



## Golden Triangle with Shimla - 12 Days

Day	Destination
2 Nights	New Delhi
1 Night	Agra
2 Nights	Jaipur
1 Night	Chandigarh
3 Nights	Shimla
1 Night	Delhi

### Day 1: Day 1: Arrive Delhi

India's largest city, Delhi, has been one of the country's commercial and economic hubs for centuries and, as a result, is incredibly rich in culture and history. Made up of the ancient walled city of Old Delhi and the more modern sector, New Delhi, the city encompasses a staggering array of beautiful architecture, notable monuments and age-old temples, including three UNESCO World Heritage Sites – the Red Fort, Qutab Minar and Humayun's Tomb. Other key attractions include the 17th century Chandni Chowk marketplace – still one of the city's most popular retail centres today, particularly for jewellery and traditional Indian saris; and the Jama Masjid, India's largest mosque.

**On arrival in Delhi:** Having cleared immigration, collected your luggage and passed through customs, please make your way towards the exit of the terminal building where you will see a bank of people waiting for you. Amongst them will be **Trail Blazer Tours Representative** who will be waiting to greet you with a paging board with your name on.

You will be transferred to your hotel and assisted with check in. **(Standard check in time at the hotel is 1400 hrs)**

## **Day 2: Day 2: In Delhi**

The day is scheduled for a heritage walk of Old Delhi in the morning followed by a tour of New Delhi in the afternoon.

### **Old Delhi Heritage Walk**

Delhi is one of very few places where the ancient and modern co-exist side by side complementing each other perfectly. This Heritage walk helps you explore the Delhi's rich, culture, heritage, history and cuisine in a fun and exciting way. The tour includes exploring the streets of Old Delhi on foot and on cycle rickshaw. The tour takes you through the narrow lanes and bazaars of Old Delhi where you will get to know about the basic ingredients used in traditional Indian meals.

The tour of New Delhi covers the UNESCO world Heritage sites of Humayuns tomb, Qutab Minar along with a photo stop at India Gate – the war memorial and drive past the Govt. Secretariat building and the President Palace.

### **Humayun's Tomb:**

The mausoleum complex of Humayun, India's second Mughal Emperor, was commissioned by his widow in 1565 and was the first garden tomb to be built in India, taking seven years to complete. Humayun had travelled widely in Persia and Central Asia during his lifetime, and many of the architectural principles he brought back from these journeys were incorporated into the building at his wife's instructions. With its double domes, decorative inlaid marble and vast garden with pools connected by channels, this 16th Century building set the stage for the style that culminated in the Taj Mahal almost 100 years later.

### **Qutab Minar**

Standing tall at 73-metres, the tower consists of 5 storeys with a flight of spiral stairs leading to its top. The walls are adorned with decorative motifs and Quranic inscriptions. At the foot of the tower lie other monuments of historical significance, such as the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque and the Iron Pillar of Delhi. The Amazing race Australia used this site as a pit stop in the second series. Visitors can take advantage of stunning photo opportunities.

## **Day 3: Day 3: Delhi- Agra**

Home of the world-famous Taj Mahal, Agra is one of India's prime tourist destinations for specifically this reason, though its attractions also extend to an array of other impressive historical sights. These include the red-hued Agra Fort, the sacred Jama Masjid mosque and Itmad-ud-Daulah's tomb, with its white marble facade embellished with intricate inlaid designs and semi-precious gems. The Taj, however, is in a league of its own and is a must-see for any visitor to the city. Commissioned by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in the 15th century as a memorial to his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal, it is an architectural masterpiece of exquisite artisanship and perfect proportions.

After breakfast, you will be transferred to railway station to board the train to Agra.

**Train** Gatimaan Express (daily except on Fridays)

**Departs Delhi** 0810 Hrs

**Arrives Agra** 0950 Hrs

Upon arrival at Agra, you will be assisted & transferred and taken directly to Agra Fort for the visit followed by check-in at the hotel. ***(Standard check in time at the hotel is 1400 Hrs).***

Later in the evening, visit Taj Mahal at sunset.

### **Agra Fort**

Known as the Red Fort of Agra, this walled imperial city was founded in 1565 by the Emperor Akbar (1556-1605) and is a well-deserving UNESCO World Heritage site, located just 2.5 kilometres from the famous Taj Mahal. Its palaces, grand mosques and elaborate public hall are crafted from pink-red sandstone and are testament to an era when Indo-Muslim art, strongly marked by influences from Persia, was at its height. Emperor Shah Jahan, who built the Taj Mahal for his deceased wife, was imprisoned by his son Aurangzeb in Agra Fort. He is said to have died in the Musamman Burj, a marble tower he himself built, with one of the most alluring views of the Taj Mahal.

