



February 8-21, 2015
Planned Itinerary

It is true that you never come home from India. It's a world of contrast, a feast for our senses, and provides an ancient education in how the world began when beauty, life and culture was in balance with nature and spirituality.

*"India is not just geography or history.
It is not only a nation, a country, a mere piece of land.
It is something more:
It is a metaphor, a poetry, something
invisible but very tangible."
~ Osho, Life's Mysteries*

Embark on a passage to India, on a ground-breaking journey to discover the superb cuisine and incredible cultural wonders of one of the world's most intriguing civilizations. A traveler's dream, we will encounter a 17th century nobility whose lineage still operate summer homes and boutique guesthouses, produce organic food, and still maintain a close and sustainable relationship with their villages. In this modern India, forts and palaces have been turned into chic hotels with Indian fusion food, taking traditional dishes and giving them an educated, contemporary twist.

On this special program, we'll immerse ourselves in a deep culinary tradition through trips to local markets and walks through fields of millet and cumin. We'll learn the craft of spice-infused Indian cuisine in the simplest of villages as well as the most exquisite kitchens. We choose spices in the India's bustling marketplaces and in the kitchen, we learn to use them in both traditional recipes and improvised favorites. We'll return home with spice boxes to brighten our own kitchens and to inspire our cooking in new ways from the source of mother India.



BASIC ITINERARY

The Imperial Hotel, New Delhi	Feb 8-11, 2015	3 nights
Tree of Life, Jaipur	Feb 11-13	2 nights
Chhatrasagar Camp, Chhatrasagar	Feb 13-15	2 nights
Jodphur	Feb 15-17	2 nights
Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur	Feb 17-19	2 nights
Devigarh Fort Palace, Delwara	Feb 19-20	1 night
TBD Hotel, New Delhi	Feb 20-21	1 night



DETAILED PROGRAM

7 FEB 2015 (SATURDAY)

DEPART HOME

8 FEB 2015 (SUNDAY)

ARRIVAL DELHI

If trees and streets could talk, the stories that would pour out of Delhi would keep listeners mesmerized for years. You can get no better insight into the diversity of India than from its capital—where the old and new, cultural and contemporary, rural and urban, all blend harmoniously. While Old Delhi is a maze of narrow serpentine lanes lined with shops, the new city is a bustling metropolis and wide open spaces.

On arrival at Delhi International Airport you will be met by a driver and transferred to The Imperial Hotel. After settling in, guests will dine at their leisure, and on their own as we each adjust to the time difference at our own pace (this meal is not included in the program).

Peggy will be stationed at the Patiala Peg Bar at the Imperial from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. this evening, for a casual *aperitivo* and introductions—feel free to drop in and say hello!

09 FEB (MONDAY)

DELHI



The group will meet for breakfast in the 1911 restaurant between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m. After breakfast, our guide will meet us at 9:30 a.m. And we will begin our program with a visit to Old Delhi, to the 17th century Jama Masjid, or “Friday Mosque.” The grand mosque with imposing marble domes and twin minarets was built in 1656. A magnificent flight of sandstone steps leads to its great arched entrance.

Next we will immerse ourselves in Delhi’s Meena Bazaar and Chandni Chowk, a souk-like bazaar with narrow streets and crowded alleyways. Many of the shops here are more than a 100 years old and the labyrinth of alleyways is full of surprises, with a conglomeration of various mini-markets including the silver market and spice market. Well integrated into the culture of the old city, these bazaars offer an opportunity to get a glimpse of life in Old Delhi.

With a local food expert, we’ll visit Asia’s largest wholesale spice market, Khari Baoli. Built in the 17th century, the market is situated near the historic Red Fort and displays hundreds of spices and condiments arranged in neat colorful piles making it a visual treat. We will have the unique experience of viewing the process of loading and unloading huge sacks from manual trolleys, shopkeepers busy with customers, customers selecting large quantities of spices and weary labor resting and chatting. The overall experience seems chaotic but in reality it a very well managed.



