

Itinerary prepared for
Key Customer Programme
Rajasthan - India

Oct 2009

Thu 23 Oct AUCKLAND – SINGAPORE – DELHI

1.25 pm Depart Auckland on SQ 0286

7.10 pm Arrive Singapore

Fri 24 Oct SINGAPORE - DELHI

2.15 am Depart Singapore

5.20 am Arrive Delhi

On arrival guests collect their luggage and complete customs formalities. Guests will be transferred in luxury Volvo air-conditioned coaches to their **five star hotel located in New Delhi.**

The Taj Palace Hotel, New Delhi is a perfect embodiment of all qualities synonymous with the quality of Taj Hotels, Resorts & Palaces. Standing apart in service, its facilities and of course, in its distinguished patronage, this hotel has played host to **Heads of State, corporate moguls and high profile businessmen** from across the world. Nestled in six acres of lush greens in the exclusive Diplomatic Enclave of the city, Taj Palace Hotel is the only one in the top-of-the-line category near Gurgaon, and a mere 10 minutes drive from the airport.

Accommodation: **Taj Palace**
New Delhi



7.15 am Participants arrive at their Hotel where they enjoy a welcome drink and a speedy check in. There is an opportunity to freshen up before breakfast.

9.30 am Guests meet for a Welcome Breakfast and briefing in the hotel restaurant.

10.15 am **Orientation Tour of Delhi**

Delhi is comprised of literally the old and the new Old Delhi with its tightly packed streets and the spacious planned areas of New Delhi. Today guests will see both with the assistance of a well informed, English speaking guide.

Guests depart in their luxury air conditioned coach for a guided tour of Old Delhi. Highlights will include a visit the **Raj Ghat** (to view the memorial dedicated to **Mahatma Gandhi**) the **Jama Masjid**, India's largest mosque and architectural extravaganza dating back to 1658, a drive past the Red Fort (sandstone structure built at the pinnacle of the Mogul empire) and the fabled shopping bazaar.



1.00 pm Today our guests will lunch in style at the specialty restaurant **Olive**, recently featured in **Condé Nast Traveller's Top 100 Restaurants** of the World. Olive is something of a surprise - capturing the magic of the Mediterranean beachside with its pebbled white courtyard, candle lit alcoves and azure waters it allows guests to 'hideout' for an hour or so before heading off to see the sights of New Delhi.

2.30 pm Guests re-board the coach for their **guided tour of New Delhi**; we visit the Qutub Minar (built to establish the might of Islam and the onset of Muslim rule in India and Humayun's Tomb the first example of a new and distinctive style which developed to become the hallmark of the Mughal Dynasty. We drive past India Gate, The President's Residence (Rashtrapati Bhawan) the Parliament house and other government buildings.

5.00 pm Return to the hotel, remainder of the day at leisure until we meet for our transfer to dinner.

7.30 pm Meet in the hotel lobby.

8.00 pm

Tonight the group will experience sophisticated Indian urban cuisine, at Veda where we will have exclusive use of a section of the restaurant.



Veda restaurant is the latest venture of Suvir Saran, one of **India's reigning super chefs**. The restaurant brings together a variety of Indian home cuisines. The interior certainly is stunning and the food superb - Saran has already worked his magic at Devi in New York City to rave reviews.

11.00 pm

Return to the hotel.

Due to our early departure in the morning guests will be encouraged to checkout this evening.

Accommodation: Taj Palace Hotel
New Delhi

Sat 25th

Delhi – Agra

5.30 am

Guests meet in the lobby for early morning tea and coffee prior to their departure for Delhi Railway station to board the **Shatabdi Express** for Agra. *(Despite the hour this train is the most efficient method of getting to Agra, by road the trip takes some 5 hours, traffic dependent, and later departing trains stop numerous times.)*



6.15 am

The Shatabdi Express departs Delhi.

8.22 am

On arrival in Agra, we transfer to the **Oberoi Amar Vila**. Here guests can enjoy the luxury of their **own private view of the greatest monument to love** – located a mere 600 metres away is the Taj Mahal! Each of the hotel's rooms, suites, lobby, bar and lounge offer breathtaking views to the building. The resort itself is a **splendid display of terraced lawns, fountains, reflection pools and pavilions with rich interiors that will take you back to an era of Emperors and Princes.**



Luggage will be stored with the concierge until 2.00pm when we may checkin.

