

Golden Triangle with Varanasi

DELHI — JAIPUR — AGRA — VARANASI — DELHI

07 Nights / 08 Days

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Day 01: Arrive at Delhi

Arrive Delhi. On arrival, you will be greeted and assisted by India holiday mall representative and transfer to the hotel.

(Room will be available from 1400 hrs.)

Delhi - Delhi has been the seat of power of several empires for about a millennium. It has been destroyed and rebuilt many times, and interestingly, a number of its destroyers have also been its rulers. Delhi today is a potpourri of two distinct cultural lineages—Old Delhi and New Delhi. Juxtaposed against the immaculately planned New Delhi created by the British Raj, Old Delhi, which was once the capital of Islamic India, is a labyrinthine network of lanes and by lanes with crumbling havelis and formidable mosques.

On arrival, check-in at the hotel.

Overnight at the hotel.



Day 02: Delhi

After breakfast proceed for visit of Delhi including following:

Photo stop at the Red Fort

Red Fort is the fifth Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan's elegant citadel in red sandstone, built on the western bank of the river Yamuna. Shah Jahan started the construction of this massive fort in 1638, when he decided to shift his capital from Agra to Delhi. The Red sandstone walls of the massive Red Fort rise 33 meter above the clamor of Old Delhi, as a reminder of the magnificent power and pomp of the Mughals.

IMP: It remains closed on Mondays.



Enjoy the Rickshaw Ride (Paddy cab) in old Delhi

We will ride on a rickshaw through the narrow streets of Old Delhi. The humble cycle rickshaw is not only the common man's beast of burden but also generates a considerable amount of employment. In an age, where our cities are beset by the pollution menace of automobiles, cycle-rickshaw is the best alternative and the only viable option for a short-haul.

Drive past the Govt. Buildings

New Delhi houses several government buildings and official residences, reminiscent of the British colonial architecture. Today we will drive past a few of them, like The Parliament House (designed by Baker and 173m in diameter), the Rashtrapati Bhawan (once the Viceroy's residence), now an official residence of the President of India, etc. Designed by Lutyens, it combines western and eastern styles of architecture.