A tour of Old Delhi would not be complete without a walk through Paranthi Wali Gali (“lane of parantha-makers”). The food here is old fashioned and strictly vegetarian—*paranthas* are stuffed Indian breads shallow-fried in clarified butter. Some of the exotic fillings include

cashews, almonds and peas.

After an exhilarating rickshaw ride through the narrow lanes of the old city to the exterior of Red Fort, we'll visit the Mahatama Gandhi Memorial.

Lunch at The Veda will offer a complete experience in Indian Fine Dining. The Tasting Menu, The Platters and other interesting innovations make the menu very distinct.

We'll return to the hotel and rest during the afternoon, relaxing or exploring at our own leisure. Unwind with an optional massage or take full advantage of the private swimming pool situated in the shade of the enchanting hotel gardens. We shall also have the option to visit the Bangla Sahib Gurudwara (Sikh Temple). It would include a visit to the community kitchen where volunteers work and feed thousands of devotees daily (the food is offered free), followed by shopping at Khan market.

This evening, we'll meet in the hotel lobby for a short drive to the Indian Accent Restaurant for a unique fine dining culinary journey showcasing Indian food for the 21st century.

Overnight in Delhi.

10 FEB (TUESDAY)

DELHI

Today after a leisurely breakfast, we will drive to urban Indian homestays for a cooking demo of traditional home cooking, learning to use traditional spices and local ingredients in an informal, everyday way.

Return to the Imperial Hotel after lunch and enjoy the afternoon for leisure, or a spa treatment.

This evening we will drive to Hauz Khas Village, an upmarket, chic, boho urban village with some of the best places to eat, design studios and boutiques. We will dine tonight at Naivedyam, a South Indian vegetarian restaurant in Hauz Khas Village.

Overnight in Delhi.



11 FEB (WEDNESDAY)

DELHI / JAIPUR

(Shatbadi Express Train,
dep 6:05 am, arr 10:30 am)

Early morning transfer to the New Delhi Railway station to board our train for Jaipur, the first stop in our tour of royal Rajasthan.

On arrival in Jaipur, we will drive to the sprawling hilltop, Amber Fort with its royal apartments, halls and dramatic views. It is superbly located and protected by wild Aravali Hills on all sides. The citadel was established in 1592 by Raja Mansingh 1 on the remains of an old 11th century fort. Enroute we will visit the Art Emporium to see block printing and making of carpets.

In the afternoon we will check into our hotel, the Tree of Life Resort. Lunch at the resort and afternoon will be at your leisure.

This evening we will proceed to Dera Amer (15 minute drive) and enjoy a private elephant safari through the somnolent countryside. The colossal size of the elephant, its playful antics, graceful gait and the wisdom of its eyes move all who are lucky enough to spend time with them. This would be followed by Dinner at Dera Amer.

Overnight in Jaipur.

12 FEB (THURSDAY)

JAIPUR

Day excursion to Samode (40 min drive)

This morning we will visit the Observatory. Built by Sawai Jai Singh between 1728 and 1734 the observatory has been described as the most realistic and logical landscape in stone. Jai Singh was inspired by the work of Mirza Ulugh Beg, the astronomer king of Samarkand.



We'll drive back to the city to Dera Mandawa and meet with Thakur Durga Singh, our wonderful host for an introduction to Rajasthan cuisine and spices. Durga will walk us through the preparation of a few special dishes, including our lunch.

In the afternoon explore the colorful, chaotic bazaars of the city. Jaipur is a city of vibrant colors and the colorful bazaars offer great opportunity for shopping. It is known for its handicrafts, textiles, leather ware, antiques, gems and jewelry. Jaipur is one of the largest ornament making centers in India and its 'enamel' and 'inlay' work with gems are the two traditional techniques for which it is most famous.

Return to the Resort and evening free for dinner

Overnight in Jaipur.