10 – 10.45 am

Breakfast at leisure.

11.00 am

Participants meet in the lobby for **sightseeing tour of Agra Fort**. Few forts in the world have a more fascinating story to tell than the Great Fort of Agra, an outstanding example of Mughal architecture and the seat and stronghold of the Mughal Empire under successive generations. Originally planned as an impregnable military structure by Akbar, the Agra Fort, over a period of time, acquired all the elegance, lavishness and majesty of an imperial palace.

Situated 1 km upstream of the Taj Mahal, on the right bank of the Yamuna, the Agra fort was built under the direction of Akbar, by Mohammed Quasim Khan, his commander-in-Chief and Governor of Kabul and added to by his son Jehangir and grandson Shahjahan. **An imposing structure with walls of red sandstone, almost 3 kilometres (two miles) long.** The eastern part of the fort (the only part open to visitors) **contains palaces, audience halls and mosques built by all the three emperors.**

12.30 pm

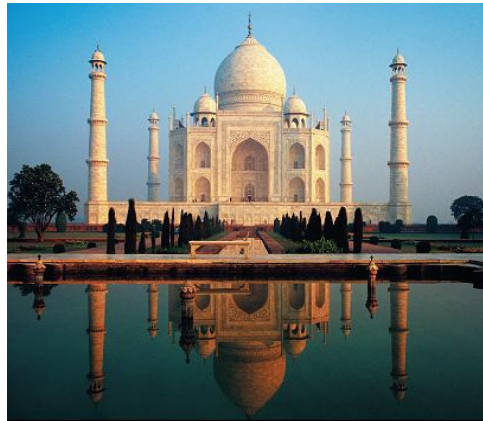
Lunch at the hotel

2.00 pm

Check in at the hotel. Remainder of the day at Leisure

6.00 pm

Meet in the lobby for transfer to the **Taj Mahal**. Guests can either walk the short distance or take advantage of the golf carts provided by the hotel.



A symphony in white marble and a tribute to eternal love, the Taj Mahal was **built by the Emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal**. The tombs of both Mumtaz and Shah Jahan lie within the mausoleum.

Construction took **22 years and over 20,000 workers and craftsmen** (1630-52 AD). The main structure is set amidst landscaped gardens. While on three sides it is surrounded by high walls, the rear is bound by the river Yamuna. Though the Taj appears to be amazingly perfect from almost any angle, it is the **close-up marble inlay work, which is really astounding**. Guests will have ample time to view and be mesmerized by this outstanding piece of architecture.

8.00pm

Participants return to the hotel. **In each guest's room we have place a traditional Indian costume** (kurta Pajama for both men and women) to wear to this evening's dinner "**Night of the Courtesan**"!

Guests meet in the lobby for the 10 minute coach drive to our dinner venue. As guests alight their coach and approach the entrance to the palace, **colourfully attired dancers entice them to join them in a whirling melee**. This evening we travel back in time to the **medieval period** and experience the golden era of India under the **legendary Mughal dynasty**. During the evening elegant Kathak dancers perform whilst a mouth watering array of Mughlai delicacies are served.

11.00 pm

Return to the Hotel.

Accommodation: Oberoi Amar Vilas
Agra

Sun 26th Oct

AGRA - JAIPUR

6.00 am As the locals will attest the very best time to view the Taj Mahal is at sunset and sunrise, this morning guests will experience a **champagne breakfast** at Taj Khema an elevated garden with excellent views of the Taj set on the banks of the river Yamuna.

9.00 am Guests check out and settle their incidental accounts and board their luxury air-conditioned coach for our onward journey to Jaipur visiting Fatehpur Sikri enroute.

