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Forts and Dynasties

Duration: 08N/09D

Key Sights: Delhi - Agra - Gwalior - Dholpur - Jaipur

Day	Program	Mode	Distance/Time
Day 1	Arrived Delhi	By Flight	
Day 2	Delhi		
Day 3	Delhi – Agra	By Surface	232KM/03-04 Hours
Day 4	Agra		
Day 5	Agra – Gwalior	By Surface	119KM/02-03 Hours
Day 6	Gwalior – Dholpur	By Surface	66KM/01-02 Hours
Day 7	Dholpur – Jaipur	By Surface	280KM/04-05 Hours
Day 8	Jaipur		
Day 9	Jaipur – Delhi	By Surface	288KM/04-05 Hours
	Departure Delhi	By Flight	



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Day 1

Arrived Delhi

By Flight

Arrival in India (New Delhi), traditional welcome by our representative at airport, transfer assistance to hotel. Check-in at hotel, before you proceed to your room/s, our representative will hand-over the travel documents and brief you about the tour programme. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 2

Delhi

Breakfast at hotel, this morning explore India's capital city by touring its magnificent monuments, start your tour by visiting - Old Delhi: An ancient walled city earlier known as Shahjahanabad. Take a photo stop at Red Fort: the most opulent Red sandstone fort and palace of the Moghul Empire (1639-1648 built by Shah Jahan the 5th Mughal Emperor of India and the builder of the Taj Mahal in Agra), visit Jama Masjid, Largest mosque in India, the foundation of the historic Jama Masjid was laid on a hillock in Shahjahanabad by Emperor Shah Jahan in 1650 AD, this mosque was the result of the efforts of over 6,000 workers, over a period of six years (1650-1656 AD). The cost of the construction in those times was 1 million rupees. This Mosque has three great gates, four towers and two 40 m-high minarets constructed of strips of red sandstone and white marble. About 20,000 people can pray here at a time. The mosque has a vast paved rectangular courtyard, which is nearly 75 m by 66 m. The whole of the western chamber is a big hall standing on 260 pillars.

Visit Chandni Chowk, the bustling and colorful market of the old city, designed by Emperor Shah Jahan's daughter Jahanara Begum. Jahanara laid the foundation of Chandni Chowk, which is the largest trading center of Delhi as well as India. At present the street is a busy thoroughfare and is really congested. This area is renowned for 'Kuchas and Katras' also known as Alleys. These alleys house traditional Havelis, places of worship: Temples, Mosques, Church and Gurudwara, popular specialised markets and century-old eating joints. Enjoy a cycle-rickshaw ride.

Visit the Raj Ghat, the memorial site of Mahatma Gandhi - Father of Nation.

Later visit New Delhi designed and built by the British in the 1920's it's a city of wide boulevards impressive Government buildings, green parks and gardens. First drive past Connaught Place, the heart and main shopping district of the capital, then drive to Rajpath (King's Way), India Gate - the 42m high stone Arch of Triumph, erected in the memory of Indian soldiers who died in First World War. Drive past Rashtrapati Bhawan (President Palace) and Parliament House.

Sightseeing will also include drive past the elegant Lodhi Garden and Safdarjung's tomb.

Visit the exquisite Humayun's Tomb, built in 1570 is of particular cultural significance as it was the first garden-tomb in the Indian subcontinent. This memorial of Emperor



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Humayun, second Mughal ruler of India was built by his widow, Hajji Begum 14 years after his death.

Later visit Qutab Minar 12th century minaret built by Qutub-ud-din Aibek of the Slave Dynasty - this building complex dates back to the onset of Muslim rule in India and is fine example of Afghan architecture which is graceful and well sculptured and stands 75 mt. Also visit the Baha'i Temple (Lotus Temple) Lotus being a symbol of peace and prosperity all around the world, the shape of the temple personifies the purpose for which the foundation of this marvelous man-made architectural was laid. Lotus temple is made of pristine marble blocks, cement, dolomite and sand and the entire ascetic value is coddled by the group of nine pools filled with crystal clear water. In accord with the mores of Baha'i religion, the temple is open to everyone from anywhere in the world who is looking for inner peace & tranquility.

Return to hotel for overnight stay.

Day 3	Delhi – Agra	By Surface	232KM/03-04 Hours
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Breakfast at hotel and check-out, later drive to Agra, check in the hotel. Relax for a while in your hotel room.

Later visit the Itmad-Ud-Daulah's Tomb. Along with the main building, the structure consists of numerous outbuildings and gardens. Tomb of Mirza Ghiyas Beg - A Wazir (Chief Minister) in the court of Mughal Emperor Jehangir. Ghiyas Beg was honored with the title of Itmad-ud-Daulah or the Pillar of the State. Emperor Jehangir married her beautiful widowed daughter Mehr-un-Nissa, she was later christened Noor Jahan and went down in the history as one of the most beautiful and artistically gifted women in the world. After the death of Mirza Ghiyas Beg in 1622, Noor Jahan undertook the project to build his mausoleum, which took six years to get complete. It is entirely made of White marble. This tomb represents the transition between the first phase of monumental Mughal architecture - primarily built from Red sandstone with marble decorations with mosaic and lattice.

Return to hotel for overnight stay.