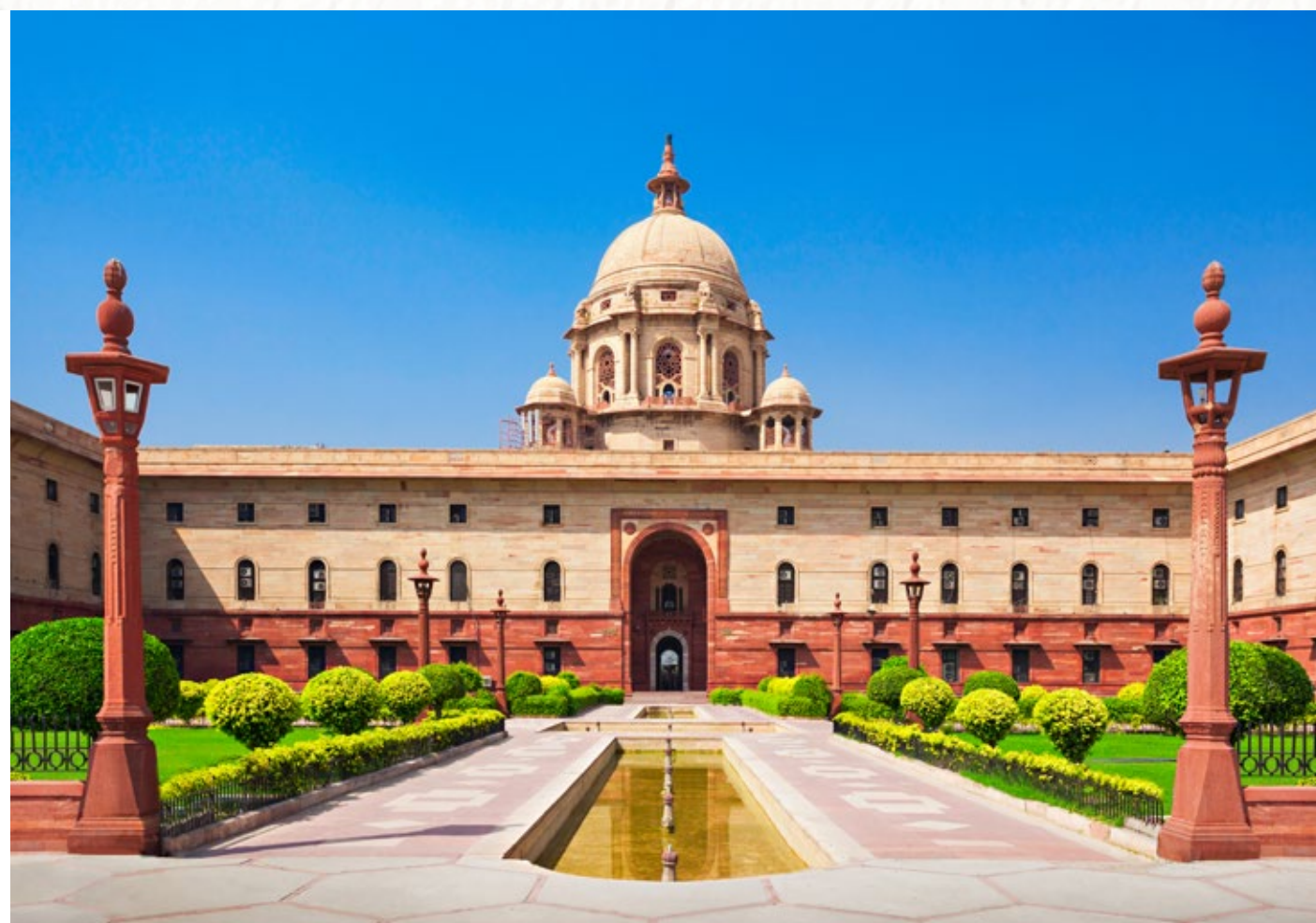




Photo stop at the India Gate

At the center of New Delhi, stands a 42-meter high - India Gate, an “Arc-de-Triumph” like archway, in the middle of a cross-road. Almost similar to its French counterpart, it commemorates 70,000 Indian soldiers, who lost their lives fighting for the British Army, during the World War I. The memorial bears the names of more than 13,516 British and Indian soldiers, killed in the North-western Frontier in the Afghan war of 1919. Under the arch, the Amar Jawan Jyoti commemorating Indian armed forces’ losses in the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971.

Humayun’s Tomb

Humayun’s Tomb is one of the most innovative and experimental monuments of its time, incorporating within it, an Indo-Islamic architectural style. This magnificent garden tomb is the first substantial example of Mughal architecture in India. It was built in 1565 AD, nine years after the death of Humayun, by his senior widow Bega Begam. Inside the walled enclosure, the most notable features are, the garden squares (Charbagh) with pathways and water channels, centrally located well proportional mausoleum topped by double dome.



Later visit the Qutub Minar

Qutub Minar is a soaring, 73 m-high towers of victory, built in 1193 by Qutab ud-Din Aybak. The tower has five distinct levels, each marked by a projecting balcony and tapers from a 15 m diameter at the base, to just 2.5 m at the top. The first three levels are made of red sandstone; the fourth and the fifth story are made of marble and sandstone. At the foot of the tower is the Quwat ul-Islam Mosque, the first mosque to be built in India. Also, a 7 m-high iron pillar stands in the courtyard of the mosque. It is said that, if you can encircle it with your hands, while standing with your back to it, your wish will be fulfilled.

Overnight at hotel

Day 03: Delhi / Jaipur (265 Kms around 05 hrs drive)

After breakfast, drive to Jaipur.

Jaipur - Capital of the Indian state of Rajasthan, Jaipur is also known as the “Pink City” due the color of its buildings. Built by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II in 1727 CE, the city’s plan followed a grid system, making it the only planned city of its time. Vidhyadhar Bhattacharya, a young Bengali architect, designed it as per the texts of the Shilp Shastra, an ancient Indian treatise on architecture. With its innumerable sagas of traditions, culture and practices, Jaipur is a sensory treat for tourists from all over the world.

On arrival, check-in at the hotel.

Overnight at the hotel.



