

The Taj, Tigers, & Beyond

DELHI - RANTHAMBORE - BHARATPUR - AGRA - KHAJURAHO - BANDHAVGARH
KANHA - PENCH - NAGPUR - DELHI

14 Nights / 15 Days



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.

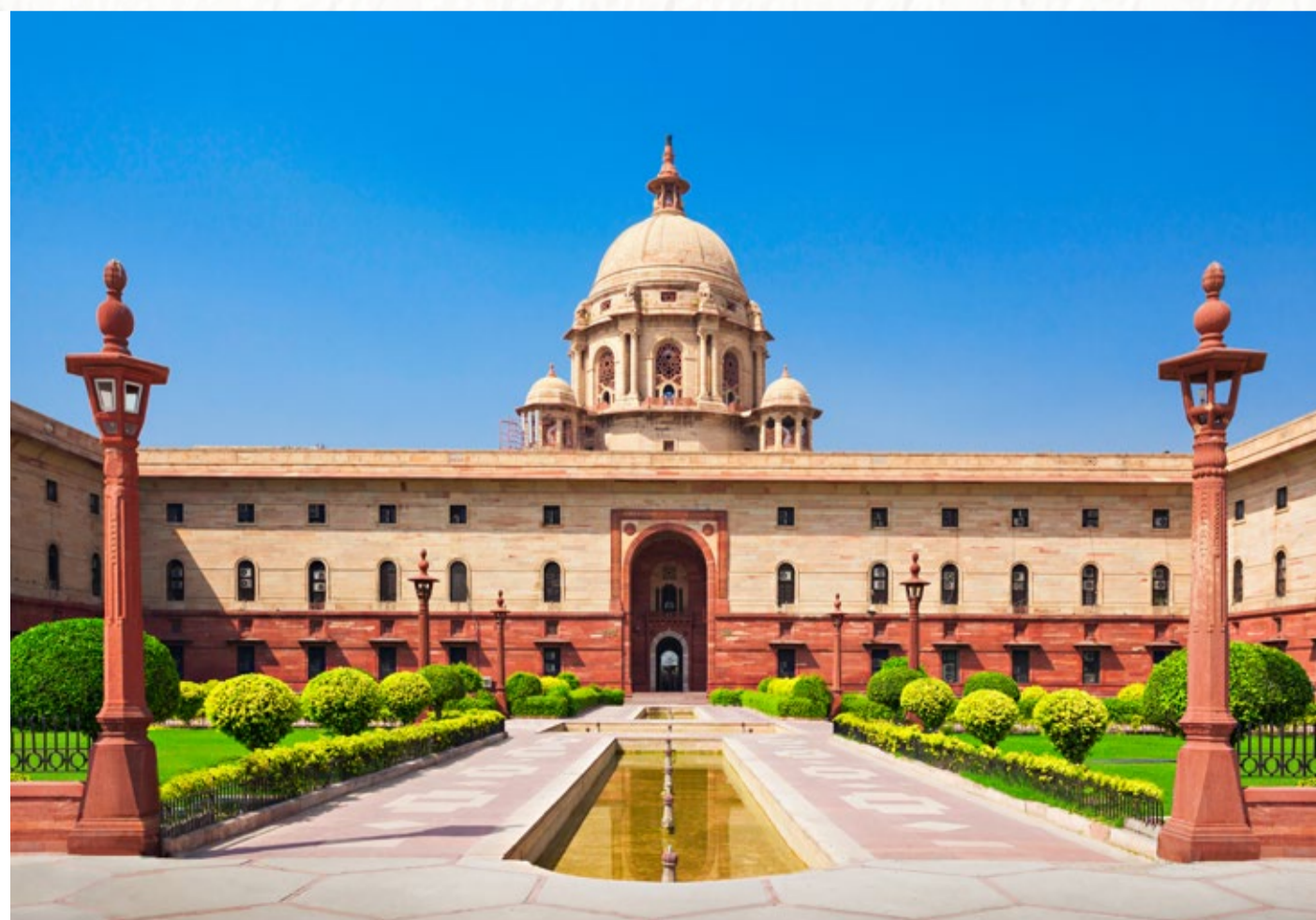




Photo stop at the India Gate

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 / Ranthambore (Approx 335 Kms / 6 hrs drive)

After breakfast, drive to Ranthambhore.

