tomb. Originally, a jewel-encrusted silver screen surrounded the public tomb. Later, Aurangzeb removed the original screen and replaced it with an octagonal screen of marble and inlaid precious stones. The screen cost him Rs 50, 000 at that time, but the result is a stupendous piece of workmanship. Each screen or jali has been carved out of a single block of marble and all these blocks have been inlaid. If you put flash of light on these flowers, you can see how luminescent the marble and intricacy of inlay work is. There are as many as 64 pieces making up petals of some flowers, which achieve a 3D effect. There is a Cairene lamp above the toms whose flame is supposed to never go out. This lamp was given by Lord Curzon (1899-1905), Governor General of India to replace the original lamp, which was stolen by mighty jats in the 18th century. The tomb of Mumtaz Mahal with the 'female slate' rests immediately beneath the dome. The tomb lines up centrally with the main entrance. The tomb of Shahjahan is larger and in the side, it is marked by a 'male' pen-box, the sign of a cultured and noble person. The tomb of Shahjahan was not intended to be there but Aurangzeb squeezed it beside the tomb of Mumtaz Mahal breaking the symmetry of otherwise flawless complex. Semi-precious stones are exquisitely inlaid in both the tombs. There is a fantastic acoustic design of the building with domed ceiling being designed to echo chants from the holy Koran and musicians' melodies.

The Tomb

Tomb above the main grave of Taj Mahal is part of the architectural beauty of this great building. In the words of Ustad Ahmad Lahori, chief architect of the project: " And above this inner dome, which is radiant like the heart of angels, has been raised another heaven-touching, a guava-shaped dome...crowning this dome of heavenly rank, the circumference of whose outer girth is 110 yards high fluttering like the sun with its summit rising to a total height of 107 yards above the (level of the) ground." The dome is crucial to Islamic architecture, cosmologically uniting heaven and earth. The square of the edifice represents the material universe; the dome symbolizes the vault of heaven. The octagon stands for the transitional phase. Above the finial is the region of transcendence. The whole domed structure is thus designed as a replica of the throne of God in Paradise where a gigantic white pearl dome stands supported by four corner pillars from which flow the rivers of grace. The Taj architects have prominently used the keel arch set within a rectangle, repeating the shape everywhere "the gateway, niches, windows, trellised doors, plinth, dome ornamentation and cusped arches of the cupolas. To complete the image of Paradise the tomb has been most lavishly ornamented with splendidly calligraphed verses from the Quran.

Pietra Dura

The tomb of Itmad-ud-Daula at Agra, built by Nurjahan for her father, had the most innovative and grand decoration, a mosaic of exquisitely colored hard precious stones inlaid into the white marble. The lyrical rhythm of the floral motifs had an amazing beauty, which the Taj greatly emulated. The crypt and the cenotaphs at the Taj carry pietra dura decoration of a fabulous unexcelled elegance. As Percy Brown, the noted art historian observes, the Taj "resembles the spirited sweep of a brush rather than the slow laborious cutting of a chisel". As many as 35 different types of precious stones have been used on a single bloom-turquoise, jade, agate, coral, lapis Lazuli, onyx, bloodstone, cornelian, jasper, garnet and malachite used to fashion blooms of fuchsias, lily, honeysuckle, etc. The ninety-nine names of Allah have been used to decorate the eastern and western sides of Mumtaz's grave in the crypts. Today, much is left to the imagination of the visitors as most of the precious stones have been plundered or destroyed in the years when Taj Mahal fell into insignificance.

Fatehpur Sikri - The History

Greatest of all the Mughal Emperors who ruled India, Akbar ascended to the throne in 1556 at the tender age of 14 years. Apparent reason of ascending throne was the sudden demise of his father, Humayun. Akbar turned his attention towards building a magnificent Imperial capital at Agra as soon as he consolidated his power. Instant result of his interest was impressive Agra Fort, which was a great asset militarily as well as it served as the royal residence. In due course of time Akbar decided to shift his capital to nearby. There is a difference of opinion among historians about this decision of Akbar. According to the legends Akbar used to visit the hamlet of Sikri to take the blessings of the great Sufi saint Salim Chisti in order to have an heir to his throne. Akbar's visitations were fruitful, for he was blessed with three sons. He built the new city according to the instructions of Salim Chisti whose mausoleum is a part of Fatehpur Sikri. Another set of historians say that he built the new city at Fatehpur Sikri as it was falling on the highway towards South India from North India. From this place he was able to control all parts of the country and move in any direction without much trouble. The new city was set on a hilltop that made it reasonably safe from future attacks. The new city, built on a ridge, grew into a magnificent township larger than contemporary London. Akbar did not stay in this magnificent city for long and reasons for deserting Fatehpur Sikri are as much mysterious as was its construction.

Imperial Ghost City

The imperial city of the Mughal dynasty between 1571 and 1584, Fatehpur Sikri was built by Mughal Emperor Akbar. The architectural grandeur of this deserted city cannot be described in words and one can only experience the aura of its magnificent edifices by seeing them. Fatehpur Sikri is the most popular day excursion from Agra, the city of Taj and capital of invincible Mughals for a long time.

Location

Fatehpur Sikri is located only 40 km from Agra city. Agra is well connected by air with Khajuraho, Varanasi, and Delhi. It has good rail and bus connections with major Indian cities. There are daily trains from Agra Fort railway station to Fatehpur Sikri.

