

Gems of India: Color and Culture of North India Tour



Day 01: Arrive Delhi

Arrive Delhi and there will be a private chauffeur-driven car to take you to the hotel. **The Imperial** is one of Delhi's leading 5-star hotels, both elegant and historic in equal measure. A grand dame built in 1936, The Imperial's architecture is a mix of Victorian and Art Deco styles and the decor features white marble colonnades, verdant gardens, and Italian marble floors.

Day 02: Delhi

Morning: Start your day with an exploration tour of **Old Delhi** known as Shahjahanabad by visiting Red Fort, Jama Masjid, Sheeshganj Gurudwara along with a fun rickshaw ride in the alleys of Chandni Chowk. Later drive through **Lutyens Delhi** (India Gate, Parliament, and Rashtrapati Bhavan),

the leafy, green area of the city built by the British Raj in the early 20th century to be their new capital of India.

Afternoon: Visit to **Shaw Brothers** showroom to learn about pashminas and hand-knotted rugs from Kashmir. Established in 1840, Shaw Brothers is a trusted name in the manufacture and sales of pure pashmina shawls, hand-knotted rugs, and other textile products from Kashmir. They use only pashmina wool from the Changra (pashmina) goat of the Ladakh region in their products and are known among generations of Delhiites for superb quality and reliability.

Dusk: Visit the **Qutub Minar**, one of Delhi's three UNESCO World Heritage sites, and the surrounding complex, which houses many historical buildings that glow in the fading light.

Day 03: Delhi

Morning: Start your day by visiting **Humayun's Tomb** and Lodhi Garden. Humayun's Tomb, a precursor to the Taj Mahal, is a UNESCO World Heritage site and a magnificent architectural marvel. Lodhi Garden is Delhi's favourite park, a verdant oasis dotted with ancient tombs in the centre of the city.

Afternoon: We will spend time at **Khan Market**, a popular high-end market frequented by diplomats, and home to many of the top-brand clothing stores such as Anokhi and Fabindia, well-known Indian designers such as Ritu Kumar and Rana Gill, and specialty stores selling high-design ethnic and wedding wear such as Ogaan and Yashodhara. Jewellery is well represented in stores such as Amrapali and Amethyst and luxury wellness products at Kama Ayurveda and Forest Essentials.

Day 04: Delhi– Agra (220 kms/ 3-4 hrs)

After breakfast, check out of The Imperial and drive to Agra. Check into the opulent **Oberoi Amarvilas**, one of the world's leading hotels. Inspired by Mughal palace designs, The Oberoi Amarvilas is just 600 metres from the Taj Mahal and is the only hotel that offers unrestricted views of the Taj Mahal from all rooms and suites.

In the afternoon, visit imposing **Agra Fort**, which was built by the famed Mughal emperor Akbar in 1565, and made predominantly of red sandstone. Among the fort's many treasures is the magnificent Pearl Mosque. It lies on the bend of the river Yamuna, almost in the heart of the town, with a stunning view of the Taj Mahal across the river.



Day 05: Agra – Jaipur (260 kms/ 5 hrs)

Morning: Start your day with an early morning visit to **Taj Mahal** during sunrise. The Taj Mahal, one of the Seven Modern Wonders of the World, is considered to be one of the most beautiful buildings on the planet. Built by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan between 1631 and 1648 for his beloved wife Mumtaz after she died in childbirth, the white marble mausoleum is also known as a monument to love and a "teardrop on the face of eternity." Apart from its stunning design balance and perfect symmetry, the Taj Mahal is also noted particularly for its elegant domes, intricately carved screens, and some of the best inlay work in the world.

Return to the hotel for breakfast and then checkout and drive to Jaipur. Check into the **Rambagh Palace Hotel**. In the heart of Jaipur, the Rambagh Palace Hotel was originally built in 1835 as a royal residence and was the home of Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II and his queen Maharani Gayatri Devi, a celebrated beauty also known for her strength and political skills. This

glorious palace retains its elaborate splendour, extravagantly decorated with hand-carved marble jalis or latticework, sandstone balustrades, cupolas and chattris or cenotaphs, and elaborate Mughal Gardens.