Day 04: Jaipur

After breakfast, proceed for visit of Jaipur including following:

Amber Fort

Set high on a picturesque and rugged hill, it is a principal attraction in Jaipur. A noteworthy fusion of Hindu and Mughal architecture, constructed by Raja Man Singh I in 1592 and completed by Mirja Raja Jai Singh, the fort was declared as UNESCO World Heritage site in 2013. The Fort depicts scintillating aura exquisitely made up of red sandstone and white marbles. The interior walls of the palace portray expressive paintings with carvings, precious stones, and mirror settings. Built mainly for the warring enemies as a safe place, the heavily structured walls defended residents, within the ramparts of the fort. Inside the fort, Sheesh Mahal is a famous hall of mirrors, constructed by Raja Jai Singh in 1623. An integral part of the Jai Mandir, it has been uniquely constructed by decorating the ceilings and walls with mirrors specially imported from Belgium and carved with beautiful designs that reflect even a small ray of light to provide natural light to the entire hall.



Photo stop at the Hawa Mahal Palace

Enjoy Photo stop at Hawa Mahal. It is the most well-known landmark of Jaipur city, built by Sawai Pratap Singh in 1799. This five-storied building overlooking the busy street is a fascinating example of Rajput architecture and artistry with its delicately honeycombed 953 pink sandstone windows known as ‘jharokhas’. It was originally built for the ladies of the royal household to watch everyday life and processions in the city from their veiled comfort as they had to obey the rules of “purdah”.

City Palace

Located in the heart of the Pink city and a blend of Mughal and Rajput architecture, it was founded in 1727 by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II as part of his ambitious city project. His successors continued to ornament and add to the elegant buildings up until the 20th century. It is a unique complex of several courtyards, buildings, pavilions, gardens, and temples. The most prominent and most visited structures in the complex are the Chandra Mahal, Mubarak Mahal, Shri Govind Dev Temple, and the City Palace Museum.



Jantar Mantar

The Jantar Mantar is a collection of architectural astronomical instruments, built by Maharaja Jai Singh II between 1727 and 1734. He constructed a total of five such facilities at different locations which includes one at Delhi and another at Jaipur. The Jaipur observatory is the largest and best preserved out of these and inscribed on the World Heritage List as “an expression of the astronomical skills and cosmological concepts of the court of a scholarly prince at the end of the Mughal period”.

Also enjoy a short Walk in Old Jaipur

In the evening, enjoy a walk in the old town. Stroll through the narrow lanes of Jaipur, through the hustle & bustle of the Old Bazaar (market). The old city is surprisingly well laid out, with its wide, straight streets running in a grid that forms a series of bazaars. While the new enchanting town of Jaipur exhibits the picture of modern India, the old city still unravels its traditional charm and speaks about India's history, culture and tradition. With this tour, you will get a good insight into the different aspects of the city, experiencing it all first-hand. The duration of the walk will be about an hour.



Overnight at the hotel.

Day 05: Jaipur / Agra (Approx. 256 Kms 05.5 hrs. drive)

After breakfast, drive to Agra.



Abhaneri Step well & Harshat Mata Temple

On the way visit Abhaneri Step well & Harshat Mata Temple (Without Guide) - Abhaneri is a small village, famous for its stepwell, created for rainwater harvesting, a unique invention by the people of Abhaneri. The major attraction of Abhaneri is “Chand Baori” which is located in front of the Harshat Mata Temple and this colossal stepwell has a depth of 20 meters with 13 levels. Despite being so huge in architecture, one can visually notice the delicate and intricate carvings, which is certainly a visual treat. The stepwell is surrounded by various structures.

Continue drive to Agra

AGRA - The city of the inimitable “TAJ MAHAL”.

The architectural splendor of the mausoleums, the fort and the palaces is vivid reminder of the opulence of the legendary Mughal Empire. While its significance as a political center ended with the transfer of the capital to Delhi in 1634 by Shah Jahan, its architectural wealth has secured its place on the international map. A pleasant town with a comparatively slow pace, Agra is known for its superb inlay work on marble and soapstone by craftsmen who are descendants of those who worked under the Mughals.

On arrival in Agra, transfer to the hotel.

Overnight at the hotel.



Day 06: Agra / Varanasi (Overnight Train)

Early Morning, proceed for the **Sunrise visit of Taj Mahal**

Sunrise visit of Taj Mahal

Sunrise is by far the best time to visit the Taj Mahal. When the early morning light transforms the dome of the mausoleum into a soft, golden color, it's magical to see the sunrise behind the Taj Mahal, a monument that symbolizes one of the greatest stories of true love ever told. Also, because this is the time when there are the least number of tourists and if you arrive early enough, you might even get perfect portraits without anyone around. IMP: Taj Mahal remains closed on Friday.



