



## **EAST MEETS WEST – 2018**

**A CUSTOM TOUR FOR KAREN ANDERSON OF ALBERTA FOOD TOURS, INC.**

**TOUR DAYS: 16 DAYS**

We'll begin in captivating New Delhi where we'll enjoy ancient monuments, classic restaurants, authentic shopping and hands-on cooking with one of India's foremost cooking instructors. Leaving the big city behind we'll head south to the major destinations of Rajasthan.

Rajasthan is alive with colour and we'll enjoy the pink city of Jaipur, the blue city of Jodhpur and the white city of Udaipur. These are cities to explore arts, culture and history but we'll also include visits to a few small villages in our travels so that you can experience the rural life of India. Walking is one of the best ways to experience a destination and the local way of life, culture & nature, so we'll spend time on foot to connect with Rajasthani people.

Of course, we'll include Agra and it's glowing gem, The Taj Mahal on this Northern sojourn. Finally, we'll head east to Bengal and the "city of joy" – Kolkata.

Kolkata is located on the east bank of River Hooghly. It is the capital of the Indian state of West Bengal and the commercial, cultural, and educational centre of East India. It is India's oldest port as well as its sole major riverine port. As the former capital of India, Kolkata was the birthplace of modern Indian literary, artistic and scholastic thought. Here we'll spend time enjoying the arts and culture and most importantly eating at fabulous restaurants and learning some incredible Bengali cuisine with local cooking instructors.



Friday Mosque in Delhi – photo credit – Karen Anderson



**TOUR DEPARTURE & PRICE:**

**20 September 2018 for 16 days**

Per person on twin sharing basis:

**CAD 7750 + (Air tax \$680)**

Single Supplement:

**CAD 3950**

**TOUR LODGING INFO: 14 Nights**

Proposed hotel list,

<b>CITIES</b>	<b>NIGHTS</b>	<b>LUXURY HOTELS</b>
Delhi	03 Nights	The Leela Palace New Delhi
Jodhpur	02 Nights	Umaid Bhawan Palace
Udaipur	02 Nights	Taj Lake Palace
Jaipur	02 Nights	Taj Rambagh Palace
Agra	02 Nights	ITC Mughal
Kolkata	03 Nights	The Oberoi Grand Kolkata

**TOUR PACKAGE INCLUDES:**

- 14 nights accommodation at listed hotels or similar
- On arrival meeting & assistance by our representative
- Daily buffet breakfast
- Transportation/Transfers in an air-conditioned coach with bottled water available
- Sightseeing & entrance fees as per the itinerary
- Walking tour of Jamali Kamali Mosque & Qutub Minar
- Salaam Balak Trust Walking Tour
- Dinner at Bukhara restaurant, New Delhi
- Cooking class with lunch at Sumeet Nair's organic farm
- Cycle rickshaw tour of Chandni Chowk spice bazaar and lunch at Kareem's plus Friday Mosque in Old Delhi
- City tour in Jodhpur
- Cooking Class with lunch in Jodhpur at Indian family's home
- Jeep Safari in Bishnoi Village
- Lunch in Jojawar with rural train experience at Kambli Ghat Pass
- Walking tour of the old city plus Sahelion ki Bari garden tour in Udaipur
- Private boat ride of Lake Pichola in Udaipur
- Cultural show at Bagore Ki Haveli, Udaipur
- Jeep ride and tour of Amber Fort in Jaipur
- City tour of Jaipur
- Cooking class at Kaaki Niwas in Jaipur
- Visit to Fatehpur Sikri near Agra
- Visit Taj Mahal and Agra Fort in Agra
- Dinner in local restaurant first night Kolkata
- City tour and tram experience in Kolkata
- Dinner at 6 BALYGUNG Restaurant – famous for Bengali cuisine - Kolkata
- Visit Mother Theresa House
- Cooking class with lunch in Kolkata
- Farewell dinner at The Oberoi Kolkata
- Yoga classes as indicated in the schedule
- Services of accompanying English speaking Tour Director
- International Flights from Calgary
- Domestic flights in India

**TOUR PACKAGE DOES NOT INCLUDE:**

- Meals not mentioned as being included
- Items of a personal nature
- Items not mentioned as being included
- Visa fees
- Travel Insurance
- Tips & gratuities



## **TOUR ITINERARY**

### **20 SEPT CANADA - DELHI**

Board your international flight.