Some Facts

Built in 16th century

Built by Akbar

Location Fatehpur Sikri (Uttar Pradesh)

The Architectural Style

At Sikri, the various royal palaces have been built in Gujarati and Rajasthani architectural styles, using ornate columns, fanciful jali work (intricately perforated decorative stone screens), sumptuous carving, and surface ornamentation. Most of the buildings located inside Fatehpur Sikri are a unique blend of architectural traditions flourishing at that time in India. These small palaces are largely a sequence of connected rectangular courtyards; these are aligned with the polar axes and so have to be grouped in a staggered formation across, the top of the narrow diagonal ridge. The overwhelmingly Hindu architectural vocabulary, however, cannot conceal the Islamic norms followed in the large-scale planning that is supposed to have derived from Arab and Central Asia tent compartments!

Monuments Within Diwan-I-Aam

As one enters Sikri from the Agra Gate, one of the nine gateways on the way to the palace complex, Diwani-I-Aam, or the hall of public audience appears first. It is a huge rectangular walled-in courtyard where petitions were heard, proclamations made, embassies received and entertainment programs held. The royal balcony, set within a frame of jali screens, appears on the western front. In front of the royal seat, a stone hook is still found embedded in the ground. As per tradition, Akbar's pet elephant Hiran was tied to this hook to crush to death under its feet the head of the guilty. If it refused to obey thrice, the victim was freed.

Diwan-I-Khas

The royal enclosure lies behind the Diwan-I-Aam. At the northern corner stands a small but grand single-storey structure of Diwan-I-Khas with the most magnificently sculptured and most photographed stone column at the center of the hall. It bursts forth into a set of 36 closely set vaulted and pendulous brackets supporting a circular platform from which radiate four passages. Is it really the famous Ibadat-Khana where Akbar initiated religious discourses amongst diverse religious groups-Hindu, Muslim, Jain, and Jesuit etc?

Panch Mahal

Panch Mahal, a five storied pavilion, stands on the western line of the courtyard. This is the badgir, the Persian wind tower for ladies of the harem. The jali screens between the 176 differently carved pillars have disappeared. Once these screens provided purdah (cover) to queens and princess on the top terraces enjoying the cool breezes and watching splendid views of Sikri fortifications and the town nestling at the foot of the ridge. In the courtyard Akbar played pachisi (checker board) with dancing girls as live pieces.

Jami Masjid

The mosque at Sikri was the first structure to be built in 1571. The exterior is modest but the interior carries the most gorgeous ornamentation in the floral arabesques and ingenious geometrical patterns in brown, red, turquoise, black and white. The spacious courtyard adds a stately charm to the place. It could accommodate ten thousand men at prayer. Akbar was so enthusiastic about this mosque that he occasionally swept the floor and gave azan (call for prayer). On June 26, 1579, Akbar even read the khutba himself, a great innovation, earlier attempted only the Timur and Mirza Ulugh Beg.

Tomb of Sheikh Salim Chisti

In 1580-81 eighty years after the saint died in 1572, Akbar built the tomb in red sandstone. In 1606, Qutubuddin Khan Koka, on orders from Jehangir, covered the edifice in white marble. Much later in 1866, a district magistrate of Agra replaced the plaster dome with white marble. The magnificence of the splendid jail screens carved out of huge marble slabs shows a rare perfection of craftsmanship. The dramatic serpentine brackets supporting the wide chajja on all four sides of the edifice have an amazing grace. The real grave lies in an undisturbed repose in the crypt, closed to visitors. Women devotees longing for a child come here and tie a colored thread to the jails. In a gesture of thankfulness they come back when their wish is granted.

Buland Darwaza

Buland Darwaza, the colossal triumphal arch, was built in 1575 on the southern wall of the courtyard. It celebrates Akbar's conquest of Gujarat. The towering portal has the height of 176 feet from ground level and 134 feet over the top step. The grand recessed central arch is the most magnificent of its kind in the entire range of Mughal architecture in India. Modest ornamentation with calligraphy contains a famous line: The world is but a bridge: Pass over but build no houses on it. The Buland Darwaza commands the landscape for miles.

Palaces in the Harem

Abdul Fazl, Akbar's historian, mentions that the royal harem had nearly 5000 wives. The queens always brought with them a great entourage of maids and dancers. The queen mother and princess had innumerable slave girls as their attendants. The number of concubines, families of courtiers away on royal duty, and dancing girls was always on the rise. The harem included not only the chief wives but all women inmates. Haresara (female quarters) occupies the largest central area in the royal enclosure at Sikri.

Jodha Bai's palace belonged to Harkha, the Amber princess and mother of Jehangir, and the other Rajput wives from Bikaner, Marwar, Jaisalmer, Merta and Durgapur and their companions. No wife of Akbar was called Jodha Bai. One of Jehangir's wives was so called. This is a high-walled edifice, guarded by a grand gateway leading to a spectacular courtyard. With double storied pavilions at the center of colonnades on all four sides, this place has some striking Hindu architectural features like ornamental columns, bells and chain motifs, heavy brackets and niches on the wall for the deities worshipped by Rajput ladies. The other smaller but beautiful palace belonged to Akbar's mother, Hamida Banu Begum, widow of Humayun. She was the most respected lady of the harem with the title Mariam-Makani. This palace is also called Sunehra Makan (golden house) because of the golden paint on the faded murals. The third palace in the harem quarters belonged to Akbar's two senior wives: Ruqayya Sultan Begum (who brought up Jahangir's son Khurram later called Shahjahan), and Salima Sultan Begum-widow of Bairam Khan. Maybe here lived Birbal's daughter who was married to Akbar hence its present name, Birbal Mahal. Surely no male could have been allowed to stay within the corner of the Sikri ridge.

