



## **YOGA CLASSES, YOGA RETREAT IN AN ASHRAM AND INDIA'S GOLDEN TRIANGLE -13 DAYS**

### **Day 01-Welcome to New Delhi (-)**

Our Denormalise representative will meet you at the airport in New Delhi, where you will be transferred to your hotel.

Delhi is a city that bridges two different worlds. Old Delhi, once the capital of Islamic India, is a labyrinth of narrow lanes lined with crumbling havelis (old private mansions) and formidable mosques. In contrast, the imperial city of New Delhi created by the British Raj is composed of spacious, tree-lined avenues and imposing government buildings. You will be enchanted by the ancient monuments and its architectural wonders, the fascinating museums and art galleries, the fabulous eating places, and bustling markets.

Overnight in Delhi

### **Day 02-Delhi (B)**

After relaxing in the morning, you will explore Old and New Delhi.

Old Delhi was the capital of Mughal India from the 12th to the 19th century. You will pass by the famous **Red Fort**, where Jawaharlal Nehru unfurled the flag of newly independent India on August 15, 1947. Then, you will trade your vehicle for a bicycle rickshaw and furrow through the narrow, winding lanes of the colorful and bustling **Chandni Chowk**, one of India's oldest bazaars. This place represents the national unity, secularism, and diversity of India.

Then, you will visit the **17th century Jama Masjid**, one of the largest **mosques** in India and Shah Jahan's last architectural triumph and the **Mahatma Gandhi's** serene and evocative cremation site.

By the end of the afternoon, you will visit two monuments from Delhi's past; **Humayun's tomb and Qutub Minar**. This tower was built by a slave king in the 12th century and is considered a prototype of all minars in India.

Then, you will return to your hotel and have your first **yoga class** on the lawn of the hotel.

Overnight in New Delhi

### **Day 03-Delhi → Agra → Bharatpur (B)**

**by: surface: 60 Kms/ 1 hour**

Early in the morning, you will be transferred to New Delhi Railway Station to board Shatabdi Express to Agra for a departure at 6:15 am.

You will be met at Agra Railway station and driven to the **Taj Mahal**. Enjoy a short ride on a Tonga (horse-driven carriage) from the parking area to the gate of the Taj Mahal monument!

It took 22 years and 20,000 men to build the Taj Mahal. The white marble was quarried 200 miles away and was transported to the site by a fleet of 1000 elephants. Built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jehan as an expression of his love for his wife Mumtaz Mahal, the Taj Mahal is truly one of the wonders of the world. You will be mesmerized by this outstanding piece of architecture from the 17th century.

Then, you will visit **Agra Fort**, which was the seat and the stronghold of the Mughal Empire for many generations. Shah Jehan added the impressive quarters and the mosque while Aurangzeb added the ramparts. Do not miss the Hall of Public Audience and its Royal Pavilions.

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Then, you will head to **Bharatpur** and visit **Fatehpur Sikri**. Fatehpur Sikri is the red sandstone city built in the 16th century by the Mughal Emperor Akbar, one of India's greatest rulers. The Emperor ruled Agra from this city and a fort with a Dargah (Muslim religious center) still stands here. Remarkably broad-minded for his time, this Muslim king married a Rajput princess in order to win over his Hindu subjects. The architecture of Fatehpur Sikri is a combination of Hindu and Muslim styles, expressing Akbar's vision of synthesizing the cultures.

In the evening, take a **yoga class** on the lawn of the hotel!

Overnight in Bharatpur

#### **Day 04-Bharatpur (B)**

In the morning, you will visit the **Keoladeo Ghana National Park**, the famous sanctuary of the migratory birds in Northern India. Enjoy a safari inside the park on a cycle Rickshaw.

Also known as **Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary**, the park's 12 square miles are home to 400 species of birds! In this network of shallow lakes surrounded by forest, savanna, and shrub land, you will watch water birds, passerines, and over 25 species of raptors. This amazing national park has been declared a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.

Enjoy your free afternoon to rest at the hotel, go shopping, or wander through the streets of Bharatpur. In the evening, partake in a **yoga class** on the lawn of the hotel.

Overnight in Bharatpur

#### **Day 05-Bharatpur → Jaipur (B)**

Start your morning off right by taking a **yoga class** on the lawn of the hotel.

After breakfast, you will head to Jaipur and check in to the hotel.

