



SAMPLE ITINERARY

Page 1

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INDIA: THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE

B = Breakfast; L = Lunch; D = Dinner

Day 1: Departure for India (meals en route)

Please arrive early for your international flight for New Delhi (please double check with Friendship Ambassadors for check-in times and requirements). Try to get some rest on board. To minimize the effects of jet lag, we advise to avoid sugar, caffeine, salt and alcohol. Drink a lot of water to keep hydrated!

Day 2: Welcome to India! (meals en route, D)

Arrive at Delhi airport in the evening. Meet your English-speaking FAF representative and transfer to your hotel for check-in, dinner, and overnight.



Welcome to India!

It is the seventh largest country by geographical area, the second most populous country, and the most populous democracy in the world. Bounded by the Indian Ocean on the south, the Arabian Sea on the west, and the Bay of Bengal on the east, India has a coastline of 7,517 kilometers (4,671 mi). It borders Pakistan to the west; China, Nepal, and Bhutan to the north-east; and Bangladesh and Burma to the east.

Home to the Indus Valley Civilization and a region of historic trade routes and vast empires, the Indian subcontinent was identified with its commercial and cultural wealth for much of its long history. Four major world religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism originated here, while Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam arrived in the first millennium CE and shaped the region's diverse culture. Gradually annexed by the British East India Company from the early eighteenth century and colonized by the United Kingdom from the mid-nineteenth century, India became a modern nation state in 1947 after a struggle for independence that was marked by widespread non-violent resistance.

India is the world's twelfth largest economy and growing. A pluralistic, multilingual, and multi-ethnic society, India is also home to a diversity of wildlife in a variety of protected habitats.

Day 3: Delhi (B, L, D)

After breakfast this morning, enjoy a guided tour of Delhi. Drive past the 5th & 7th cities of Delhi, Ferozshah Kotla (15th cent) & Red Fort (17th cent) – the seat of Mughal power for nearly 200 years. Visit Jama Masjid – the largest mosque in Asia; and Rajghat, a memorial to Mahatma Gandhi. On to the Capital Complex, comprising the impressive drive Raj Path that leads from the war memorial India Gate to the imposing President's palace Rashtrapati Bhawan, flanked by the cupolas & towers of pink & buff Secretariat buildings – the center of all government activity. Dinner & overnight at the hotel.

Friendship Ambassadors Foundation, Inc.

Address: 299 Greenwich Avenue Greenwich, CT 06830 - USA
Phone: +1 (203) 542 0652 * Fax: +1 (203) 542 0661
Email: friendlyam@faf.org * Web Site: www.faf.org



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Page 2

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Day 4: Sightseeing in Delhi (B, L, D)

Enjoy breakfast at your hotel, visit the 12th century Qutub Complex to see the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque, the first ever built in India & Qutub Minar – the tallest structure in Delhi’s environs for centuries. On to Humayun’s Tomb – mausoleum of the 2nd Mughal Emperor, said to be the architectural precursor to the Taj Mahal. Prepare for your **exchange** and **performance** today at a local venue. Upon your return, have dinner and overnight at your hotel.

Day 5: Transit to Agra and Sightseeing (B, L, D)

Breakfast will be at your hotel this morning. Check out of your hotel and load your luggage into your private motor coach. Drive to Agra – the erstwhile capital of the Mughal dynasty that ruled North India during 1526-1857AD; along with a midway pitstop to use the restrooms. On arrival, check in at Hotel Jaypee Palace. After lunch, proceed with our tour guide to visit Agra Fort – stronghold of the Mughals for over 150 years & built over the reigns of three Mughals from 1565AD onwards. Return to the hotel for dinner & overnight.

Day 6: Sightseeing in Agra, proceed to Jaipur (B, L, D)

In the early morning, you will meet with your guide to see The Taj Mahal at sunrise. Situated on the banks of the river Yamuna, the Taj Mahal was built by grief stricken 5th Mughal Shahjahan as a memorial to his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal. Afterwards, you will return to the hotel for breakfast. We recommend dark colored clothing on this visit, so as to show up well in photographs against the pristine whiteness of this monument. After a marble inlay demonstration, followed by breakfast back at the hotel, check-out and depart towards Jaipur. En-route visit Fatehpur Sikri, one of the Capitals of the Mughals, built by the 3rd Mughal Akbar during 1569-72AD – now a ghost town in red sandstone, crystallizing within itself a fragment of the Mughal era. Visitors to the Dargah or mausoleum of Sufi saint Salim-ud-din Chishti are requested to wear clothing that covers them from ankle to elbow. After lunch at a midway motel, continue to Jaipur. Prepare for your **performance** at a local venue. and check-in at your hotel for dinner & overnight.



Day 7: Sightseeing in Jaipur (B, L, D)

Have breakfast at your hotel. Then, accompanied by our guide, visit the Fortress Palace of Amber the former Capital of the Jaipur rulers until 1727AD. Ride an elephant from the parking lot to the fort gates atop a hill. Later, proceed for souvenir shopping, as Jaipur is the place to shop-till-one-drops for Persian Rugs, gemstones, handicrafts, paintings and hand block printed textiles, bed linen and table linen. Lunch at Surabhi – an ethnic restaurant created in the residence of an erstwhile nobleman, where we see

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Page 3

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their unique Turban Museum displaying more than 85 styles of tying a turban in this state alone. In the afternoon, proceed to Hawa Mahal – the Palace of Winds from behind whose latticed screens the Royal ladies once viewed ceremonial processions and everyday street life; the City Palace & Museum, where the son of the last Maharaja still resides; and Jantar Mantar – the Royal Astronomical Observatory built along ancient astronomical principles in the 18th century out of nothing more than brick & mortar. Return to the hotel for dinner & overnight.

Day 8: Proceed to Kolkata (B, L, D)

After a leisurely breakfast, check-out and drive to Delhi, along with a midway pitstop for lunch. On arrival, transfer directly to the domestic airport for your flight to Kolkata. On arrival, our representative will meet and transfer us to your hotel for check-in, dinner & overnight.



Day 9: Sightseeing in Kolkata (B, L, D)

After breakfast at your hotel, take a cruise on the River Hoogly – a tributary of the River Ganges – sailing from Vivada Jetty in Millennium Park. Pass under the 700 meter long Howrah Bridge, which is an abstraction of steel cantilevers and traffic fumes. This structure is the architectural icon of Kolkata and a picture post card symbol of the city. Take a shore visit to Belur Math, a beautiful temple in memory of Sri Ramkrishna Parmahansa built by his disciple, Swami Vivekananda. Then, reboard at Belur Jetty and sail to Kolkata Ghats. Fresh fruit juices and coconut water will be served on board. Reach The

Botanical Gardens, home to one of India's largest and oldest Banyan Trees which boasts of the second largest canopy in the world. Ethnic Bengali-style lunch will be served on the cruise. Prepare for your **exchange** and **performance** at a local venue tonight. Have dinner and overnight at your hotel.

Day 10: Sightseeing in Kolkata (B, L)

After breakfast at your hotel, visit the Howrah Bridge. Then, proceed to the daily Flower Market to see the normal life of the common man with different colors and presentations of flowers. Afterwards, visit the Dalhousie Square where you can see the Writers Building (State Secretariat), Raj Bhawan (Governor's House), General Post Office Building, High Court, Town Hall and the St. John's Church. Then return to your hotel for lunch. In the afternoon, have free time at your leisure. Have dinner on your own and overnight at your hotel.

Day 11: Departure (B)

After breakfast, check out and bid a fond farewell to India as you depart to Kolkata airport, and catch your return flight to the US. Have a safe flight, and...

Welcome Home!

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