- **Jaipur** **02 days**
The Pink City: **02 - 03 January 2005**

About Jaipur

Popularly known as the Pink City, Jaipur was founded in 1727 AD by one of the greatest rulers of the Kachaawaha clan, the astronomer-king Sawai Jai Singh, and designed by architect Vidyadhar Bhattacharya.

First planned city

Jaipur is the first planned city of north India. Designed in accordance with Shilp Shastra, an ancient Hindu treatise on architecture, Jaipur follows a grid system and is encircled by a massive wall painted pink. Today, the city has spread beyond these walls and continues to grow. Jai Singh's planned city, Jaipur, has withstood the pressure of time. The pink color used at the time of its making is still maintained scrupulously. Beautiful gardens and parks and attractive monuments, which once housed maharajas, are still to be found everywhere.

Street Craft

Considered a marvel of town planning, Jaipur drew merchants and craftsmen to its streets and rewarded them with colonies earmarked for them. Traditional crafts like jewellery, metal work, enamellings, tie and dye, pottery, leatherwork, stone carving and miniature painting, patronized by the rulers in the 18th century, continue to thrive in this day and age.

Jaipur's Charm

It is a city with timeless quality to it, a city where the ancient and the modern coexist in complete harmony. Colorfully attired women in their ghagra-odhani and men in spotless dhoti-kurtas and colorful turbans make it all the more vibrant and beautiful. Not to mention the ambling camels and cheerful people in multi-hued costumes that make your trip to Pink City a memorable one! Unlike other Indian cities, Jaipur is a heritage city. The rich culture is the essence of its glory and the monuments and traditions are a treasured possession. Peace, harmony and complete symphony prevail in this land of forts and palaces and plush multiplexes. The five star hotels with state of the heart facilities also have a rich tradition to take care of the guests and will also impress you with gestures that place a special mark on your memories. The royal past, modern present and hi-tech future will make Jaipur top the list of must-visit destination in India.

'Padharo mahro des' (Come to my land) is what the incomparable culture says!

- **Bikaner** **01 day**
City of Treasures: **04 January 2005**

About Bikaner

Bikha, the sixth son of Rao Jodha, the founder of Jodhpur also founded Bikaner in 1488 –the fourth largest city of Rajasthan. Visit the Junagarh Fort that was built between 1588-1593 by Raja Rai Singh, one of the generals of Emperor Akbar. The outer walls of the fort are 986 meters in circuit, reinforced with 37 pavilions silhouetted against the skyline. Within the walls are a series of palaces built by successive rulers. The fort and palaces are beautifully preserved and well maintained and each palace contains particular treasures.

- **Jaisalmer** **02 days**
Golden Fort City: **05 - 06 January 2005**

About Jaisalmer

Deep in the heart of the Thar Desert is the Fort city of Jaisalmer, founded by Rawal Jaisal, a descendent of the Yadav Clan and a Bhati Rajput, in 1156 AD. The Bhati Rajputs of Jaisalmer were feudal chiefs who lived on the forced levy on the caravans that crossed their territory en-route to Delhi. These caravans, laden with precious cargos of spices and silk brought great wealth to this town. While it was founded on what was the cross - road of lucrative trade routes, Jaisalmer has remained aloof and untouched by foreign influences and was the last to sign the Instrument of Agreement with the British. This remote settlement is celebrated for the velour of its rulers, and for the aesthetic sense represented by their palaces and havelis.

Jaisalmer Fort

Jaisalmer Fort seems to rise out of the desert haze, its yellow sandstone walls and bastions taking on a golden hue in the afternoon sun, hence its name Sonar Kila or the Golden Fort. The fort stands 100 meters over the city and houses a citadel within its huge ramparts. Walking down the narrow cobbled stone lanes, one can feel the sheer magic of Jaisalmer. Several entrances called Pols, guard the Megh Durbar and the Jawahar Mahal, which were occupied by the royal family. Outside the fort is the main market place called Manek Chowk where one can walk into the lanes where the famous carved havelis or houses are to be found. Jaisalmer is famous for its intricately latticed havelis with conspicuous facades. Apart from the havelies, Jaisalmer is also known for its group of Jain temples dating back to the 12th to the 15th centuries, where the Parswanath Temple is the oldest and the most beautiful. In medieval times, its prosperity was due to its location on the main trade route linking India to Egypt, Arabia, Persia, Africa and the West. The glory of Jaisalmer faded when sea trade replaced the old land routes. But there is still 'Arabian Nights' quality about the town. The narrow streets in the walled city preserve a traditional way of life : the craftsmen still work at the ancient crafts of weaving and stone carving, the making of silver jewellery and embroidery. And the stately, nonchalant camel is everywhere.