Located 40 km from Agra, Fatehpur Sikri was built by Mughal emperor Akbar in 1571 in honour of the Sufi saint, Sheikh Salim Chisti. It was the Mughal capital for 14 years after which it was abandoned due to paucity of water. It is **made of red sandstone and combines influences from both Hindu and Mughal architecture**. Even to this day, the entrance to the fort is through the road that Akbar built which leads to the Buland Darwaza, a huge 54 metres gateway. Other inspiring monuments in Fatehpur Sikri are the Hiran Minar that Akbar built in memory of his favourite elephant, Tomb of Sheikh Salim Chishti, Birbal's House and the Diwan-i-Khas.

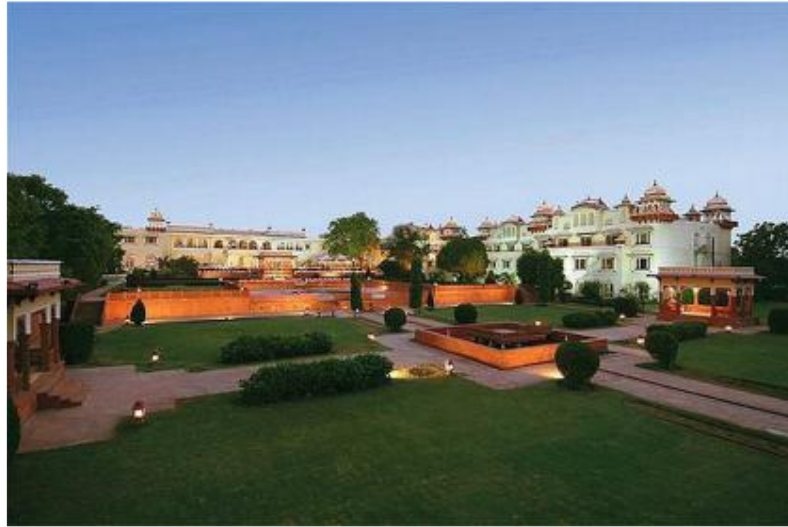
1.00 pm Today participants enjoy lunch at the **Hotel Laxmi Vilas Palace** located in Bharatpur. This **Palace was built in 1887** for Raja Raghunath Singh, the younger brother of the then ruler of Bharatpur, Majoraja Ram Singh. The venue provides a relaxing and beautiful setting for our luncheon today.



2.00 pm Continue journey to Jaipur.

4.00 pm Upon arrival at the **Jai Mahal Palace** hotel **guests will be accorded a Maharaja Welcome**, given to a victorious Rajput warrior returning from battle. **Elephants, camels, colourful maidens** (showering the path with rose petals) and beautiful women, performing a traditional Indian welcome with garlands of flowers, greet participants. With the music of the 'shehnai' in the background, the guests can relax with a welcome drink and enjoy their private 'show'.

Set Amidst **18 acres of beautifully landscaped Moghul gardens**, this incomparable Palace **dates back to 1745 AD**. A masterpiece in the Indo Saracenic style of architecture, it blends spotlight-grabbing opulence with tantalizing comforts that transport guests to a world of Rajasthan magnificence. It is located downtown, **close to the main shopping centre and historical monuments**.



Remainder of the day at leisure

5.00 pm

A hospitality desk is set up in the lobby to assist guests with options for dining this evening or to give advice with regard to the markets in Jaipur, where skilled craftsmen display **jewellery, paintings, carvings and colourful textiles**, - an enjoyable experience for tourists.

Accommodation: Jai Mahal Palace
Jaipur

Mon 27th **AGRA – JAIPUR**

7.00 - 9.30 am **Breakfast** at leisure.

9.45am Meet in the lobby for transfer to **Amber Fort** situated on a ridge just outside Jaipur city and surrounded by fortified battlements. Maharaja Mansingh, Mughal Emperor Akbar's most successful General, started the construction of Amber Fort in **the 17th century**. Before the City Palace was constructed in Jaipur, Amber was the seat of power.

Enroute we will make a short stop at a local market where guests can purchase ingredients for today's lunch.

At the foot of the hill **guests board jeeps** and proceed on an interesting drive to the main gate. From here participants may tour the **chambers and hallways of the palace, famous for the excellence of its design and decoration**. Within the complex is Ganesh Pol, an imposing gateway painted with the images of the elephant-headed god, Ganesh. The merging of Rajput and Mughal architectural styles is captured in the Sukh Niwas and Jas Mandir apartments, and in the Charbagh garden with its perfectly proportioned landscaping. Pierced screen windows offer views from different vantage points and shimmering mirrors encrust the walls of Sheesh Mahal.