### **21 SEPT DELHI**

Welcome to Delhi, India - a monumental city with a vibrant mix of old and new teeming bazaars, stately British boulevards, powerful Mughal palaces and forts, and intricate, ethereal towers, temples and tombs. On arrival at Delhi International Airport we will be met and assisted by our company executive then transferred to our hotel for check in. Overnight in Delhi

### **22 SEPT DELHI Breakfast+Dinner**

Breakfast at the hotel.

Post breakfast we'll start the day by enjoying a walk to the Jamali Kamali Mosque. The beautiful lawns of Jamali Kamali make it a scenic picnic spot for Delhiites. Jamali Kamali Mosque and Tomb are located in the Archeological Village complex in Mehrauli, Delhi. Here, two historic monuments are found adjacent to each other. One is the mosque and the other is the tomb of two persons with the name Jamali & Kamali. After exploring the mosque we'll walk half a kilometer to Qutub Minar, a stunning 240-foot minaret that is the tallest in the world. Qutub Minar is an elaborate complex built in the Indo-Islamic architectural tradition. From here we'll venture to the city centre to meet one of the Salaam Balak Trust volunteers. Salam Balak means "hello child" and it is a charity that provides support to help over 6000 children annually to leave a life on the streets. We'll learn what that life was like and all about the important work of this organization.

In the evening we'll enjoy dinner at Bukhara restaurant. Bukhara has played host to innumerable world dignitaries and celebrities including Bill Clinton, Bill Gates, Bryan Adams and Tony Blair. For many, a visit to the capital is not considered complete, without a meal at the Bukhara. **'The Restaurant Magazine', UK**, declared Bukhara the Best Indian Restaurant in the world in 2004. It has also been voted the **Best Restaurant in Asia** and is the only Indian restaurant to feature on the San Pellegrino list of the 50 Best Restaurants in the World.

### **23 SEPT DELHI Breakfast+Lunch**

Rise for early morning yoga followed by breakfast at the hotel.

We'll enjoy a cooking demo with Sumeet Nair at his home and organic farm in Gurgaon. On the way back to the city we'll take some time to shop for clothes, jewelry and souvenirs at Khan Market in the late afternoon. This evening allows for time to enjoy our hotel.

### **24 SEPT DELHI- JODHPUR Breakfast+Lunch (BY FLIGHT AI – 475 DEP 1600 ARR 1710 HRS)**

Rise for early morning yoga followed by breakfast at the hotel.

Our adventure this morning begins with a visit to Old Delhi, the Mughal capital established by Shah Jahan in 1638.

At the famous Red Fort, where Jawaharlal Nehru unfurled the flag of newly independent India on August 15, 1947, we'll trade in our vehicle for a thrilling ride on bicycle rickshaws. As our drivers weave through the warren of crooked, congested alleys off Chandni Chowk, one of India's oldest and busiest bazaars, you'll see the traditional life of this still thriving spice market for which India is well known. Later we'll visit **Jama Masjid** (Friday Mosque) made of red sandstone and white marble. This is India's largest mosque where more than 20,000 people can kneel in prayer at one time. The interior of the prayer hall is divided into aisles by arches. The walls and floors are of marble inlay panels.

We'll enjoy lunch at nearby Karim's – famous for their Royal Mughlai for since 1913.

