Itinerary

15 Day Best of India & Sri Lanka Small Group Tour

***IMPORTANT NOTE: Any extra nights, optional tours or other amendments, will not be visible on this itinerary.**

DAY 1: Arrive Delhi

Your adventure to the vibrant heart of Incredible India commences with a convenient airport pickup at Delhi International Airport. Brace yourself for an exhilarating immersion in a tapestry of sights, sounds, and aromas as you journey through the dynamic streets of this bustling metropolis en route to your accommodation. Once you've checked into your hotel, the remainder of your day is yours to enjoy at your leisure, providing the perfect opportunity to relax or explore the local surroundings as you wish.
MEALS: Nil

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Hotel Florence (Deluxe Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Udman Hotel Panchshila Park (Superior Room)

DAY 2: Delhi City Tour

Today's journey takes you on an extensive city tour of Delhi, where you'll encounter some of the city's most iconic landmarks. Start your exploration at the majestic Red Fort, a pivotal site in India's history, before making your way to the Jama Masjid, the largest mosque in India, renowned for its imposing structure and cultural significance. Wander through the bustling lanes of the Chandni Chowk market, where an optional rickshaw ride offers a unique vantage point of the vibrant local life (please note, the rickshaw ride is not included in the tour price). Later, pay a visit to Raj Ghat, the solemn memorial dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi, reflecting on his enduring legacy. Conclude your tour with a return to your hotel in the afternoon, leaving the evening free for you to relax or explore more of Delhi at your own pace.
MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Hotel Florence (Deluxe Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Udman Hotel Panchshila Park (Superior Room)

DAY 3: Delhi ~ Agra

Today marks a special highlight of your journey as you visit the Taj Mahal, one of the Seven Wonders of the World and an iconic symbol of love. Constructed over 22 years by the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan in honour of his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal, the Taj Mahal stands as a testament to enduring love and architectural grandeur (please note, the Taj Mahal is closed on Fridays).
After enjoying breakfast, we'll set off from Delhi for the scenic four-hour drive to Agra. Upon arrival, you'll have the opportunity to settle into your accommodation and freshen up. We then proceed to explore the

Agra Fort, an impressive fortress built by three successive Mughal Emperors starting with Akbar the Great. This fort is not only a stunning example of Mughal architecture but also a storied palace that offers a window into the regal lifestyle of the emperors.

As the day wanes, we'll head to the Taj Mahal to catch the sunset—a truly magical time. The changing colours of the sky cast different hues on the marble of the Taj, providing a breathtaking backdrop. Entrance fees are included, allowing you full access to this magnificent monument. Spend your time wandering through the lush gardens, exploring the intricate carvings and quiet corners of the complex, and soaking in the peaceful, awe-inspiring atmosphere as the sun sets in a warm, hazy glow. This experience promises not only a visual feast but also an emotional connection with history and beauty.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): The Retreat Hotel (Standard Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Hotel Royale Regent (Deluxe Room)

DAY 4: Agra ~ Fatehpur Sikri ~ Jaipur

Today's itinerary involves an exhilarating five-hour journey to Jaipur, affectionately known as the Pink City. En route, we'll make a fascinating stop at Fatehpur Sikri, an architectural marvel built in the 17th century by Emperor Akbar using red sandstone. This city was envisioned as a grand capital but was abandoned shortly after just 15 years due to acute water shortages and political instability. Although entrance fees are not included, this stop offers a unique glimpse into the ambitious, yet transient dreams of a powerful Mughal ruler.
After exploring Fatehpur Sikri, we will continue our drive to Jaipur. As the capital of Rajasthan, Jaipur is celebrated for its regal palaces and vibrant bazaars brimming with textiles, pottery, jewellery, and a diverse array of folk arts and handicrafts. This city is a true shopper’s paradise, offering endless opportunities to purchase unique and exquisite items.

Spend your afternoon immersed in the local culture; wander through the bustling markets, engage in spirited haggling to secure the best prices, and enjoy interactions with the friendly locals. Exploring these bazaars not only allows you to collect beautiful souvenirs but also offers deep insights into the artistic heritage and lively community spirit of Jaipur. This hands-on experience is one of the most authentic ways to connect with the heart and soul of this historic city.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Dera Park Prime (Superior Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Ramada by Wyndham Jaipur (Deluxe Room)

DAY 5: Jaipur City Tour

Immerse yourself in a full day of exploration in the enchanting city of Jaipur, where history and culture vividly come to life. Our day begins with a visit to the majestic Amber Fort, a grandiose complex that combines stunning white marble with shades of yellow and pink sandstone, creating a visual spectacle that reflects the opulence of Rajput architecture. Please note that the entrance fee to the fort is not included in the tour.