### **Taj Mahal (Closed on Fridays)**

The iconic Taj Mahal is not only an architectural masterpiece, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the new Seven Wonders of the World – it is also the enduring legacy of a royal love story. It was commissioned in the 17th century by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan after the death of his third and favourite wife, Mumtaz Mahal, to serve as her final resting place and a symbol of his eternal affection for her. Combining Islamic, Persian, Ottoman Turkish and Indian design elements, it's an awe-inspiring structure of elegant domes and white marble, which changes colour along with the light – pink at sunrise, pearly white in the afternoon and silver-gold in the full moon.

## **Day 4: Day 4: Agra- Jaipur**

Fringed by the rugged Aravali Hills, Jaipur is the capital and largest city in India's northern state of Rajasthan. This city is famed for being India's first planned city featuring a multitude of pink terracotta buildings within the walled historic centre, earning it the nickname, 'The Pink City'. Jaipur falls within the Golden Triangle, a popular tourist circuit, which includes Delhi, Jaipur and Agra, and serves as a gateway to the neighbouring desert cities of Jaisalmer and Jodhpur. This colourful city is a combination of tradition and modernity and offers visitors vibrant bazaars, lavish palaces and ancient temples. The salmon-hued old city is home to the opulent City Palace, encompassing an impressive assortment of palatial structures, sprawling gardens, courtyards and buildings. Do not miss the fairy-tale splendour of the Amber Fort, set against the backdrop of the arid landscape.

After breakfast, leave with the private chauffeur driven vehicle Jaipur (approx. 235 kms/ 06 hours' drive) with a stop at Fatehpur Sikri.

Arrive Jaipur in the afternoon and check-in at the hotel.

## **Fatehpur Sikri**

This world heritage site is rated as one of the best-preserved collections of Mughal architecture in India. Surrounded by a six kilometre wall, with the fourth being a lake at the time, a day can be spent exploring the elaborate structures within. Marvel at the impressive Jama Masjid mosque, the detailed palaces built for Emperor Akbar's wives, the public and private discussion halls and vast ornamental pool; all of which took over 15 years to conceptualise and build.

## **Day 5: Day 5: In Jaipur**

After breakfast, enjoy Full day sightseeing tour of Jaipur covering Amber Fort, City Palace and the Observatory and a photo stop at Hawa Mahal "Palace of Winds". Take a shared Jeep ride to reach Amber Fort.

### **Amber Fort**

Amber Fort, officially known as the 'Amber Palace', is one of the most famous forts of Rajasthan attracting around 4000 to 5000 visitors a day during peak tourist season. The palace was named after the small town of Amber, where it is situated – only eleven kilometres from Jaipur. Perfectly picturesque, this 16th century hillside residence is well preserved, boasting grand pavilions and mirrored halls that open onto flourishing gardens and courtyards.

Although the palace's main construction started in 1592 by Maharaja Man Singh, it was added to over the years by successive rulers and continued to be occupied by them until Jaipur was built.

### **Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds)**

One of Jaipur's most recognised buildings, the Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds) is known for its iconic façade. Small windows, decorated with intricate latticework create a honeycomb-like appearance. The original intention of the lattice was to allow the royal women to observe everyday life in the street below without being seen. The cooling effect, provided by the breeze passing through the small windows, gave the palace its name. Built in 1799 by Maharaja Sawai Pratap Singh, the unique construction was originally designed to look like the crown of Krishna

### **Jaipur City Palace**

City Palace forms one of the most famous tourist attractions and a major landmark in Jaipur. The beautiful palace was built by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh during his reign. Among the various forts and palaces of Jaipur, City Palace stands apart, with its outstanding art and architecture.

### **Jantar Mantar Jaipur**

In 1734, the year of its completion, the Jai Singh Observatory was the last outpost of medieval science. From the outside, the eighteen fixed observational instruments look more like playground apparatus than sighting devices, but they were used to measure the position of the sun, stars and planets. Built by Jai Singh, the first Maharaja of Jaipur who founded the city in 1727, the observatory is one of a handful. Jai Singh, fulfilling a lifelong interest in mathematics and astronomy, built observatories in Delhi, Jaipur, Ujjain, Mathura and Benares. The Jaipur observatory is the largest and best preserved of these.

## **Day 6: Day 6: In Jaipur**

Days at leisure for own activities. (You will have a car and driver at disposal within city limits).

## **Day 7: Day 7: Jaipur – Chandigarh**

Designed by Le Corbusier – a renowned Swiss French Architect, Chandigarh has been hailed internationally for its excellent city design, attractive architecture and lovely parks. One of the main attractions is Leisure Valley – an eight-kilometre stretch of beautiful theme gardens. Other highlights include the Nek Chand Rock Garden – filled with sculptures crafted from recycled materials; the Government Museum and Art Gallery; and Sukhna Lake – popular with nature lovers, bird watchers and water sports enthusiasts.

Fly Jaipur to Chandigarh.

Arrive Chandigarh and check-in at your hotel.