13 FEB (FRIDAY)

JAIPUR to PUSHKAR (3 hour drive) to CHHATRASAGAR (2 hour drive)

Today after breakfast drive to Pushkar, a pilgrim town of lakes and 400 temples. Legend claims its lakes were created from the petals that fell from the divine hands of Brahma the Creator. We will take a walk through Pushkar town and bazaar followed by Lunch at the Ananta Resort.

Upon arrival in Chhatrasagar, we will check in to Chhatra Sagar, a luxurious campsite situated on the dam of a 100 year old reservoir. The site exemplifies the luxury living of the Rajasthani royalty in tents that were often mini palaces. The tents offer breathtaking views of the sunrise over the lake and sunsets on the Aravali hills.

Dinner will be enjoyed as a group, including a truly delicious Indian and traditional Rajasthani meal cooked with farm fresh vegetables. Other than meals, guests will have the afternoon and evening free to explore and enjoy the beautiful locale, and to soak in some fresh air, sit around the bonfire and listen to old folklore.

Overnight in Chhatrasagar.



14 FEB (SATURDAY)

CHHATRASAGAR

Chhatra Sagar was built as a hunting lodge of the Nimaj Estate. Surrounded by lush green fields of wheat, mustard, cotton and chilies and vast grazing pastures, this 100 year old reservoir with a periphery of about 10 km is an ideal destination for nature lovers and a perfect getaway from the chaotic Indian city life.

In the morning, after breakfast, we will take a village tour accompanied by one of our hosts from the Nimaj family. We'll have the opportunity to walk in the farms, which grow chilli, anis seed, cummin seed, mustard and wheat. We'll walk within the settlement, meeting the local people and perhaps taking advantage of the great photo opportunities.

In the afternoon, we'll enjoy a cooking class with our host family, followed by a lunch of the meals we have prepared. Much of the regional cuisine of Rajasthan reflects the former lifestyle of the community of Rajputs, members of warrior clans. The traditional meal of *dal batti churma* kept well for days when warriors went to battle in the desert. The meat-eating Rajputs were game hunters and their grilled meat specialties are still enjoyed today, often prepared with lamb or chicken. We'll have the opportunity to learn about and enjoy some of

these dishes at dinner.

Overnight in Chattrasagar.



15 FEB (SUNDAY)

CHHATRASAGAR TO JODHPUR (2 hour drive)

Morning at leisure or option to go bird watching around Chhatrasagar. After lunch we will drive to Jodhpur. Epitomizing all the romance and feudal splendor of Rajasthan with the majestic Mehrangarh Fort towering over it, colorful bazaars and the sands of the Thar Desert, the city of Jodhpur exists in the most stunning shade of blue.

We will check into our hotel and in the evening we will have a chance to walk through the colorful bazaars of Jodhpur - well known for glass bangles, ornamental swords, rugged leather slippers and printed fabrics.

This evening we will dine at Hanwant Mahal, the fine dining restaurant adjacent to the Umaid Bhawan Palace.

Overnight in Jodhpur.

16 FEB (MONDAY)

JODHPUR

This morning we will visit Mehrangarh Fort - perhaps the most majestic of Rajasthan's forts, described by Rudyard Kipling as "the creation of angels, fairies and giants". Mehrangarh's forbidding ramparts are in sharp contrast to the flamboyantly decorated palaces within. Founded in 1459, the sandstone fort was added to by later rulers between 17th and 19th centuries.

Afterwards we will visit the Umaid Bhawan Palace, last of the palaces to be built in India by the Maharaja to provide employment to the people of this region during a famine in the late 40s.

Relax for the rest of the afternoon before heading to the kitchens for a cooking demo, followed by dinner at Darikhana at The Raas.

Overnight in Jodhpur.

17 FEB (TUESDAY)

JODHPUR / RANAKPUR (2.5 hour drive) RANAKPUR / UDAIPUR (2.5 HOUR DRIVE)

This morning drive to Udaipur with en route stop at the Ranakpur Jain Temple. Set in a secluded wooded valley of the Aravali Hills, the 15th century complex is one of the five great holy places of the Jain faith. The grand scale and the sheer architectural complexity of the white marble temple along with its exquisite sculptural ornamentation makes it the single most impressive example of Indian temple architecture.