After lunch we'll drive to the Delhi airport to board a flight for Jodhpur. Jodhpur, called the 'Blue City', was once the capital of the former princely state of Marwar. It was founded in 1459 by Rao Jodha and is now the second largest city in Rajasthan. Flanked on its western side by the Mehrangarh Fort and on the eastern side by the stately sandstone Palace of Umaid Bhawan, the monuments, temples and gardens of Jodhpur depict multi-faceted grandeur. It is a marvelously medieval city. While the graceful palaces, forts and temples bring alive the historic grandeur, exquisite handicrafts, folk dances, music and the brightly attired people lend a romantic aura to the city. Overnight in Jodhpur

### **25 SEPT JODHPUR Breakfast+Lunch**

Rise for early morning yoga followed by breakfast at the hotel.

This morning we'll visit the massive **Meherangarh Fort**, a living testimony of the military might of the Rajputs. With the strategically located cannons on the walls, the fort is spread over an area of 5 km at an altitude of about 125 meters. Thousands of tourists visit this fort every year to have a glimpse of the artillery system of the Rajput warriors. A bird's eye view of the city from above the fort is fascinating. Another example of Rajput glory is the **Jaswant Thade**, a shrine built in the memory of



Maharaja Jaswant II in 1899. Legend has it that Maharaja Jaswant succumbed to injuries here while fighting the Mughal King Jahangir.

This afternoon we'll visit the Clock Tower and the colorful **Sardar Market** nearby. Narrow alleys in the market lead to quaint bazaars selling textiles, antiques, silverware and handicrafts.

Later we'll meet a local family and have the opportunity to learn about the daily life, work, clothing, festivals and wedding rituals from the women. We'll also learn to cook their food in traditional Indian style and the dishes cooked during the cooking class will be served as lunch.

Later we'll enjoy a **Jeep Safari to the Bishnoi Villages**. The Bishnoi people are a community in Rajasthan who are famous for their rich cultural life and true love for nature and animals. A memorable outing in jeeps will lead us to various traditional villages to witness local handicrafts (shoe makers, pottery hand weaving) and also men in their traditional attire and women clad with ancestral silver jewellery. We should have a chance to see and photograph wildlife black bucks, chinkaras and peacocks freely moving in abundance protected by Bishnoi Wildlife reservation.

#### **26 SEPT JODHPUR – JOJAWAR – UDAIPUR Breakfast+Lunch**

Post breakfast we'll drive to Udaipur and stop enroute to visit **Jojawar** where we will have a delicious lunch.

After lunch we'll enjoy a rural train journey between the cities of Jodhpur and Udaipur over the scenic Kambli Ghat Pass. The engine laboriously pulls the train through the most beautiful forests and hills in the state. This one hour ride is unique as we have the chance to interact with the locals who'll readily share their seats and try their best to make conversation while trying to suppress the surprise and excitement of sitting next to a foreigner from faraway lands! We'll arrive at Khambali Ghat and then drive on to Udaipur.

#### **27 SEPT UDAIPUR Breakfast**

Rise for early morning yoga followed by breakfast at the hotel.

After breakfast, at around 0930 Hrs, we'll visit the City Palace built on the bank of the Pichola Lake, by Maharana Udai Singh in 1570. The impressive complex of several palaces is a blend of Rajput and Mughal influences. Half of it is still occupied by the Royal family, and the rest has been converted into a museum. After the visit of the Palace, we'll enjoy a walk in the old city, for about 45 minutes starting at the Tripolia Gate of the City Palace. This part of the city's bazaar is full of small shops on both sides of the road selling handicrafts. Further down the road, there is a very famous Hindu temple called Jagdish Temple. The Temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu, the preserver of the Universe. We continue our walk down the road towards the Clock Tower where we'll see many interesting local shops selling different articles of day-to-day requirements. From the Clock Tower we turn in to the silver market, where we'll see many shops selling Silver Jewelry and articles. Further down the road are shops for the handmade embroidered shoes, Jutties, which are typical of the region.