Return to Hotel for Breakfast, after breakfast, proceed for visit Agra Fort



Agra Fort

A UNESCO World Heritage site, Agra Fort was the main residence of the emperors of the Mughal Dynasty till 1638, before the capital was shifted to Delhi from Agra. The forbidding exteriors of this fort hide an inner paradise as it comprises of a number of exquisite buildings like Moti Masjid - a white marble mosque akin to a perfect pearl; Diwan-I-Am, Diwan-I-Khaas – the audience halls, Musamman Burj - where Shahjahan died in 1666 A.D., Jahangir's Palace; Khas Mahal and Sheesh Mahal. The massive Agra fort is considered as the predecessor of the Red fort in Delhi.

Afternoon free.

Later transfer to the Tundla railway station to board the **Poorva Express Train 2045 Hrs. / 0345 Hrs.**

Overnight at Train

Day 07: Varanasi

Early Morning arrival in Varanasi, meet and greet at station and transfer to hotel.

“Benaras is older than history, older than tradition, older even than legend and looks twice as old as all of them put together”, wrote the American novelist Mark Twain. Referred to as the oldest living city in the world, Varanasi, situated between Rivers Varuna and Assi, in Uttar Pradesh derives its name from its location. A city of thousand temples, it is also known as Kashi which stands for “the city of light”. According to Hindu mythology, Varanasi is the cosmic center of the universe. The British referred to Varanasi as Benaras or Banaras and the Banarasi sari of this region is as popular as its temples and traditions.

After breakfast proceed for visit of Varanasi including following:

Banaras Hindu University

Banaras Hindu University was built in 1917 and considered as one of the oldest educational university in India. It was founded by Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, as a center for the study of Indian art, culture, music, and Sanskrit. The university campus is spread over 5 sq. km and houses the Bharat Kala Bhavan. The Bhavan has a fine collection of miniature paintings, sculptures from first to fifteenth centuries, old photographs of Varanasi and brocade textiles. This university is highly reputed and attracts students from every corner of India and the world.



Kashi Vishwanath Temple (University)

The temple is located in the premises of the Banaras Hindu University and is about thirty minutes’ walk from the gates of the university. The temple, built by the Birlas, was planned by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. Unlike many other temples in Varanasi, this temple is open to all irrespective of caste or creed.

Later enjoy excursion to Sarnath

Sarnath Archaeological Site

A major Buddhist centre, Sarnath lies 10 kilometres northeast of Varanasi. It was here that Buddha preached his message of the ‘middle way’ to nirvana after achieving enlightenment at Bodh-gaya. In around 234 BC, Emperor Ashoka, a great follower of Buddhism, erected a stupa here. Between the 3rd century BC and the 11th century