Lodurva Jain Temple

Once the capital of Rawal Jaisal, Lodurva now has ruins of the ancient township and an important center of Jain pilgrimage. The temples exhibit some more fine examples of intricate craftsmanship on yellow stone.

- **Jodhpur** **01 day**
Lake City: **07 January 2005**

About Jodhpur

A valiant sentinel in the desert, on the eastern fringe of the Thar Desert has the distinction of neither being a part of the Thar Desert nor out of it. At best it is a doorway to the wonderland of sand dunes and shrubs, rocky terrain and thorny trees. The home of the Rathores - the awesome princely state of Rajasthan. They conquered Marwar or Maroodesh, land of the sand after the fall of Delhi and Kannauj. In 1459 AD, Rao Jodha, chief of Rathore clan of Rajputs, who claimed decent from Rama, the epic here of the Ramayana, laid the foundation of Jodhpur. A high stonewall protects the well-fortified city. The wall is nearly 10km in length and has eight gates facing various directions. Within, stands an imposing fort on a low range of sandstone hills, about 125m above the surrounding plains. Invincible! And dauntless in its league with time! The city lies at the foot of the hills. The clear distinction between the old and the new city is visible from the ramparts of the fort. On the other side of the city, facing the fort is the Umaid Bhawan Palace. One of the most spacious, sprawling and well-planned palaces in India. And from here, as you look at fort, a tantalizing view rises before your eyes at sunset. The peculiar slant of the sunset lends the desert landscape an awe-inspiring glow and the people, a chivalry undaunted.

- **Udaipur** **01 day**
Lake City: **08 January 2005**

About Udaipur

Maharana Udai Singh of the Sisodia dynasty founded the city of Udaipur in 1559 AD. It was a part of the Mewar kingdom. There are several palaces, lakes and temples in and around the city. Udaipur had 11 entry points or gates, of which five can be seen today. It is situated around Aravalli hills.

City Palace

The palace overlooks Pichchola Lake. The main entrance is the Tripolia, the triple arched gate. The notable sights in the palace are the peacock mosaics, the balcony and the ceramic art works.

Pichchola Lake

The lake has two lake palaces on it (see picture). The lake has around it hills, palaces and temples. Good spot for sightseeing.

Fateh Sagar

Another lake surrounded by hills. Maharana Fateh Singh constructed it. At the centre of the lake is a garden.

Ahar

About 3 km away is Ahar, the then Capital of the Mewar rulers.

Other sites

Other sites worth visiting are Jagdish temple, the largest in the town; Saheliyon-ki-Bari, a garden with fountains; Gulab Bagh, a rose garden.

- **Ahmedabad** **06 days**
City of Design: **09 - 14 January 2005**

About Ahmedabad | Gujarat State

Situated on the banks of the Sabarmati River, founded by Sultan Ahmed Shah in 1411 A.D., Ahmedabad is the largest city and a leading industrial centre in Gujarat. It is also called 'Manchester of the East' because of its thriving textile industry and a mention of this city is incomplete without mention of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. IIM- A. It is also home to several interesting museums.

The nine-night festival of Navratri is celebrated with the maximum fervor and splendor in Ahmedabad.

Kachchh

Kachchh is a fascinating land and no visit to Gujarat is complete without a sojourn to this peninsular district, well known for its wild ass sanctuary. It is known for producing exquisite handicrafts like embroidery, tie die fabrics, enameled silverware and other handicrafts. The great Rann of Kachchh is also a breeding ground for the flamingo, pelican and avocet species of birds.

Adalaj Wav

About 19 kms. north of Ahmedabad this stepwell is an architectural wonder built by Queen Rudabai and is certainly one of the finest monuments of Gujarat. It is a seven-storied structure in the form of a well with chambers one behind the other.

Akshardham

Akshardham, the highlight of Gandhinagar houses a beautiful Swaminarayan temple, with a theme park containing tableaux of the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The village Pethapur outside Gandhinagar is known for its woodcarving and traditional textile block printing.

Ambaji

Situated on the Arasur hill near Mount Abu, Ambaji is one of the most important places of pilgrimage in Gujarat, built of the finest quality of marble. It is the principal shrine of the goddess-Amba and is recognized as one of the original Shakti Pithas.

Baroda

Baroda, the City of Palaces has often been called the cultural capital of Gujarat and is filled with relics of its princely past.

It is also one of the corporate capitals with IPCL, ONGC and other major industries. There are numerous national and multi-national projects also coming up.

Calico Museum

Ahmedabad houses one of the finest textile museums in the world in one of Gujarat's famous carved wooden havelis. The museum displays a magnificent collection of rare textiles dating back to the 17th century. There is also an excellent reference library on textiles.

Cambay

Cambay is an old seaport to the southwest of Ahmedabad about 92 kms. During the Mughal era this region was called Cambay and was one of the important port and trading centers in India.

Chorwad Beach

Chorwad is a quaint little beach village about 66 kms. from Junagadh and the only beach in India where one can live in the timeless splendor of a palace built by the former Nawabs of Junagadh. It is ideal for weekend getaways and family picnics.

Dada Hari Vav (Stepped Well)

Gujarat's step wells or "baolis" are strange and unique and the Dada Hari Well built in 1499 is a magnificent masterpiece representing the typical Gujarati style of architecture. Entirely underground, they were built to overcome heat and dust. Behind the well is the tomb of Dada Hari.