The visit to the Temple will be followed by a delicious lunch nearby. After lunch continue your drive to Udaipur and on arrival check into the Taj Lake Palace. The Taj Lake Palace is a dream of white marble and mosaic, glistening in the moonlight and offering a striking 360-degree panoramic view of the majestic Aravali Hills on one side and the lofty palaces on the other. It was built in 1754 in the middle of Lake Pichola and is spread over a 4-acre site complete with ponds and gardens for the frolicking courtesans.



Guests will have the afternoon to rest or explore. Dinner will be at your own discretion.

Overnight in Udaipur.

18 FEB (WEDNESDAY)

UDAIPUR

After breakfast, we will explore the City Palace, a blend of stern Rajput military architecture on the outside and lavish Mughal inspired decorative art on the inside. This is the largest palace in Rajasthan covering an area of 5 acres and built between the 16th and 20th centuries. The older section of the City Palace complex dates back to 1568 and has a maze of royal apartments and courtyards. They are linked to each other by narrow passages, a typical feature of Rajput Palaces of that period, designed to confuse invaders.

Then we will take a walk through the old city followed by a visit to the Jagdish Temple, situated in the heart of the city. Lunch before returning to the Lake Palace.

During the late afternoon, we will have a cooking demo in the kitchens of Neel Kamal restaurant at the Taj Lake Palace, followed by dinner.

Overnight in Udaipur.

19 FEB (THURSDAY)

UDAIPUR TO DELWARA (1 hour drive)

After breakfast, we will depart for Delwara and arrive at the Devigarh Fort Palace. Nestled in the Aravali Hills, the 18th century Devigarh Fort Palace is 28 km northeast of Udaipur city. The Fort Palace was conceived as a place where the past meets the future. The contemporary design showcased within this spectacular heritage property creates a new image of India for the 21st century.



Before lunch, we'll wander through the local village, which belonged to the kingdom of Mewar until 1947, as a part of the feudal estate of the house of Delwara. The history of this region is known for its rich culture, chivalry and martial valor.

Guests will be free for lunch and an afternoon at leisure to enjoy the excellent Devigarh spa. In the evening, we will dress our best for a FAREWELL DINNER at Devigarh Palace.

Overnight in Delwara.



20 FEB (FRIDAY)

**DELWARA TO UDAIPUR (1 hour drive)
UDAIPUR / DELHI (3:30 PM flight)**

This morning after breakfast, we will attend our final cooking class with the Devigarh chef and his team, followed by an early lunch.

In the afternoon, we will transfer to Udaipur airport in time for our flight back to Delhi. On arrival at the Domestic Airport in Delhi, we will be met by a local guide, who will take us to our hotel in Gurgaon, located in the suburbs of Delhi and in close proximity to the International Airport. The Trident is set amidst 7 acres of landscaped gardens, walkways, courtyards, reflection pools and fountains.

Guests will be free for dinner, as we prepare for our final departures.

21 FEB (SATURDAY)**DEPARTURE DELHI**

Breakfast will be provided at the hotel.

Guests will be transferred with assistance to the International Airport for flights home.

Program includes:

- Pick-up at the airport in Delhi by private driver upon arrival
- 12 days of unforgettable images and discovery in the regal region of Rajasthan
- 5-star accommodations and noble countryside estates
- Most meals and all cooking classes and demonstrations
- Recipes!
- Cultural excursions to palaces and local artisans, villages and marketplaces, and historical sites
- Elephant ride
- Transportation, excellent driver and assistant
- Knowledgeable guides in all cities, including village jeep tours and safari bird watching

Not included but offered:

- Elephant Polo
- India's premiere wine selections
- Ayurvedic Spa treatments
- Optional pre or post trip excursions to Agra and the Taj Mahal