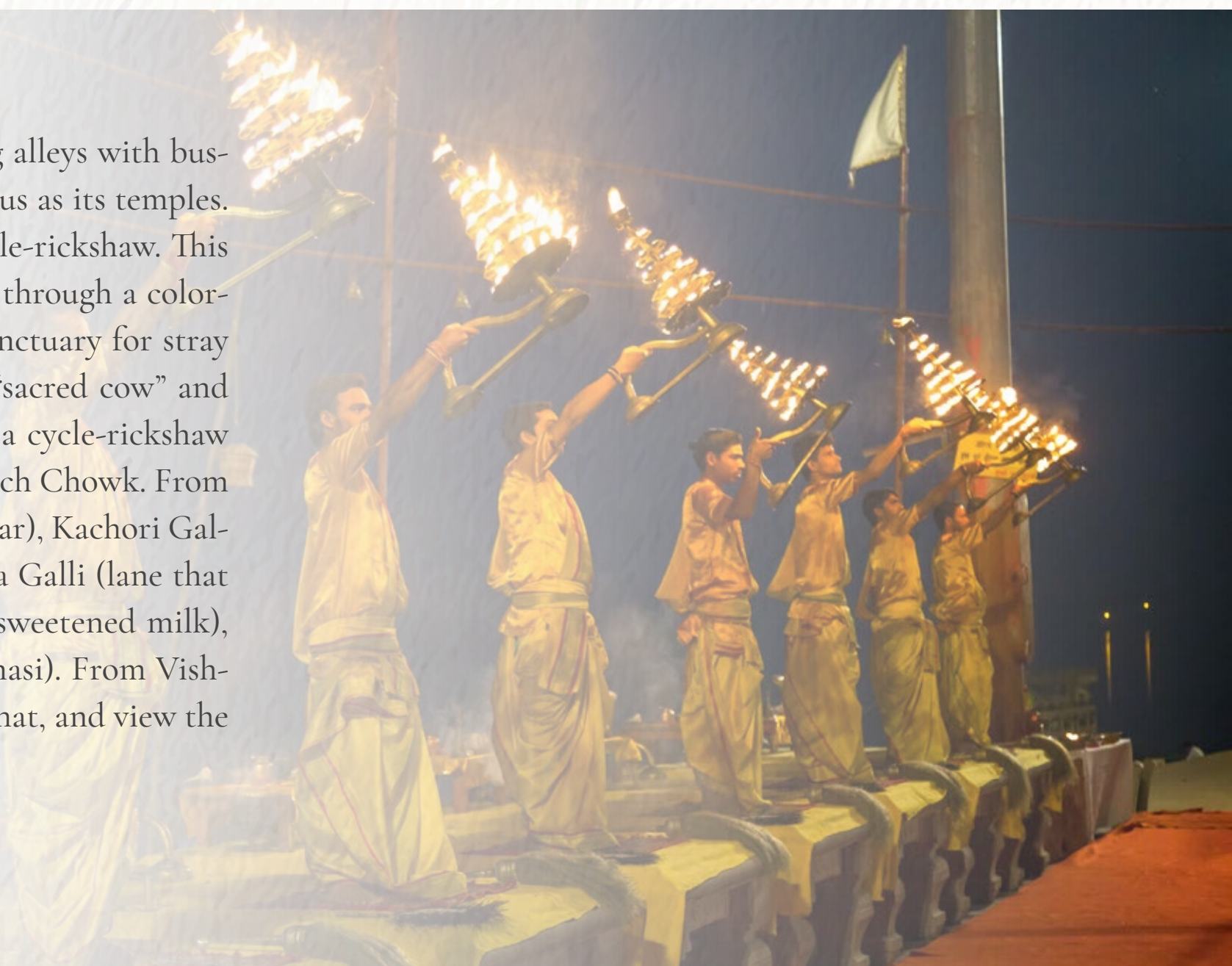
Sarnath Archeological Museum

Visit the Archaeological Museum locally known as Sarnath Museum, this splendid building houses the capitol from the Ashoka pillar, the symbol which has been adopted as the state emblem, of modern India. The museum contains a large collection of figures and sculptures from the Mauryan, Kushana and Gupta periods, discovered during the excavations at Sarnath. You can have a look at the earliest Buddha image found at Sarnath and many images of Hindu Gods, dating from the 9th to 12th centuries. (IMP: Museum remains closed on Fridays)

Bazaar walk followed by the Aarti

Celebrated in mainstream songs, Varanasi is a city of winding alleys with bustling markets, each specializing in something and just as famous as its temples. The bazaars are colorful and best explored on foot and by cycle-rickshaw. This tour starts at the Town Hall (Maidagin). From here, we walk through a colorful fabric and saree market to visit a Goshala (a charitable sanctuary for stray cows). At the Goshala, you can understand more about the “sacred cow” and see how Varanasi’s bovine are cared. From the Goshala, take a cycle-rickshaw ride through the central market thoroughfare of the city to reach Chowk. From Chowk, walk again covering: the wedding market (Kinari Bazaar), Kachori Galli (lane filled with deep-fried snacks trendy in Varanasi), Khoa Galli (lane that sells milk products including cottage cheese and condensed, sweetened milk), and Vishwanath Galli (the most famous of all streets in Varanasi). From Vishwanath Galli, we end our walk to emerge at Dasashwamedh Ghat, and view the evening Ganga aarti ceremony.

Overnight at the hotel.



Boat ride on river Ganges

In the morning enjoy Boat ride on river Ganges - Experience the life of this ancient city early morning. See the beauty of the rising sun on the River Ganges. Enjoy the boat ride and witness the early morning rituals of the Hindus being performed. A perfect click will be the view of thousands of people taking a bath in the holy water of River Ganges, believing that they will be free from the circle of rebirth. It is interesting to see the pilgrims offering sweets, flowers, and holy water to the Sun God.



Return to the hotel for breakfast. Later transfer to the airport to board the flight to Delhi.

(Rooms will be available till 12:00 hrs.)

On arrival in Delhi, transfer to International Airport and board the flight for onward journey.

End of Services