Inside the fort, you'll explore notable sections such as the Jag Mandir or the Hall of Victory, renowned for its detailed decorations and strategic importance. Another highlight is the Sheesh Mahal or the 'Mirror Palace,' a mesmerizing room whose walls and ceiling are intricately adorned with thousands of mirror tiles imported from Belgium, designed to reflect any streak of light into a room ablaze with glittering illumination.

The journey continues to the City Palace, the royal residence of Jaipur's ruling family. This palace not only serves as a home to the royals but also houses a museum that showcases the rich heritage of the Rajputana era. Part of the palace still functions as the royal residence, adding a living history aspect to your visit.

Lastly, we will explore the Armoury museum within the palace grounds. This museum houses an impressive collection of antique weaponry, including pistols, blunderbusses, swords, rifles, and daggers, each piece narrating a story of battles and bravery. This comprehensive collection provides a unique insight into the martial history of the region, highlighting the craftsmanship and strategic advancements of the era.

This full day of sightseeing in Jaipur offers a deep dive into its royal past, architectural grandeur, and the enduring legacies of its rulers, making it a memorable part of your Indian adventure.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Dera Park Prime (Superior Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Ramada by Wyndham Jaipur (Deluxe Room)

DAY 6: Jaipur Free Day

Dedicate a full day to leisurely exploring Jaipur, delving into its vibrant culture and rich history at your own rhythm. Start your day wandering through the bustling local markets where you can practice your bargaining skills. These markets are treasure troves of handicrafts, textiles, and unique souvenirs that make perfect gifts and mementos.
Jaipur is also renowned for its exquisite gemstones and jewellery. Take advantage of being in the global hub of precious stones to acquire some splendid pieces of jewellery. Whether you're looking for traditional Rajasthani designs or something more contemporary, the skilled jewellers here can offer you beautifully crafted pieces that are sure to evoke envy from your friends back home.

As the day winds down, don't miss the chance to witness the spectacular light and sound show at Amber Fort. Held every evening, this show is a dazzling display of lights that illuminates the fort in vibrant colours, set to a narrative that recounts the glorious history and legendary tales of the Rajput kings. This experience, though not included in your tour package, comes highly recommended for its captivating blend of art, history, and technology. Be sure to ask your driver for details and assistance in attending this mesmerizing spectacle. This is a wonderful way to conclude a day in Jaipur, surrounded by the illuminated legacy of its rulers.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Dera Park Prime (Superior Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Ramada by Wyndham Jaipur (Deluxe Room)

DAY 7: Jaipur ~ Delhi

Today begins with an early departure as we set out on our journey back to Delhi. We'll be starting the drive between 7:00 and 7:30 AM, embarking on a roughly six-hour return trip. Along the way, we'll make a stop for lunch to enjoy some local cuisine and take another break to stretch our legs and refresh.

Upon arriving in Delhi around 3:00 to 3:30 PM, we will proceed directly to our hotel. Here, you'll have a few hours to relax and unwind from the day's travel.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Hotel Florence (Deluxe Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Udman Hotel Panchshila Park (Superior Room)

DAY 8: Delhi ~ Negombo, Sri Lanka

Today marks the next phase of your journey as you transition from the bustling streets of Delhi to the tropical serenity of Colombo. You will be transferred to Delhi Airport in ample time to board your flight to Sri Lanka. Upon your arrival in Colombo, a representative will be waiting to greet you and facilitate a smooth transfer to your hotel in Negombo.
Once you've settled into your accommodation, the remainder of your day is yours to enjoy at your leisure. This is a perfect opportunity to relax after your travels or explore the coastal town of Negombo. You might want to take a stroll along the beach, visit local shops, or simply unwind at your hotel. This relaxed pace will help you adjust and prepare for the exciting activities and explorations that await you in Sri Lanka.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Lavinia Hotel (Deluxe Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Jetwing Sea (Standard Room)

DAY 9: Negombo ~ Sigiriya ~ Dambulla

Rise early this morning for a visit to the Negombo fish market. Morning is the best time to visit the market – your leader will help you navigate the organised frenzy of vendors displaying delicacies like crab, lobsters, and squid.
Say goodbye to Negombo and make the drive to Dambulla, where you'll spend the next two nights. Settle into your hotel then in the late afternoon, head out for one of the highlights of any visit to Sri Lanka, a visit to the magnificent palace of Sigiriya (Lion Rock). This dramatic rocky outcrop, rising from the surrounding plains is topped by a ruined palace. It's a good workout to get to the top – your leader will share stories of the ancient civilization who once lived atop the rock as you climb, and the sight at the top makes it well worth it. In the evening, return to Dambulla.