At the end of the road, around at 1215 Hrs, we'll enter the vegetable market square, where we'll see many women sitting around bamboo baskets, which are used by these vegetable vendors to display their fresh produce. The walk will end at the vegetable market.

After a rest at our hotel, we'll visit **Sahelion ki Bari** – a garden that was built in early 18th century AD as a retreat for ladies of the royal household to spend their time in leisure. The enchantingly beautiful garden is famous for its lotus pool, fountains (in the shape of birds), lush green lawns, flowerbeds, and marble pavilions, offering a breathtaking view to visitors.

Later in the afternoon we'll enjoy a **Boat ride** on Lake Pichola. Lake Pichola derives its name from Pichola Village. Maharana Udai Singh enlarged the lake after he founded the city of Udaipur. This picturesque 4 km long and 3 km wide lake encloses the Jag Niwas Island and the Jag Mandir. The City Palace extends along its eastern banks.

In the evening we'll enjoy **cultural show at Bagore Ki Haveli** - a museum and mansion on the banks of lake Pichola. This heritage building was built by one of the prime ministers -Mewar called Amar chand badwa - in 18th century. It houses a collection of puppets, the largest turban, costumes, old pots, paintings and glasswork. Overnight in the Hotel.

#### **28 SEPT UDAIPUR –JAIPUR Breakfast**

**Drive - 395 KMS / 07 HRS**

Rise for early morning yoga followed by breakfast at the hotel.

Today we journey towards Jaipur, Rajasthan's capital that is famous as "the pink city". The origin of this nickname becomes immediately apparent as you enter the old city walls and greet the pink-colored buildings that rise at every turn. Jaipur is an





excellent place to enjoy shopping and people watching. We'll spend time in the oldest and busiest of markets in the walled city, Johori Bazaar, a true feast for the senses. Here, aromatic spices fill the air while oxcarts, rickshaws, cows, bejeweled women and men with shocking pink turbans jostle through the labyrinthine streets. Overnight in Jaipur

**29 SEPT JAIPUR Breakfast+Lunch**

Rise for early morning yoga followed by breakfast at the hotel.

This morning we will drive a short distance outside of the city to Amber Fort and Palace. Perched on a hillside on the outskirts of town, the palace was constructed in the 1590s by Maharaja Man Singh. Singh was the commander of Akbar's army and was largely motivated to build here by the highly defensible location. This is a beautiful and very well preserved structure, built on four levels and surrounded by ruins, which served as the backdrop for the Mira Nair movie "Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love." We'll travel up to the fort by jeeps.

Returning to the city we'll tour the grand Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds). This magnificent structure was built to allow the royal ladies of the palace to discretely watch the grand processions along the main street. After a visit to the City Palace we'll take in the impressive Jantar Mantar, an astronomical observatory built in the early 1700s by Maharaja Jai Singh II, the great warrior-astronomer to which this city owes its name. Overnight in Jaipur

Next we'll visit a local's home for a cooking class and lunch. Evening will be free and at your leisure.

**30 SEPT JAIPUR – FATEHPUR SIKRI – AGRA Breakfast**

Rise for early morning yoga followed by breakfast at the hotel.

After breakfast we'll drive to Agra and stop enroute to visit Fatehpur Sikri, the beautiful and deserted medieval city built by Akbar the Great in the 16th century to serve as the capital of his vast empire. The complex consists of religious, residential and administrative buildings. The Mosque is considered a copy for the Mosque at Mecca and is extremely elegant, containing elements of Hindu and Persian design. Housed here is the Shrine of Sheikh Salim Chisti one of the greatest of Sufi saints of the Muslim world.

After our visit we'll drive to Agra and overnight there.

