

INDIA, FOOTSTEPS OF LORD BUDDHA

13 Days / 12 Nights



★ Anglo Indiago Travels (P) Limited ★

ROUTE: Delhi – Agra – Lucknow – Sravasti – Lumbini – Kushinagar – Vaishali - Patna – Nalanda-Rajgir- Bodhgaya – Varanasi – Delhi – Departure

Day 01 Arrive Delhi

Upon arrival at Delhi Airport, you will be met by your car with chauffeur for the short transfer to your hotel for night stay. Rest of the day free. No meals neither early check in is Included on day1.

Day 02 in Delhi

Breakfast. Full day sightseeing of Delhi with guide. You could include some of the following: Old Delhi, Red Fort from outside, the Jama Masjid Mosque, with a rickshaw ride through the Chandni Chowk visiting the Spice, Wedding and Silver Markets and then the Birla Temple, Parliament Buildings of Sir Edwin Lutyens, India Gate and Humayun's Tomb.

Start the morning with a visit to Old Delhi. Built in the first half of the 17th Century by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan this old city is still a dense network of overcrowded homes, markets and endless alleyways dominated by the enormous Red Fort. Go by cycle rickshaw through Chandni Chowk (closed on a Sunday) a bustling thoroughfare of shops, craftsmen's workshops, mosques, and temples. Continue onto Jama Masjid the largest mosque in India and then to the Red Fort (closed on a Monday) with its imposing appearance and towering entrance. Also visit Rajghat, the cremation place of Mahatma Gandhi.

Continue to visit the Qutub Minar complex housing an impressive 13th Century 72m victory tower.

In the afternoon drive south to New Delhi designed by British architect Sir Edwin Lutyens in a combination of western and eastern styles. Proceed up to Rashtrapati Bhavan once the Viceroy's abode but now the official residence of the President of India and then across to the eastern end of the Rajpath to the imposing India Gate. This war memorial, designed by Lutyens, commemorates the Indian soldiers who died in the First World War, on the Northwest Frontier and in the Afghan War of 1919 and, most recently, in the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971. Overnight stay in Delhi.

Day 03: Delhi – Agra (200 Kms/3 Hrs appx)

Breakfast at Hotel and drive to Agra. In the afternoon sightseeing with an English-speaking guide. We would suggest to begin your day visiting Taj Mahal (closed on Fridays) , the tomb of Mumtaz, beloved wife of the emperor Shah Jahan and arguably the greatest monument to love, built by Shah Jahan as a memorial to his wife Mumtaz & a building world renowned for its power and beauty. The craftsmanship is outstanding with semi-precious stones inlaid into the marble in beautiful patterns, a process known as pietra dura, whilst the white marble reflects every change in light allowing the Taj to appear to change its hue according to the light & time of day.

Continue to visit the imposing Agra Fort on the banks of the River Yamuna which was established by the Mughal Emperor Akbar in 1565. This powerful imperial fortress dominates the centre of the city & the red sandstone walls enclose a vast area which comprises of palaces, impressive reception rooms and two exceptionally beautiful mosques. Afterwards

Rest of the time free. Night in Agra.

Day 04: Agra – Lucknow (336 Kms/5 Hrs)

Breakfast at hotel and drive to Lucknow – Capital of Uttar Pradesh. Arrive and check-in at hotel. Lucknow is one of the largest cities in Uttar Pradesh and well known for its magnificently elaborate late Mughal-style architecture built by the Nawabs of Oudh. The ruined British Residency is another attraction which was the site of two epic sieges during the 1857 Indian Mutiny. The city of Lucknow is famous for its Awadhi cuisine and Mutton biriyani. Afternoon city tour of Lucknow including visit to Chotta and Bada Imam Bada. Overnight

Day 05 : Lucknow – Sravasti (175 Kms/4 Hrs appx)

Breakfast at hotel and drive to Sravasti - here Lord Buddha spent 24 years and performed the miracle of sitting on a 1000 petalled lotus and multiplying himself a million times while fire and water came from his body. Arrive & check-in at Hotel. Afternoon Visit Sahet-Mahet, Angulimal's Cave. Overnight

Day 06: Sravasti – Lumbini (175 Kms/5-6 hrs)

Breakfast at Hotel and drive to Lumbini via visiting Kapilavastu en route. Lumbini, a UNESCO World Heritage Site is believed to be the place where Siddharta Gautama - Buddha was born. In the late 1970's by a Japanese architect to make Lumbini a place of both pilgrimage and a tourist attraction too. So now there is a Japanese stupa, a Burmese style pagoda, a Chinese style temple, some formal gardens, and a museum. Arrive and check-in at Hotel. Afternoon visit Mayadevi Temple, Ahokan Pillar, Garden and Pond.