1.00 pm Today we lunch at a local restaurant with a difference. Guests are invited to participate in the preparation of their meal – an Indian Curry Lunch - at one of **the most famous restaurants in Jaipur "Spice Court"**.



Situated in the plush historic residential area of Jaipur, the specialty restaurant overlooks lush green lawns and boasts of a wide array of traditional Rajasthani dishes from the various Royal Houses of Rajasthan. **The highlight of the lunch is an opportunity to participate in or witness the intricacies of Indian cooking in a brief interactive cooking demonstration.**

3.00 pm Return to the hotel.

Afternoon is at leisure to shop or enjoy a spa treatment at the hotel.

7.00 pm

Guests meet in the lobby for transfer to enjoy an **Exclusive Elephant Polo Match**. As the embodiment of courage, sportsmanship and equestrian skill, polo has long **been the traditional sport of the Indian nobility, since the medieval period**. Foremost among the warrior princes who nurtured this game of kings, were the Rajputs of northern India. Renowned for their chivalry and valour, they cherished the sport as a proving ground for the horsemanship and ability of young men and soldiers

In other parts of the world polo has since been associated as a sport of the rich; in India, it has been, and always will be, the sport of the Kings.



After the match, an exclusive bbq dinner will be served in a huge Indian Village style hut made of bamboo sticks.

Accommodation: Jai Mahal Palace
Jaipur

28th October

Jaipur

7.00 – 9.30 am

Breakfast at leisure

10.00 am

Today participants enjoy a half day sightseeing tour **of Jaipur the Pink City**, in style – **by vintage car!** When the first motorcars started coming to India, Rajasthan's princes and aristocracy were among the earliest to order them. Since some of the aristocratic families have kept these some date back to the turn of the century.



The highlights of the tour include a visit to the City Palace Museum, which has a **superb collection of Rajasthani costumes, and an armoury of Mughals and Rajputs including swords of different shapes and sizes** with chiselled handles. Many antiques and artefacts belonging to the ruling family are housed here, including a collection of weaponry. It also has an **art gallery** with an excellent collection of miniature paintings, carpets, royal paraphernalia and rare astronomical works in Arabic, Persian, Latin and Sanskrit. Following this we proceed to the awe inspiring **Jantar Mantar Observatory**, a stone astrological and astronomical Observatory built by Maharaja Jai Singh in the 18th century.

1.00 pm

Lunch at the hotel

Remainder of the day will be at leisure, a hospitality desk will be available in the lobby.

7.30 pm

Farewell Gala Dinner

This evening guests are driven in jeeps to **Samode** situated 40 km from Jaipur. On arrival we climb aboard **colourfully decorated camel carts** to wend our way through the village, to the fortress, accompanied by local musicians and torchbearers. As we turn a corner of the track we find the **illuminated palace** looming above us and a stunning tableau of decorated camels and lancers lined up on either side of the entrance.



Beautiful ladies in Rajasthani costume wait on the Palace stairs to greet participants and to perform the **traditional welcome with garlands of flowers and the 'tikka' ceremony.**



Participants are escorted inside the palace where **cocktails and delicious canapés are served** as traditional Rajasthani dances are performed.

The group enjoys a lavish dinner followed by an array of desserts before the grand finale of the evening, an **impressive display of fireworks**, which light up the sky and the surrounding hills. The palace, the welcome on arrival, the dancers and performers, all combine to create a very special ambience which will transport guests back to an era long gone of the chivalrous warriors of this desert kingdom and their colorful queens.

Accommodation: Jai Mahal Palace
Jaipur

29th Oct

Jaipur - Delhi

8.00-10.00am **Breakfast** at leisure.

11.00am Leave your luggage inside your room for collection.
Check out at reception and settle your incidental accounts.

12.00 noon Meet in the lobby for transfer to the airport.

1.00 pm Transfer to airport.

Tbc Dinner at airport hotel – exclusive area

11.15pm Depart Delhi

10.40pm +1 Arrive Auckland.

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