RANTHAMBORE - One of the largest and most popular national parks in North India, Ranthambore National Park is named after the historic Ranthambore fortress that is located within the park's premises. With the Banas River to its north and Chambal River to its south, Ranthambore lies at the edge of a plateau and covers an area of 392 square kilometers.

On arrival in Ranthambore, transfer to hotel.

Dinner & Overnight at the hotel.



Day 04: Ranthambore

Early morning, enjoy a shared canter safari in the Ranthambore national park.

Game ride in Ranthambore National Park is a rewarding experience for wildlife enthusiasts and also for the nature lovers. The national park is surrounded by Aravali hills and is home to several fascinating wildlife species. One can spot leopards, striped hyenas, chitals, chinkaras, sambars, langurs, civets, and sloth bears in the park. The park's pride, however, lies in the number of tigers that can be found prowling in their natural habitat.

After safari return to hotel for breakfast.

Later in the afternoon enjoy another **Shared canter safari in the park.**

Dinner and Overnight at the hotel.



Day 05: Ranthambore / Bharatpur (Approx 225 Kms - 04 ½ Hrs drive)

After breakfast, drive to Bharatpur.

Bharatpur is home to one of the world's best-known bird watching destinations, Keoladeo Ghana National Park. 250 years ago, the then ruler built embankments that allowed flooding of this land, turning it into a marsh. Set up in 1956, the 29-kilometer marshland, is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site sheltering over 360 species of birds, of which 117 are native to the land. Once a part of the private shooting reserve of the Maharaja of Bharatpur, today the sanctuary boasts of 80 species of ducks and several other species such as storks, Chinese coots, kingfishers, spoonbills, sarus cranes and several birds of prey, including the falcon, marsh harrier, and eagle. The site is popular among avid birders and ornithologists, who flock to the park to observe and study the feathered beauties.

On arrival in Bharatpur, transfer to hotel.

Dinner & Overnight at the hotel.



Today enjoy the visit of Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary by Rickshaw

Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary

Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary - also known as Keoladeo National Park, was established in 1956. This 29 sq km marshland is one of the finest bird sanctuaries in the world. It has over 360 species of birds, out of which 117 are local birds. Now, a UNESCO World Heritage site, it used to be the part of private shooting reserve of the Maharaja of Bharatpur. Among many bird species to be seen here are storks, ducks, Chinese coots, kingfishers, spoon-bills, sarus cranes and several birds of prey, including a falcon, marsh harrier, and eagle. Around 80 species of ducks alone can be spotted here. Enjoy a rickshaw ride through the Bird Sanctuary, where you can watch birds in their nests.



Later drive to Agra. Arrive Agra and transfer to the Hotel.



Taj Mahal

Muted but Soulful, Taj Mahal popularly known as Crown of Palaces is a white marble mausoleum and a UNESCO world heritage site. As a testament to his love, the magnificent structure was built by Mughal Emperor Shahjahan in the loving memory of his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal. Situated in the Mughal city of Agra, Taj Mahal looks the same from all the four sides and endorsed as “The Jewel of Muslim art in India”. Commissioned in 1632, it took approximately 22 years to make this marvelous structure and an estimated 20,000 workers to build this masterpiece that reflects different colors under the canopy of sun. Purely ecstatic and iconic, it attracts (7 to 8) million annual visitors every year. (It remains closed on Fridays).

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 several 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.



Overnight at the hotel.

Day 07: Agra / Khajuraho (Vande Bharat Express –0745 Hrs-1420 Hrs) Runs every day except Monday)

Early Morning transfer to the railway station to board the train to Khajuraho.

KHAJURAHO - One of the most frequented tourist spots in the state of Madhya Pradesh in India, Khajuraho is popular for its temples that were built by the Chandela dynasty rulers. Built over a span of 200 years, only 25 of the original 80 Hindu temples remain today. The structures are scattered over an area of about 20 square kilometres and are listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Arrive Khajuraho and transfer to the Hotel.

Later enjoy visit of **Eastern and Western Groups of Temple.**

Visit Eastern Group of temples mainly dedicated to the Jain teachers-tirthankaras. The Parsvanatha Temple, the Adinatha Temple and the Santinatha Temple. The temples are ornately carved on the outside with beautiful figures of Hindu gods, goddesses. Also visit the Western Group of temples, which consist of a group of artistic (erotic) temples built in sandstone. The sculptures of Hindu deities, dancers and musicians appear to be so natural as if they would come alive any time.