Special Information:

Today's total driving time is approximately 5 hours.

The visit to Lion Rock takes around 3.5 hours in total. From the Lion's Paw there is a steep, 30-minute climb over often narrow walkways and steps to reach all the points of interest at the site. Those who do not want to climb can wait at the Lion's Paw until the rest of the group return. You must climb to access sites like the water garden, boulder garden, frescoes, and the mirror wall.

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Lario Resort (Standard Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Sigiriana Resort by Thilanka (Deluxe Room)

OPTIONAL TOURS: Sigiriya Lions Rock $70 pp

DAY 10: Polonnaruwa ~ Minneriya Elephant Safari

Morning optional activity to Polonnaruwa ($110AUD per person includes entrance fee and extra transfer cost - approximately 1.5 hours), the capital of the Indian Chola Dynasty after Anuradhapura was conquered in the late 10th century. These ruins are close together and generally in much better repair than those you have just seen. Cycling amid the remains of 1000-year-old Polonnaruwa is once again the best way to get around. Once the heat of the day has eased, you'll visit more palaces, temples, and stupas. A likely highlight will be the massive stone Buddhas: 14-metre-high granite carvings of the iconic reclining Buddha which represent the zenith of Sinhalese rock carving. You'll also visit the well laid-out museum, which has scale models of many of the buildings to show how they would have existed in their time.
In the evening enjoy a game drive in the Minneriya National Park (Approximate 40 Mins) Minneriya National Park is a haven for flora and fauna. Being part of the elephant corridor, which joins up with Kaudulla National Park and Wasgomuwa National Park, you have guaranteed sightings of elephants throughout the year. Every year during August to October, one of the most awesome wildlife spectacles “The Gathering” takes place. Over 300 elephants are seen making their way to Minneriya tank as the ancient tank slowly dries up giving way to fresh grass and shoots which is a feast in abundance. Apart from elephants, there is a huge species of birds, mammals, reptiles, fishes, butterflies, etc. The highlight of the park is the Minneriya reservoir with its historical importance, built in 3rd century AD by the famous monarch King Mahasen. It covers an area of 4,670 acres. Return to your hotel and spend the rest of the day at leisure.

Special Information:

Depending on the period of the year / weather we will provide the safari at different national parks with prior notice, Kaudulla National Park or Eco Park which are located within the same region.

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Lario Resort (Standard Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Sigiriana Resort by Thilanka (Deluxe Room)

OPTIONAL TOURS: Polonnaruwa AUD$125 pp | Cycle Hire $12 pp | Picnic Lunch $17 pp

DAY 11: Dambulla Cave Temple ~ Kandy

This morning you will take a short drive to the incredible Dambulla Cave Temple. Here you’ll discover five caves filled with around 150 beautiful statues and paintings of Buddha – some as many as 2000 years old. Explore the magical cave complex as your leader explains why this World Heritage-listed site has been a place of worship for thousands of years. In the afternoon, start your journey to Kandy. Along the way, stop off in the city of Matale where you will visit a local spice garden and learn about the spices that have played such an important role in Sri Lanka’s cultural heritage. Continue to Kandy where you’ll have a

free evening to explore. Though it's the second-largest city in the country, Kandy maintains a laidback atmosphere. Perhaps take a peaceful stroll around the city's centre piece lake.

Special Information:

Today's total driving time is approximately 2.5 hours.

Please note that there are many steps to the caves and a dress code which requires you to remove your shoes and cover up your shoulders and legs.

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Suisse Hotel (Standard Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Thilanka Hotel (Deluxe Room)

DAY 12: Kandy ~ Cultural Show

Encircled by verdant hill country and home to a picturesque lake, bustling market, old shops and some great restaurants, Kandy is one of Sri Lanka's most pleasant cities. It was at one time also home to Sri Lanka's last king, who managing to resist European control long after the coastal areas had surrendered. This morning optional activity - you'll can visit Dalada Maligawa (the Temple of the Tooth), which houses the country's most sacred relic: a tooth said to be the Buddha's. Pilgrims have been coming to pay homage at this site since the 16th century.
Visit the magnificent Peradeniya Botanical Gardens with its immense fig tree and impressive orchid collection. Considered among the finest botanical gardens in all of Asia, this is a great spot for the kids to run around in. Next up, witness the cultural show. In the early evening, join a Local family to spoil your sweet tooth with a Kandyan sweet-filled Sri Lankan dinner and cooking class.