Dakor

Dakor is a temple town dedicated to Lord Krishna, about 50 kms. from Vadodara. The temple with a striking image of Lord Krishna is the temple of Ranchodare, belonging to the golden period of Dwarks. The temple houses a tank containing several species of turtles regularly fed by the pilgrims.

Gandhi Ashram

The Gandhi Ashram situated alongside the Sabarmati River, was the nerve center for the Indian Freedom movement. The beautiful ashram complex with its shady trees offers a refuge from the loud streets of the city. There is a museum inside the Ashram complex.

Gandhinagar

Gandhinagar, the modern capital of Gujarat, was named after the father of the Nation. Lying on the banks of river Sabarmati it is the second planned city in India after Chandigarh. The famous Swaminarayan temple is also built in Gandhinagar.

Gir Forest & Sanctuary

Located about 50 kms from Junagadh is the Gir Forest, the only place in the world, outside Africa, where the lion can be seen in its natural habitat. This sight can be enjoyed on a guided jeep tour. One can also see animals like Chital, Nilgai, Sambar, Black Buck, Chinkara, Wild Pig, and Jackal etc.

Hatheesing Jain Temple

A rich Jain merchant built this temple outside Delhi Gate in 1850. It is built of pure white marble and profusely decorated with rich carvings, dedicated to Dharamnath, the 15th Jina or Jain apostle.

Hussain-Doshi's Gufa

Popularly known as Amdavad Ni Gufa it is an underground art gallery housing the collaborative effort of artist M. F. Hussain and the architect B. V. Doshi. This marvel of contemporary architecture was constructed using computer aided design and tribal initiative, adding a new dimension to viewing art.

Jama Masjid

Located in the centre of the old city, this congregational mosque was built by Sultan Ahmed Shah in 1423. Built in yellow sandstone, it combines the best of Hindu and Muslim styles of architecture, standing on 260 pillars supporting 15 domes at varying elevations.

Jamnagar

Jamnagar, historically called Nawanagar, or the new city, was one of the most important princely states of Saurashtra. It is about 310 kms from Ahmedabad via Rajkot and is often called Chotta Kashi or Benares, for its innumerable Hindu and Jain temples. It is known for its tie-&-dye work on fabrics, silken & gold embroidery.

Kandla

Kandla, a major seaport about 380 kms from Ahmedabad has single point mooring facilities with a free trade zone. The monument of Mahatma Gandhi and Nirva Sitieshwar Mahadev Temple are places of interest.

Kankaria Lake

One of the best places to witness the sunset in Ahmedabad is the artificial lake of Kankaria constructed in 1451. It attracts good bird life and has an island garden, called Nagina wadi.

Lakshmi Villas Palace

The Royal Family's residence is an extravagant building in Indo- Saracenic style.

Lothal

About 82 kms from Ahmedabad, this ancient city offers an incredible insight into one of the world's oldest urban cultures and the largest civilization of its time-the Indus valley civilization or Harappan culture.

Mahudi

This is a small village near Kalol 78 kms from Ahmedabad famous for Jinalaya of Ghantakarna Mahavir and Kotyark temple. There are thousands of people from different religions offering prayers besides Jain devotees. The temple's prasad-Sukhadi is not to be taken outside the temple.

Modhera

The Sun Temple (dedicated to the Sun God) is one of the finest examples of Indian temple architecture, built in 1026 A.D. It has spectacular carvings, fine architecture and traditional erotic sculpture.

Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary

About 60 kms. from Ahmedabad, is the delightful bird sanctuary visited by millions of magnificently colored birds in winter and spring. It harbors over 250 species of wetland birds. Winter migrants from the north including Rosy Pelicans, Flamingoes, White Storks, Brahminy Ducks and Herons visit Nal Sarovar.

Nazarbaug Palace

This palace was built in old classical style, used on ceremonial occasions by the Gaekwads. The royal Family heirlooms are on display.

Palitana

Amongst all the Jain temples, Palitana temples are considered to be the most sacred. Located on Shetrunjaya hills there are 863 temples, exquisitely carved in marble. No one is allowed to sleep overnight including the priest, because the temple city has been built as an abode for the Gods.

Patan

Patan located around 130 kms. from Ahmedabad, is rich in architectural marvels like the 11th century Rani-ki-wav step well and numerous temples, and textiles like the Patola silk sarees and Mushroom weaving, originating from the time of royalty.

Pavagadh

It is a beautiful excursion from Ahmedabad with the historic fortress on a mountain, the holy Hindu and Jain temples on the pinnacle and the medieval Islamic citadel of Champaner in the plains. It also offers fine hilly sceneries, lakes, the picturesque cable car ride and opportunities for trekking and rock climbing.

Pols

Pol (pronounced "pole") is derived from the Sanskrit word pratoli meaning entrance to an enclosed area. It is a housing cluster comprising many families of a particular group, linked by caste, profession, or religion.

Porbander

Porbander the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi situated about 395 kms from Ahmedabad is a picturesque seaport on the Arabian Sea, known as "White City" because of its white stone construction. Gandhiji's Kirti Mandir, Sudama Mandir, Bharat Mandir, Planetarium, and Chowpati are other places of interest.

Pratap Villas Palace

The Pratap Villas built, as the residence of the royal family, is an extravagant and flamboyant building in the Indo - Saracenic style, housing a collection of old armory and sculptures in bronze, marble & terra cotta.