**01 OCT AGRA Breakfast**

After breakfast, we'll visit the world famous monument of India the **Taj Mahal\*** (1631-1653), a poem in white marble, built by Shah Jahan in memory of his beloved wife, Mumtaz Mahal, who died giving birth to their 14th child. The project employed 20,000 workers from the Central Asia and Europe for 22 years. The extravagant monument of love features white marble inlaid with precious and semi precious stones. (\*Taj Mahal remains closed on Fridays.). After, we'll visit the **Agra Fort**, situated on the west bank of the river Jamuna that was started by the Mughal King Akbar in the 16th century and completed by his grandson Shah Jahan. Sadly, his son Aurangzeb imprisoned Shah Jahan for eight years in this fort before Jahan's death.

Enjoy the rest of the day free at your leisure. Stay overnight in Agra.

**02 OCT AGRA – DELHI / KOLKATA (1425 / 1625 HRS) Breakfast+Dinner**

Early this morning we'll transfer to the Delhi airport to board our flight to Kolkata. This city is one of the four metropolitan cities of India and the capital of the eastern state of West Bengal. Formerly designated as Calcutta, it is rich in cultural and demographic resources. The popularity of Kolkata, as one of the premier cities in India, reached its heights in the pre-independence era and in a short span of 400 years, has evolved into one of the major commercial areas. On arrival in Kolkata, we'll transfer to our hotel to freshen up for dinner in local restaurant.

**03 OCT KOLKATA Breakfast+Dinner**

Rise for early for morning yoga followed by breakfast at the hotel.

After breakfast we'll visit the Famous **Jain Temples, the flower market of Kolkata, and the Howard Bridge**. The latter is a cantilevered bridge, also known as Rabindra Setu. It is similar in size to the Sydney Harbour Bridge but carries a flow of traffic which Sydney could never dream of. It is the busiest bridge in the world.

Early this afternoon we will experience history on wheels. In the 1880's the first horse drawn tram carriages hit the rails in Kolkata and a new era of history was created. Amidst lots of hurdles, barriers, & setbacks, this tireless system has stood firmly

will witness the golden decades of our history through its wheels. In 1902, Kolkata had the first electric tram in Asia. Tied with an ecofriendly tag, the tram meanders smoothly through the lush greens, madding crowds & the traffic jams of the city.

Tonight we'll enjoy dinner at BALYUNG 6 RESTAURANT where we will experience Bengali cuisines' famous fish dishes.

**04 OCT** **KOLKATA** **Breakfast+Lunch+Dinner**

Rise early for morning yoga followed by breakfast at the hotel.

After breakfast we'll enjoy a half day of sightseeing of Kolkata city including the **Victoria Memorial** that is a huge white-marble structure and the most enduring of remains of the British Raj in India. Built by Lord Curzon in memory of the popular monarch, Queen Victoria, it is a wonderful example of the Western style of architecture. It has been now converted in a museum that houses the most impressive collection of memorabilia from the days of Raj. The manuscripts, paintings and sculptures here are outstanding.

Later we'll visit **St Paul's Cathedral church**. Constructed between 1839 and 1847 in Gothic style with stained glass windows and two Florentine frescoes, the cathedral is the largest in the city and is located next to the Birla Planetarium. St Paul's was consecrated in 1874. We'll finish our day visiting **Mother Teresa House**: Nirmal Hriday was the first institution established in 1950 by Mother Teresa under her own organization – The Missionaries of Charity. This is a hospice and home for dying people. Later Mother Theresa established many other homes in Kolkata including orphanages and old age facilities. Kolkata is the world wide Head Quarters of the Missionaries of Charity.

After this visit we'll visit a local home, to enjoy a Bengali cooking class with lunch.

After lunch it's back to our hotel to enjoy time at spa or to rest in preparation for the long flight home.

In the late evening we'll enjoy a group farewell dinner at the Oberoi.

**05 OCT** **DEPARTURE**

Late night - early morning transfer to airport.

**END OF OUR SERVICES**



Cooking with Sumeet Nair – photo credit – Karen Anderson