Special Information:

When visiting the Temples, you must take your hats and shoes off, do not leave your shoes at the side of the road or the monkeys will run off with them. Store them with the 'shoe keepers' for a small charge or put them in your rucksack.

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Suisse Hotel (Standard Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Thilanka Hotel (Deluxe Room)

OPTIONAL TOURS: Temple of The Tooth AUD$14 pp

DAY 13: Kandy ~ Ella ~ Scenic Train to Nanu Oya ~ Nuwara Eliya

Depart Kandy and drive to Ella. From Ella take the 3:30pm scenic train journey to Nanu Oya. Upon arrival into Nanu Oya, you will be transferred to Nuwara Eliya. Nestled even deeper into tea plantation country, Nuwara Eliya sits at an elevation of 1800 metres, making it one of the coolest regions in Sri Lanka. Favoured by the Scots and English during the colonial-era, remnants of the past can be seen in sculpted gardens and manor homes decorating the city today. In the evening head to the sky-scraping Single Tree temple and embark on a short 40- minute hike, taking in spectacular views of the surrounding hills and tea

fields.
Note: Due to the weather event late 2025 some parts of the track are unusable, we have amended the itinerary accordingly. When the main track reopens we will revert back to the original itinerary which uses the train track from Kandy to Nanu Oya

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Oak-Ray Summer Hill Breeze (Deluxe Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Mirage Kings Cottage (Deluxe Room)

DAY 14: Tea Factory Tour ~ Colombo

Make a morning visit to the Pedro Tea Estate. Built in 1885, this fascinating factory still features some original pieces of machinery. You'll have a new appreciation for your humble morning brew after learning about the production process and discovering how the finest tea leaves are transformed into Ceylon black tea. If touring the factory inspires a thirst, you'll have the chance to sample some of the final product yourself. Thereafter, make your way to the Colombo.
As the capital city of Sri Lanka, Colombo holds the lifeblood of our island amidst a bustling array of cultural, shopping, and dining experiences. At the heart of the city is the picturesque Beira Lake, which hosts the Seema Malaka and adjacent Gangaramaya Temples against the backdrop of Colombo's rising futuristic skyline. A step back in time, however, is best taken at the National Museum – a refurbished mansion of a colonial governor, which sits close to the lush Viharamahadevi Park as well as the historic Independence Square.

Special Information:

Today's total driving time is approximately 5.30 hours.

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): The Ocean Colombo (Superior Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Radisson Hotel Colombo (Superior Room)

DAY 15: End of Tour ~ Departure

Following breakfast, you'll be taken to the airport for your return flight home. Alternatively, if you wish, you can choose to extend your stay in Sri Lanka by adding on an optional extension to the picturesque beachside town of Hikkaduwa.
MEALS: Breakfast

OPTIONAL HIKKADUWA BEACH EXTENSION

DAY 15: Colombo ~ Hikkaduwa

Today you will be transferred to Hikkaduwa. After checking into your hotel, you can spend the rest of the day at your leisure.

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Citrus Hikkaduwa (Superior Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Hikka Tranz by Cinnamon (Superior Room)

DAY 16: Hikkaduwa Free Day

Today, enjoy a day of leisure in Hikkaduwa. You have the freedom to explore this beautiful coastal town at your own pace. Whether you choose to relax on the stunning beaches, take a swim in the clear blue waters, or explore the vibrant local markets, the day is yours to spend as you wish. Take this opportunity to unwind and soak in the unique charm of Hikkaduwa.
MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Citrus Hikkaduwa (Superior Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Hikka Tranz by Cinnamon (Superior Room)

DAY 17: Hikkaduwa Free Day

Today, enjoy a day of leisure in Hikkaduwa. You have the freedom to explore this beautiful coastal town at your own pace. Whether you choose to relax on the stunning beaches, take a swim in the clear blue waters, or explore the vibrant local markets, the day is yours to spend as you wish. Take this opportunity to unwind and soak in the unique charm of Hikkaduwa.
MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Citrus Hikkaduwa (Superior Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Hikka Tranz by Cinnamon (Superior Room)

DAY 18: End of Tour ~ Departure

After breakfast and checking out of your hotel, meet your driver for your transfer to Colombo Airport in time for your flight home.
MEALS: Breakfast