Overnight in the Hotel.



Day 08: Khajuraho / Bandhavgarh (Approx 225 Kms/ approx. 6 hrs drive)

After breakfast drive to Bandhavgarh.

BANDHAVGARH - Declared as national park in 1968 and included in the famous Project Tiger in 1993, Bandhavgarh Wildlife Sanctuary, is one of the most scenic tiger reserves in India. It is in the lush surroundings of the Vindhya and Satpura hill ranges, in the state of Madhya Pradesh. Known for its tiger population whose numbers are now between 45 and 50, the sanctuary also shelters other wildlife species such as leopards, wild dogs, sloth bears, rhesus macaques, and four-horned antelopes besides a sizeable population of birds and reptiles.

On arrival in Bandhavgarh, transfer to the hotel.

Dinner & Overnight at the hotel.



Day 09: Bandhavgarh

Early morning, enjoy a jeep safari in the Bandhavgarh national park.

Return to the lodge for a late breakfast.

Afternoon **Enjoy jeep safari** in the National Park. One of the most enthralling experiences is Jungle safari at Bandhavgarh National Park, to spot various wildlife in their natural habitat. Catching sight of the various exotic species of birds also lends a charm to the ride on the wheels.

Dinner & Overnight at the hotel.

Note: Park remains closed for Afternoon Safari on Wednesday



Day 10: Bandhavgarh / Kanha (Approx 245 Kms around 06 hrs drive)

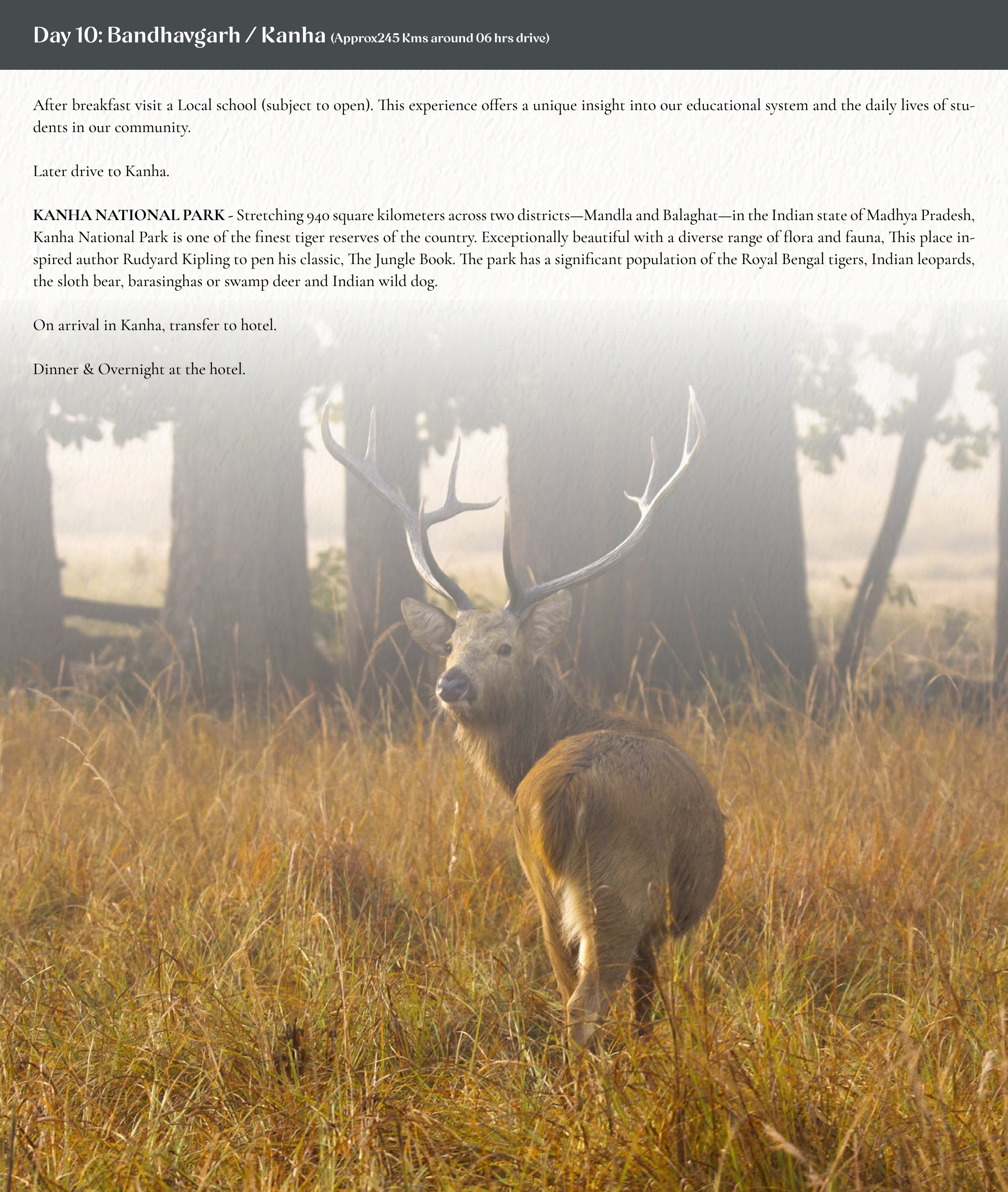
After breakfast visit a Local school (subject to open). This experience offers a unique insight into our educational system and the daily lives of students in our community.