Welcome to **Rajasthan**, a land endowed with **invincible forts, magnificent palaces, and waves of sand dunes and serene lakes**. No other region in the country assembles the many paradoxes of India like the desert land of Rajasthan. **By far, it is the most colorful region in India.**

The city of victory, **Jaipur** presides **over the fascinating desert state and its people**. Jaipur is surrounded by rugged hills, each crowned by a formidable fort, with beautiful palaces, **mansions, and gardens** dotted throughout its precincts. Except for the busy traffic of bicycles, cars, and buses, little seems to have changed in the "**pink city**." With its historical past, Jaipur revives legends of the ancient Rajputs. **The women's dresses and the men's turbans add color to this fascinating city.**

Proceed for a **Heritage Walk in the old city** early in the evening. From the year of its creation in 1727, the royal families and nobles of Jaipur patronized **the craftsmen and artisans** of the city. These traditions continue to this day. As a result, modern day **Jaipur is considered to be the craft capital of India**. Traditional methods are still used to produce many valuable and highly prized items. Visit **the areas of Ghat Darwaza and Vishveshwar ji**, mingle with locals, and **taste the region's culinary delights**.

Overnight in Jaipur

#### **Day 06-Jaipur (B)**

Early morning **yoga class** on the lawn of the hotel.

After breakfast, visit the fabulous **Amber Fort**, built in the 17th century. The fort is **surrounded by fortified battlements and overlooks the Moat Lake**.

An elephant (or a jeep) will spare you the trouble of getting up to the fortress.

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Once on top, **stroll through the sprawling complex of courtyards and halls**. Many of the rooms have **delightful wall paintings, with precious stones and mirrors** inlaid in the walls. Most fascinating, perhaps, is the **Sheesh Mahal** (hall of mirrors) where a single lamplight is reflected in the many mirrors, lighting up the room.

Then, stop at “**Palace of Winds**” (**Hawa Mahal**), a **thin layer of an elaborate facade** behind which the **ladies of the royal court used to watch the daily goings on in the street** below. The cool wind blows through its facade of windows and latticed screens through which the queens of the court once viewed the streets of the city.

In the afternoon, you will visit the **City Palace**, which is an **interesting combination of exquisite palaces, gardens and courtyards, decorative art and carved doorways**. The **palace museum** houses collections of **rare manuscripts, armory, costumes, carpets, and miniature paintings**. Located nearby is Jantar Mantar, the most famous of five Royal Observatories built in India by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh.

#### **Optional Activity**

This afternoon, spend half a day with the Elephants at Elefantastic. **Elefantastic** – When meeting an elephant for the first time, you have to let them catch your smell. **Let the elephant feel your energy and spirit**. Feeding is the easiest way to gain their trust.

You will learn **their feeding habits and how to create a traditional painting on the elephant’s face**. Go on an hour-long elephant safari.

Overnight in Jaipur

#### **Day 07-Jaipur – Delhi (B)**

Early morning **yoga class** on the lawn of the hotel.

Free time to rest in the morning before heading back to New Delhi in the afternoon. You will be able to sleep in the car during the 5 ½-hour drive.

Check in at the hotel, and spend the night in Delhi.

#### **Day 08-Delhi → Haridwar → Rishikesh (B/D)**

Early in the morning, you will be transferred to New Delhi Railway Station to board a Superfast Train for Haridwar.

Departure from Delhi: 6:50 a.m.

Arrival at Haridwar: 11:25 a.m.

Upon arrival in Haridwar, a Denormalise representative will meet you at the Railway station and will drive you to Rishikesh. It is a 45-minute drive.

Check in at the **Swami Ram Shadak Gram Ashram** in Rishikesh.

**Rishikesh**, the “place of sages,” is a **celebrated spiritual town on the bank of Ganga** and is surrounded on three sides by the Shivalik range of the **Himalayas**. It is an **ideal destination** not only for pilgrims but also for those who want to **delve deeper into meditation, yoga, and other aspects of Hinduism**. Rishikesh is also called the ‘**Yoga Capital of the World**’.