Day 06: Jaipur

”In 1727, Maharaja Jai Singh II founded the city of Jaipur with the idea of making it a thriving commercial capital. Jewellery was a big aspect of this project as he was fascinated with gems and he invited jewellers and karigars from Delhi, Agra and Varanasi to settle down in Jaipur. With his support, Jaipur became the thriving centre of jewellery.” Conde Nast Traveller

Morning: Start your day with a visit to **Amer Fort**. Massive, romantic Amer Fort is a very well maintained monument to the Rajput way of life in the 16th century, and includes gorgeous palace rooms, courtyards, and gardens. Building was started by Maharaja Man Singh I in 1592, and completed by his descendent Maharaja Jai Singh I in a beautiful fusion of Mughal and Hindu styles.

Afternoon: We will explore the **Pink City** (Walled City), visiting the City Palace and Jantar Mantar (Observatory). The City Palace sprawls over a large area of the Walled City and houses the Chandra Mahal, Shri Govind Dev Temple, and the City Palace Museum. It is the home of the royal family of Jaipur. Our tour of the Pink City will end at Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds).

Late afternoon:

Emma Chapman Jewels: Emma will arrange a bespoke pop-up for our group where you can shop her designs or have something custom made.

Award-winning British jewellery designer Emma Chapman has been working in Jaipur, India, for the last 15 years. She lives between Jaipur and the UK and her opulent gemstone jewellery is inspired by India's traditional designs, techniques, and craftsmanship. Emma's signature style is haute-bohemian in flavour, exotic, and glamorous. All the jewellery is exquisitely handmade by master goldsmiths and stone cutters in her workshops in Jaipur. <https://emmachapmanjewels.com/>



Day 07: Jaipur and Sitapur

Morning: After breakfast, expert guide Gyansham Sharma will arrive to begin a day tour into the world of gems and jewellery in Jaipur. Gyansham has worked as a guide in Jaipur for 40 years, and has also worked in the gemstone cutting and polishing industry.

Gyansham will start the tour with a talk about jewellery traditions and techniques, past and present, and the development of the gemstone and jewellery industry in Jaipur.

Afterwards, we will drive about 45 minutes to Sitapur, a manufacturing centre that was set up by the Rajasthan government. Here, we will visit a couple of workshops owned by brands such as Amrapali and Gem Palace to see how precious and semi-precious gemstones are cut and polished, and to enjoy a demonstration of the jewellery making process.

Afternoon: **Amrapali Jaipur:** We will visit the flagship store in central Jaipur, where you can buy new and vintage jewellery in virtually every price range, followed by a visit to the Amrapali Museum.

A Jaipur institution, Amrapali was founded in 1978 by Rajiv Arora and Rajesh Ajmera. As young men, they spent time travelling in India and learning about local arts and crafts and this tradition continued after they founded Amrapali as they started to source unique jewellery from small villages across Rajasthan. Amrapali is rooted in Indian ethnic chic, but with a contemporary flare. The museum was created to showcase the 3,000 historic pieces of antique silver Rajiv and Rajesh collected over the years.

Gem Palace: After Amrapali, we will visit the iconic Gem Palace, the oldest and most well-known jewellery store in Jaipur. Gem Palace was founded by the Kasliwals in the 18th century, court jewellers to the royal family of Jaipur. The family's dazzling collection of rare gems and antique jewellery make the Gem Palace as much a museum as a store. A private tour will include the second floor workshops.

Day 08: Jaipur

After breakfast, check out from the hotel and transfer to the airport for departure.

CITY	HOTELS	NIGHTS
Delhi	The Imperial	03
Agra	The Oberoi Amarvilas	01
Jaipur	Taj Rambagh Palace	03

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Mariellen Ward

mariellen@indiaforbeginners.com

India mobile number: (91) 9368998201

WhatsApp number is Canadian: Country code: 1 Number: 416-520-1825

Anjani Nandan

anjani@indiaforbeginners.com

TEL and WHATSAPP: (91) 9953918980

Ujjwal Mukherjee.

Ujjwal@clouditineraries.com

TEL and WHATSAPP: (91) 9811791296