Later drive to Kanha.

KANHA NATIONAL PARK - Stretching 940 square kilometers across two districts—Mandla and Balaghat—in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, Kanha National Park is one of the finest tiger reserves of the country. Exceptionally beautiful with a diverse range of flora and fauna, This place inspired author Rudyard Kipling to pen his classic, The Jungle Book. The park has a significant population of the Royal Bengal tigers, Indian leopards, the sloth bear, barasinghas or swamp deer and Indian wild dog.

On arrival in Kanha, transfer to hotel.

Dinner & Overnight at the hotel.



Day 11: Kanha

Early morning, enjoy jeep safari in the Kanha national park.

Tailor-made jeep safari, breathtaking landscapes, and the best wildlife experience can be found in Kanha National Park. The conservation efforts not only to protect the tigers but also to manage the habitat and maintain the delicate balance between flora and fauna is what Kanha is known for. Return to the lodge for a late breakfast. After breakfast rest of the morning is at leisure.

Afternoon enjoy another Jeep Safari in the Tiger Reserve

Dinner & Overnight at the hotel.

Note: Park remains closed for Afternoon Safari on Wednesday



Day 12: Kanha / Pench (Approx 225 Kms around 05 ½ hrs drive)

After breakfast, Drive to Pench.

Pench National Park - Pench Located on the southern boundary of the state of Madhya Pradesh in India, Pench National Park spreads 758 square kilometers across the densely-forested districts of Seoni and Chhindwara. The park derives its name from the Pench River that flows through it from the north to the south and is nestled in the lower southern reaches of the Satpura range. Set up in 1965 and declared a tiger reserve in 1992, Pench National Park is home to the Royal Bengal tiger and other species of wild animals such as jackals, wild dogs, wild boars, sloth bears, Indian leopards, and striped hyenas. The forest area in the park has a mixed vegetation of teak, saja, amaltas, dhaora, bijiayasal, and salai trees that provide cover to the thriving bird life here.

On arrival in Pench, transfer to hotel.

Dinner & Overnight at the hotel.



Day 13: Pench

Early morning, enjoy a jeep safari in the Pench national park.

Return to the lodge for a late breakfast. After breakfast rest of the morning is at leisure.

Afternoon enjoy another **Jeep Safari in the Tiger Reserve**

Dinner & Overnight at the hotel.

Note: Park remains closed for Afternoon Safari on Wednesday



Day 14: Pench / Nagpur (Approx 80 Kms around 02 hrs drive) / Delhi (Flight: IndiGo - 6E 6E 2099 11:55 / 13:35 hrs.)

After breakfast, drive to Nagpur Airport to board the flight to Delhi.

On arrival, you will be greeted and assisted by our representative and transfer to the hotel.

Overnight at the hotel.

Day 15: Delhi Departure

On arrival, you will be greeted and assisted by our representative and transfer to the hotel.

Overnight at the hotel.

In time transfer to Airport to board the flight for back home / onward destination.

(Rooms will be available till 1200 hrs)

End of Services