## **Day 8: Day 8: Chandigarh – Kalka – Shimla**

Shimla, lying deep in the foothills of the Himalayas, is the capital city of Himachal Pradesh and the gateway into the more remote northern regions of Kashmir. It is also the stop-off for travellers venturing into the Kullu and Spiti Valleys. Sitting at an altitude of 2159 metres, the city is blessed with a cool climate and beautiful views of river valleys, pine forests, apple orchards and steep mountains covered with maize terraces. The Mall, a long, winding pedestrian-only walkway, is the commercial and social hub of Shimla, while those looking for natural beauty should head uphill through the forest to Jakhu Temple or follow one of the many forest trails in the eastern part of Shimla. To the south of the city, the bazaars bustle with local flavour.

Leave in the morning to Kalka railway station to board the UNESCO world heritage mountain train for Shimla.

**Train** Himalayan Queen

**Depart Kalka** 1210 Hrs

**Arrives Shimla** 1730 Hrs

Toy Train – The Shimla – Kalka rail route, offers the charm of old-world travel amidst lofty pines and lush green, misty mountains. This is one of the four narrow gauge rail routes on hill terrain in the country. Laid out on a 96 km long narrow gauge track that passes through 103 tunnels and across more than 800 bridges and viaducts, it is one of the most beautiful hill railways in India. It was considered the “crown jewel” of the Indian National Railways during British times. Flanked by hills on both sides, the rail line, like twin threads of silver, clings to the steep cliffs and ventures boldly over bridges, built over tiny streams that show off their radiance in the sunlight. The cool breeze sweeps across your face as the train makes an arduous climb of almost 4800 feet.

Upon arrival in Shimla, transfer to hotel for check-in.

## **Day 9: Day 9: In Shimla**

A day for the visit covering Indian Institute for advanced studies (closed on Mondays), Sankat Mochan temple and the Mall road.

### **Indian Institute of Advanced Study (Closed on Monday)**

Also called the Viceregal Lodge, the Indian Institute of Advanced Study is a research institute set in a historical building in Shimla. As a residential centre for research, it encourages creative thinking in areas of deep human significance. The environment of the institute is eminently suitable for academic pursuits, especially in select areas of the humanities, Indian culture, religion and the social and natural sciences. It also has a comprehensive library and documentation facilities.

### ***Sankat Mochan Temple***

Next, you will be visiting Sankat Mochan Temple. A famous temple of Lord Hanuman in the region is located amidst the mist-clad mountains, providing a serene and scenic environs, making visitors get lost in the mesmerizing atmosphere of the place. The temple was built in the decade of 1960s. It was a famous religious person Baba Neeb Karoriji Maharaj who gave the idea of building this famous Sankat Mochan Mandir. Originally dedicated to Lord Hanuman, the temple now also bears the idols of Lord Rama, Lord Shiva, and Lord Ganesha in various complexes.

### **Shimla Mall Road**

The Mall Road is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Shimla that enfolds many hotels, restaurants, clubs, bars, banks, shops, offices, post offices, and tourist offices. People can walk up and down the Mall road slowly and enjoy the scenic views of the nature while sipping their favourite coffee. A lot of people gather at the Ridge and Scandal point on Mall road to meet and talk with friends, see the views of the Himalayan range and to do some shopping. The Mall road is connected to the Ridge at the Scandal point, where a statue of the nationalist leader Lala Lajpat Rai has been erected.

## **Day 10: Day 10: In Shimla**

Day at leisure in Shimla.

## **Day 11: Day 11: Shimla – Kalka – Delhi**

Drive to Kalka Railway station (approx. 3 hours drive) to board train back to Delhi.

**Train** Shatabdi Express

**Depart Kalka** 1745 Hrs

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## **Arrives Delhi 2155 Hrs**

Upon arrival in Delhi, you will be met and transferred to hotel.

## **Day 12: Day 12: Depart Delhi**

At an appropriate time, **a Trail Blazer Tours Representative** will assist and provide you the necessary transfer to the international airport to board your flight back home.

## **About Tour**

The journey will take you through an exciting Indian trail – the Golden Triangle– Delhi, Agra, and Jaipur along with the Shimla –the erstwhile summer capital of the British.

## **Highlights**

- Explore the historic layers of the Old and New Delhi with its UNESCO world heritage sites.
- A heritage walk along with rickshaw ride through the fabled markets of “Chandni Chowk”
- Experience a journey on Indian Railways.
- Visit to “Taj Mahal” – the universally admired masterpiece of the world’s heritage.
- Explore the deserted city of FatehpurSikri.
- Explore the bustling bazaars of the Pink City of Jaipur.
- Cover the forts and palace at Jaipur and Agra
- Take a short ride on the UNESCO World Heritage Toy Train from Shimla to Tara Devi (45 minutes ride).
- Learn about the history of British rule & life in their summer capital Shimla.