Rajkot

The Rajput Chief Kunwar Vibhuji founded Rajkot, the former Capital of the princely state of Saurashtra in the 16th century. It is famous for its Bandhani Sarees, mirror-work, patchwork, beadwork and silk embroidery.

Rani Rupmati's Mosque

Named after the Hindu wife of Sultan Mehmed Beghara, this mosque was built between 1430 to 1440 A. D. having three domes supported by pillars with the central dome slightly elevated to allow natural light into the mosque. The tomb of Rani Rupmati is next to it.

Rani Sipri Mosque

Queen of Mahmud Shah Begda built this beautiful mosque in 1514. After the death of Rani Sipri, she was buried in the premises of the mosque.

Sarkhej Roza

The Sarkhej Roza is an elegant architectural creation remarkable for the use of pierced stone trellises and complete absence of arches. The peaceful atmosphere makes it an ideal retreat.

Siddi Bashir Mosque (Shaking Minarets)

The Sarkhej Roza is an elegant architectural creation remarkable for the use of pierced stone trellises and complete absence of arches. The peaceful atmosphere makes it an ideal retreat.

Sidi Sayed Jhali

The most famous mosque in Ahmedabad is Sidi Sayed Mosque, acclaimed for its splendid Jhali screen, framed, in the ten semi-circular windows. It is a superb example of delicate carving that transforms atone into filigree.

Somnath

Somnath is one of the 12 jyotirlingas of lord Shiva, offering a holy pilgrimage, a beach holiday and a number of places of historic, religious or scenic importance. The temple has imposing architecture, a 50-meter high shikara tower and a pretty Nandi.

Surat

Situated on the banks of river Tapi, Surat is a major industrial center with many textile mills. It was a great port city during the Mughal region from where pilgrims sailed to Mecca. It is famous for zari and brocades and is an important diamond-cutting center.

Teen Darwaza

The Teen Darwaza, the triple arched gateway was originally meant to serve as the royal entrance to the Royal Square. It was a trio of massive arches, from where emperor Jehangir and Noor Jehan used to watch the processions from the palace to the Jama Masjid.

The Baroda Museum And Art Gallery And The Maharaja

The Baroda museum and art gallery and the Maharaja Fateh Sigh Museum have excellent artwork collections by Indian artists and European Masters of Mughal miniatures and valuable palm leaf manuscripts of Buddhist and Jain origin.

- **Mumbai** **01 day**
New York of India: **15 January 2005**

About Mumbai

Mumbai's most famous landmark, The Gateway of India, is situated at Apollo Bunder. George Wicket designed it. It was built to commemorate the visit of King George V and Queen Mary to India in 1911. Through this magnificent monument, numerous viceroys and governors were welcomed to India as they disembarked from their steamers, hence the name.

Flora Fountain (Hutatma Chowk)

This marvelous fountain was built in 1869, in honor of Sir Henry Bartle and Edward Frere. It is situated in the heart of the Mumbai city at a junction of five streets. The fountain has a figure of "Flora", the Roman Goddess of Flowers at the top.

Chowpatty Beach

Chowpatty beach is situated on Marine Drive. This beach is well known for its stalls selling "Bhel-Puri and Pani - Puri chat" a favorite fast food among the Mumbaites and visitors to the city.

Juhu Beach

Juhu Beach is the most popular beach in Mumbai, which is 30 kms away from the heart of Mumbai. It is a long stretch of sandy beach from Santa Cruz to Vile-Parle. This is a very popular beach for picnic. Both these beaches are crowded on weekends.

Haji Ali

Haji Ali mosque, and the tomb of a Muslim saint, is located off shore, in the Arabian Sea opposite Mahalaxmi temple. During high tide the walkway to the mosque is submerged in the sea and it can be visited only during low tide.

Kamala Nehru Park & Hanging Gardens

The giant Old woman's shoe in the Kamala Nehru Park is very popular with children to play in. One gets a panoramic view of parts of the city from these parks situated at the height of Malabar Hill. When seen at night, the view of streetlights of Marine Drive resembles a dazzling bejeweled "Queen's Necklace". At sunset, the waterfall and fountains in the park are lit with colorful lights, which are worth seeing. The Hanging Gardens surrounded by beautiful flowerbeds and lush green lawns are very popular as picnic spots.

Mahalaxmi Temple

This temple is situated very close to the sea off Mahalaxmi. This temple has three beautiful images of Hindu goddesses, Mahalaxmi, Mahasaraswati and Mahakali, which are made of gold. During Navaratri festival, devoted Hindus throng this temple in great numbers to offer coconut, flowers and sweets to the goddesses.

Mount Mary Church

This is one of most prominent and splendid churches in Mumbai, situated in Bandra (West). During the month of September a week long fair is held which the people of all religions attend.

Mahalaxmi Race Course

Situated in Mahalaxmi, this racecourse is one of the best in the world. The racing season is for six months from October to April. It attracts huge crowds for heavy betting.

Nehru Planetarium and Science Centre

This Science Centre is named after Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister. It is situated in Worli. It has a computer laboratory, mobile science exhibition units, a heritage hall, an auditorium, inflatable dome planetarium, science library and a children's science park. The sky-show at the planetarium is very interesting with its narration, sound effects and slide projections, which combines entertainment with education. It has a library containing a large collection of books on astronomy, astrophysics and space sciences.