#### **Day 09/10/11 - Rishikesh (B/L/D)**

3 full days for a **yoga retreat at the Swami Ram Shadak Gram Ashram**

#### **Your stay:**

The full name of your ashram is **Swami Rama Sadhaka Grama**. Grama means “**village**” and Sadhaka means “**spiritual seeker**” in the Sanskrit language. This ashram is devoted to the teachings of Swami

Rama of the Himalayas. Built like a beautiful Meditation hill village, the ashram was established by Swami Veda Bharati in 2002.

Swami Rama Sadhaka Grama also serves as headquarters of the Association of **Himalayan Yoga Meditation Societies International**, a worldwide non-profit society of like-minded individuals with the aim of teaching and making available the knowledge of yoga meditation in the tradition of the Himalayan Masters.

**Your accommodation:**

The facilities are a blend of **modern but basic amenities** and traditional simple living for spiritual purposes in a **pure and sacred atmosphere**.

**Your environment:**

The awe-inspiring beauty of the ashram, the **clear flowing waters of Mother Ganga**, the **majestic Himalayan Mountains** and the **lush green forests** will embrace and rejuvenate your entire being.

**A full immersion ...**

Activities at the ashram include **teaching the art and science of yoga meditation**. Your stay will give you **inspiration and elevate your body, mind, and spirit** as well as a deeper connection with the Divine. As you experience the serenity of the ashram, you will feel your **soul bathing in the peace of sacred energies**, including those that emanate from nature and those that linger from the timeless healing powers of saints, sages, and holy ones.

Overnight in Rishikesh.

**Day 12-Rishikesh → Haridwar → Delhi (B/L)**

In the afternoon, head to **Haridwar**. You will walk around **Har-ki-Pauri Ghat** (the most sacred Ghat in Haridwar). A **ghat** is comprised of several steps leading down to a body of water, usually a holy river. In the evening you will be transferred to Haridwar Railway station to board the “Shatabdi Express” train for New Delhi.

Departure from Haridwar: 6:13 p.m.

Arrival at New Delhi: 10:45 p.m.

You will be met by our Denormalise representative at the railway station and transferred to your hotel.

Overnight in Delhi.

**Day 13-Bye bye India! (B)**

Enjoy your last morning in New Delhi, rest at the hotel, or go shopping. Transfer to the airport for your flight back home.

**DETAILS**

- ❖ **Tour duration:** 13 days
- ❖ **Price starts at:** \$1840 per person - price based on 2 people double occupancy
- ❖ **Group Size:** 4 to 6 people
- ❖ **Start on:** all year long

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- ❖ **Country visited:** India
- ❖ **Comfort:** standard; at the ashram, simple and monastic
- ❖ **Level of difficulty:** dynamic, for people practicing yoga, all levels accepted
- ❖ **Transport:** local train and private vehicle with driver in a Deluxe Micro Van
- ❖ **Accommodation:** 3-star hotels - 4-star and 5-star hotels by request only
- ❖ **Additional Information:**
  - Taj Mahal is closed on Fridays
  - Passport and visa: All U.S. citizens need a valid passport and valid Indian visa to enter and exit India for any purpose (also see Special Circumstances, below). Visitors, including those on official U.S. government business, must apply for visas at an Indian Embassy or Consulate abroad before entering the country:

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1139.html#entry\\_requirements](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1139.html#entry_requirements)

#### ❖ **What's included?**

- 20 Meals - 12 breakfasts, 4 Lunches, 4 Dinners
- Air-conditioned ground transportation
- Train tickets
- 8 nights in 3-star hotels and 4 nights in the ashram of Rishikesh
- Entrance fees for key sites and monuments mentioned in the itinerary
- Services of English-speaking guide
- Bottled water in the coach during sightseeing and meals
- Yoga classes from day 2 to day 7
- All currently applicable taxes, tolls, parking fees, and service tax

#### ❖ **What's not included?**

- Personal expenses and personal insurance
- Any meals, special events, or options mentioned in the itinerary
- International airfare and departure taxes at the airport
- Alcoholic beverages

#### ***Tips from the team:***

-From **March 1 - 7, 2014**, the **International Yoga Festival is held in Rishikesh**. Let us know if you are interested in including this unique event in your trip!

-**Each day at 7 p.m. at Haridwar, the Aarti ceremony** (the fire ceremony) takes place. Haridwar is one of the most important Hindu pilgrimage sites, and, as a result, a holy town. **The ceremony is a good opportunity to be fully immersed in Indian culture. If you are interested in participating in this unique event, please let us know!**

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