Day 07: Lumbini – Kushinagar (160 Kms/4 hrs appx)

After breakfast drive to Kushinagar. Lord Buddha is reputed to have breathed his last words " Decay is inherent in all components things" and expired at Kushinagar. Kushinagar is a prominent Buddhism pilgrimage site. It is believed to be the place where Gautam Buddha attained Mahaparinirvana, making Kushinagar an international tourist destination, especially among the followers of Buddhism. It is also believed that Lord Buddha died in Kushinagar after which Emperor Ashoka built a stupa here to mark the parinirvana site. The stupa houses the reclining nirvana statue of Buddha which depicts the "dying Buddha" reclining of the right side. Arrive and check-in at hotel. Evening Visit cremation stupa, Mahaparinirvana temple and modern IndoJapan-Sri Lanka Buddhist center.

Day 08 : Kushinagar – Vaishali – Patna (240 Kms/7-8 Hrs)

Breakfast at hotel and drive to Patna en route visiting Vaishali (where Buddha preached his last sermon) visit Ashoka pillar, Stupas, Coronation Tank, Bawan Pokhar Temple, Chaumukhi Mahadeva etc. Patna is one of the oldest cities in the world and holds significant religious and spiritual importance as it is a gateway to pilgrimage sites of Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists. Arrive Patna and check-in at hotel. Overnight

Day 09 : Patna – Nalanda – Rajgir - Bodhgaya (164 Kms/5 Hrs appx)

Today drive to Bodhgaya via visiting Nalanda - 19 Kms from Rajgir, Founded in 5th century BC, was one of the world's great universities and an important Buddhist center until its sacking by the Afghans in the 12th century. A credit to the curators, the site is peaceful, clean, well-maintained, and perfumed with the scent of roses and shrubs. Also visit Rajgir - Buddha spent 12 years and the first Buddha council after Buddha attained nirvana was held here. Continue drive to Bodhgaya for night stay.

Day 10: Bodhgaya

Full day in Bodhgaya visiting Bodhi tree, Mahabodhi Temple- which marks the spot where Buddha gained enlightenment and set out on his life of preaching, Monasteries, Magadh university etc. Also, visit Sujata Stupa, also Sujata Kuti stupa or Sujata Garh, is a Buddhist stupa located in the village of Senanigrama, slightly east of Bodhgaya. It is a walk of about 20 minutes, from Bodh Gaya to Sujata Stupa. The stupa was dedicated to the milkmaid Sujata, from the village of Bakraur, who is said to have fed Gautam Buddha milk and rice at this spot as he was sitting under a Banyan tree, thereby ending his seven years of fasting and allowing him to attain illumination through the Middle way.

Day 11: Bodhgaya – Varanasi (260 Kms/5-6 Hrs)

Breakfast at hotel and drive to Varanasi, one of the most holy places for Hindus. Built on the banks of the River Ganges, this visit will show you the spiritual side of the Indian culture.

Enjoy evening ceremony at the Ganges River. The best way to reach by man-pulling rickshaw. The evening Ganga Aarti is an hour-long ritual performed daily at the bank of the main Ghats, absolutely do not miss the grand 'aarti' at Dasaashwamedh Ghat, conducted every sunset by five white-robed priests. These five young men sway in seemingly choreographed movements, worshiping the river goddess with incense, camphor, flowers, and earthen lamps. Thousands of illuminated lamps are immersed in the waters of the holy Ganges and the floating lamps add a divine look to the river at dusk. Sit with some 'sadhu' and enjoy knowing their lifestyle from proximity. You might even run into someone who is more than 100 years old!

The Ghats also provide a good option for photography with serene temples and their bustling courtyards creating a perfect back drop. Night stay in Varanasi.

Day 12: Varanasi

Early morning during sunrise boat ride over the river Ganges to witness the sunrise and the many pilgrims performing their morning rituals. Along the banks there are more than 100 hundred temples and Ghats. This is a "must do"! Return to hotel for breakfast. Later proceed for a sightseeing tour of Varanasi visiting the Vishwanath Temple, erected by Rani Ahalayabai Holker of Indore in 1776. The gold plating on the shikharas was a gift of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1835. It is therefore popularly known as Golden Temple. Bharat Mata Temple is a novel temple dedicated to Mother India, which instead of the customary gods and the goddesses' houses one of the most perfect relief maps of India carved out of marble. Tulsi Manas Temple was constructed in 1964 by a philanthropist family of Varanasi and is dedicated to Lord Rama. The temple is situated at the place where the great seer of the medieval ages, Tulsidas, lived and wrote the epic Ramcharitmanas expounding the history and deeds of Lord Rama who was an incarnation of the god Vishnu

Afternoon visit to Sarnath, 10km from Varanasi and the place of Buddha's first sermon after he got enlightened in Bodh Gaya. Later, Emperor Ashoka built magnificent stupas and monasteries here which were for the main part destroyed by Muslim invaders. Many of the monuments are set in pleasant gardens, the most important being the Dhamekh Stupa. Return to Varanasi for your overnight stay.

Day 13: Varanasi – Delhi (Fly)

Breakfast at hotel. Transfer to airport to connect flight for Delhi. Arrive and connect onward flight back home.

End of the services...

NOTE. This tour can be modified as per your requirements.