The Prince of Wales Museum

This museum stands not too far from the Gateway of India. It has a priceless collection of art, sculpture, china and other antiques. Carefully preserved, this mid-Victorian Gothic style building built in 1904 with beautiful gardens surrounding it, is worth visiting in Mumbai.

Taraporewala Aquarium

Situated on the Marine Drive, this aquarium has fish in varying shapes, sizes and color. It's a delight for children as well as grown-ups.

Victoria Gardens (Veermata Jeejabai Bhonsle Udyan)

These botanical and zoological gardens have an interesting collection of flora and fauna. Apart from these, it also has a beautiful gateway, an arched architectural screen and a museum building in the Greco-Roman Style. A large stone elephant at the entrance is also worth seeing. These gardens are situated in Byculla.

| | | |
|---------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Leave | Mumbai | 16 January 2005 |
| Arrive | Phoenix | 16 January 2005 |

Tips:

India has a well-established infrastructure for western travelers. You need just a little extra patience and consideration to have a wonderful experience. The transport and the range of hotels in some ways eclipse those you will find at home (except in speed and luxury) and you will comfortably get by with English in any established tourist town or city.

Health

Yellow fever vaccination is required for tourists coming from infected areas. Guests are requested to drink mineral water during their journeys. Good hospitals & dispensaries are available in most part of the country.

The following are guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for people traveling to the Indian subcontinent. The number one cause of illness is due to food and waterborne diseases that lead to a condition called traveler's diarrhea. The symptoms include diarrhea, abdominal bloating, nausea and vomiting, and general malaise. Viruses, bacteria, or parasites that have contaminated food or water sources can cause the infection. Even though the condition is rarely life threatening, it can put a real damper on your vacation plans because the symptoms can last from three to seven days. Therefore, it is advisable that you either drink from bottled water or boil it yourself. Carbonated beverages in cans and bottles are also deemed safe. You should avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes. If you are going to be in remote areas you may want to consider bringing along a 1-micron water filter and adding iodine tablets. These can be purchased from your local outdoor and camping equipment shop. With regards to food, you should only eat thoroughly cooked food or fruits or vegetables that you have peeled yourself. Be wary of eating food from stalls found on the side of the road or at train stations no matter how tempting the delicacies. If you are to get diarrhea, make sure that you are able to remain well hydrated and seek medical attention if possible. An antibiotic called ciprofloxacin may help to shorten the length of the illness if bacteria cause it. Please ask your physician if this would be appropriate for you to take on your journey.

Malaria, another preventable infection, if left untreated can be potentially life threatening. Malaria is a serious disease that is transmitted to humans by a bite from an infected Anopheles mosquito. It can present as a flu-like illness with symptoms that include cyclical fevers and chills, headaches, muscle pain, and fatigue. Malaria can lead to anemia, jaundice, kidney failure, and eventually coma and death. Therefore, it is especially important to take the appropriate precautions. Do not believe that just because you are in a major city such as Dehli or Bombay that you will be safe. All areas in India, except for certain regions above 2000 meters (6561 feet) in elevation, where no mosquitoes live, are at risk.

The best course of action is prevention. A few weeks prior to your departure you should obtain anti-malarial pills from your physician. The most common medications are mefloquine (brand name Lariam) and doxycycline. You will only need to take one or the other for your trip. Mefloquine is a 250 mg tablet that is started one week before arrival in a malaria-risk region. From then on, it is taken once a week on the same day and completed four weeks after leaving the area. Doxycycline, on the other hand, is a 100 mg tablet that is taken once a day starting several days prior to arrival in a malaria-risk region and continuing for four weeks after departure. There are side effects to both medications, which your doctor will advise you about. Doxycycline is contraindicated in pregnancy and in children under the age of eight.

However, in spite of taking anti-malarial, you will not be completely immune from contracting the disease. It is important that protect yourself from being bitten by mosquitoes. This involves wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants, using insect repellent containing DEET, and mosquito netting, coated with the insecticide permethrin, if not in well enclosed housing. Not only will these precautions help prevent malaria, but also diseases such as dengue, filariasis, Japanese encephalitis, leishmaniasis and plague which are also carried by insects in this region of the world. One final note of caution, malaria can occur up to one year after leaving a region of risk. Therefore, if you succumb to a flu-like illness or a fever during this period, you should seek prompt medical attention and notify your physician about your travel history.

Overall, it is important to make an appointment with your doctor at least four to six weeks prior to your journey. This will help you prepare appropriately for the areas that you will be visiting, including allowing for the recommended vaccinations to take effect. These vaccines include Hepatitis A and B, booster doses of tetanus-diphtheria and measles, and a one-time adult dose of polio for adults. If you plan to be in rural areas or come in contact with wild or domestic animals, you should inquire about getting vaccinations against Japanese encephalitis, rabies and typhoid. A list of these vaccines and further information regarding traveler's health can be obtained on the web at www.cdc.gov.

Tourist Visa Info

All Foreign visitors are required to obtain Indian visas and same can be obtained from Indian Consular Offices around the world. Maximum period for Tourist visas is 180 days. Recent passport size photographs are required. We suggest you to obtain multiple entry visa if visiting neighboring countries of Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Customs Formalities

All visitors are required to make pre baggage declaration. There are Red and Green channels existing at all Indian International airports. Though the rules and regulations may vary from time to time, generally the free allowances include all personal belongings.

Currency Regulations

There are no restrictions on the import of foreign currency in Travelers Chouses. However, visitors in possession of more than US \$10,000 (presently) or equivalent thereof in currency notes are required to obtain a Currency Declaration Form before leaving customs. This will help them on departure to take out of India the amount so declared. All money should be changed at banks or at official Money Changers. The tourists receive a currency exchange memo for each transaction. These memos should be retained as these are required for re-exchange of any Indian currency while leaving India, and for certain official purchases such as airline, rail tickets etc.

Clothing

India has three major seasons: Summer, Winter and Monsoon. The summer months (April - June) are hot in most parts of India. The winter (November - March) is pleasant throughout India with bright sunny days. The monsoons break at the beginning of June on the south west coast of India, gradually breaking in all parts of the country. During the winter months, light woollens and for rest of the year tropical and cottons are recommended. In short, bare minimum - if you buy out there, you blend in better anyway. During winter months in the North and the highlands in the South do get cold at night, but at all other times light weight cotton is best. Respect their culture, discreet clothing for women especially. For footwear - comfortable sandals are all you need.

Foreign Travel Tax

Government of India Airport Tax is INR 500 on departure. For departure to neighboring countries like Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Maldives and Pakistan the Airport Tax is INR 250. If a tourist is visiting neighboring countries, and does not return to India for final departure the airport tax levied at the time of departure to neighboring countries would be INR 500.

What to Take

As little as possible, you can buy just about everything when you are out there. Perhaps the only area in which buying in India is neither cheaper nor easily available is technical equipment (i.e. found in camping/trekking shops).

Email/Internet

Now huge in India, particularly on all well trodden travelers paths. Connection can be slow but you will rarely fail to find a selection of Internet cafes. Good tip is to duplicate records of Travelers Check numbers, passport and plane details, etc. on your Yahoo/Hotmail accounts.

General Visitors Tips

- Besides the originals, a copy of your passport, travel visas, airline tickets and travel documents. A list of any charge or credit cards you are carrying. Remember to keep the copies separate from the originals.
- An International Driving License, which can be obtained through the automobile association. Even if you are not planning to drive, bring your driver's license with photo for identification.
- Consider purchasing special international health insurance and medical evaluation plan programs.
- Avoid drinking water from an unknown source. When in doubt ask for "Bisleri, Kinley, Aqua Fina, Himalaya, etc" mineral water(check the seal). As a further precaution bring water-purifying tablets.
- As in any location, there are those who steal from others, so follow the same rules of safety that you follow traveling anywhere else with respect to using hotel lock boxes, and keeping travel documents safe. When in public places, keep them in your hotel, or with you all the time when moving about.

Men:

Don't carry a traditional wallet with you, the kind you put in your pocket (front or back).

Women:

Avoid keeping valuables in a purse, which can be easily snatched off your shoulder.

Consider using an "interior wallet", the kind that is either fastened around your neck, draped from a belt loop or worn, with a Velcro fastener, around the calf or ankle. All three kinds are concealed underneath clothing.

- Taxis (cabs)/Auto Rickshaw (3 wheeler) are available from all hotels, and you negotiate the rate before commencing your journey. Use only authorized, properly identified taxis and buses. Avoid taxis that pick up additional passengers. Don't accept an offer to share a taxi to your hotel unless you know the individual.
- Be wary of imposter porters or guides. Assure they are properly uniformed or identified. Never leave your luggage, briefcase or other items unattended.
- The voltage used is 220 volts (the U.S. uses 120 volts). You can purchase a converter at most hardware stores for appliances that do not switch to 220V.
- There are some areas in India where malaria is still prevalent. Prior to your departure, get a prescription from your doctor for some anti malarial tablets.
- Pharmacies or chemists are available in every little town and village and you can buy medication. In case you need to see a doctor for a specific condition, ask for help from your hotel (most have doctors on call) or your tour operator. The cost of visiting a doctor is fairly low(less than a dollar) compared to western countries.
- Do remember to bring some insect repellent, mosquito coils or even an electronic repellent. Mosquitoes in India can be fierce.
- Avoid foods, which have been laid out in the open, avoid sweets and candies from local markets.
- Wash fruits before eating them.
- Do carry sunglasses, sunscreen and a hat.
- Always respect religious shrines and places of worship, Some places require visitors to observe a decent dress code. Take care not to violate any taboos in a mosque or a temple.
- Change currency only from official moneychangers. Remember to retain the currency Exchange receipts after each transaction. You will need them for re-exchange on departure.
- Tipping is a matter of personal discretion. Although bills normally include a service charge, it is customary to tip in restaurants and other places that cater to tourists.
- Photography is prohibited in places of military importance, railway stations, bridges, airports and military installations.
- If ever you land in trouble, contact your Embassy and nearest Police Station.
- In a Indian Police Station always speak with the Senior Inspector in Charge even if you have to wait couple of hours.

Credit Cards

Large establishments including hotels, shops, and airlines generally accept American Express, Master Charge, Visa and Diners Club credit cards.

Time

GMT + 5 1/2 hours (time difference)

The standard time for India is calculated from Allahabad and is common to all cities i.e. only one time zone for India.