Day 4	Agra		
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Early morning visit to the Taj Mahal at the time of Sunrise - one of the Seven Wonders of the World, a pristine monument of undying love, built by Emperor Shah Jahan to enshrine the body of his beloved wife Arjumand Banu Begum (Mumtaz Mahal) after she died in 1631 at Burhanpur. The Taj has continued to be a mark of love since ever. This monument took 22 years to be completed and was designed, and planned by Persian architect Ustad Isa. The construction started in 1632 and was completed in 1653. The workforce of some 20,000 and 1,000 elephants, included Masons, Stonecutters, Inlayers, Carvers, Calligraphers, Dome-builders and other artisans were requisitioned from the empire and also from Italy, Central Asia and Persia. In accordance with Islamic tradition, verses from the Quran were inscribed in calligraphy on the arched entrances to the mausoleum, in addition to numerous other



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sections of the complex. Apart from its stunning design balance and perfect symmetry, the Taj is also noted particularly for its elegant domes, intricately carved screens and some of the best inlay work ever seen. Witness the White marble reflect the nuances of the changing light from the Sun. Taj Mahal symbolize the richness of art and architecture of the Mughal period.

Return to hotel for breakfast,

Later proceed to visit Agra Fort which retains the irregular outline of the demolished mud-wall fort of the Lodhis. It is a World Heritage Site, located near to the Taj Mahal gardens on the banks of River Yamuna. The real specimen of architectural marvel, this fortress was constructed in the 15th century. The construction of this mammoth structure started during 1565 during the reign of Emperor Akbar and continued the developments up to the period of Emperor Shah Jahan. The fort, in a length of 2.5 kms marvelous enclosure walls, is built in red sandstones and encloses many monuments which are real architectural wonders. Many exquisite palaces such as the Jehangiri Mahal, Shah Jahani Mahal, the Khas Mahal, Diwan-i-Aam - which was used as a communications ground between the public and the aristocracy and once housed the Peacock Throne, Diwan-i-Khas - a hall of private audience, it was used to welcome Kings and dignitaries and Mussaman Burj - a large, octagonal tower with a balcony facing the Taj Mahal are enclosed in the Fortress. Other monuments include the Fish Pavilion, the Nagina Masjid, Garden of Grapes and the Pearl Mosque. Views of the Taj Mahal from the Fort are amazing.

Visit to Sikandra, built in Persian architecture using Red sandstone and beautified with inlay marble work and pattern work, Sikandra is the final resting place of Mughal Emperor Akbar. Emperor Akbar planned and began construction in around 1600, according to Tartary tradition to commence the construction of one's tomb during one's lifetime. After his death, Akbar's son Jahangir completed the construction in 1605-1613. The tomb lies in the center, surrounded by a Charbagh style Mughal Garden - a quadrilateral garden divided symmetrically by paved walkways. The entire complex follows the symmetrical design found in Persian architecture along with features such as chattris or cenotaphs from Hindu architecture. Entrance is through a magnificent gateway, comprising 20 huge panels featuring intricate geometrical inlay work. One can also see the Baradi palace in the gardens built by Sikander Lodhi.

Return to hotel for overnight stay.

Day 5	Agra – Gwalior	By Surface	119KM/02-03 Hours
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Early breakfast and check-out. Drive to Gwalior arrive and check-in at hotel.

During the day proceed for a tour of the Majestic Gwalior Fort. This massive fort had the distinction for being the most invincible forts of India. It stands on a steep mass of sandstone and towers above the Gwalior city. The winding steep road to the fort is flanked by the statues of Jain Tirthankaras, carved into the rock face. Within the fort are some of the most beautiful examples of the medieval architecture. The 15th century Gujari Mahal, a



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monument of love built by Raja Mansingh Tomar for his Gurjar Queen, the interior of this palace has been converted into an Archaeological Museum. Another monument built by him between 1486-1517 is Man Mandir Palace. Most of the Palace stands stripped of its former glory, the tiles that once adorned its exterior have not survived, but at the entrance, traces of these still remain. There is a charming frieze of ducks paddling in turquoise waters. Within, the palace rooms stand bare, stripped of their former glory, mute testimony to the passing of the centuries. Vast chambers with fine stone screens were once the music halls, and behind these screens, the royal ladies would learn music from the great masters. Visit Jehangir and Shah Jahan Palace. The Teli Ka Mandir, a 9th century structure with a height of 100 ft. It has blend of two different architectural styles, the shape of the roof is distinctively Dravidian, while the decorative embellishments have the typically Indo-Aryan characteristics, the Sas Bahu temple, built in 11th century dedicated to Lord Vishnu.

Later visit Jai Vilas Palace is a splendid residence of the Scindia family. Part of the residence has been turned into the Scindia Museum (also known as Jivaji Rao Scindia Museum) where one can see a regal lifestyle. Established in year 1964, the museum is controlled by a private trust. Keeping the past alive, Jai Vilas Palace architecture dominates Italian style. The palace is adorned with Belgium artworks, huge China bowl, two famous central chandeliers weighing a couple of tons, intricate gold work ceiling in the Darbar Hall, fine Persian carpets, antique French and Italian furniture. Every corner of the palace is decorated with gifts and artifacts. The dining hall of the palace is a Silver train with glass cut wagons which takes round on the dining table used for serving food to guests. It also has collection of swords which were once worn by Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb.

After the completion of the tour drive back to Agra for overnight stay.

Day 6	Gwalior – Dholpur	By Surface	66KM/01-02 Hours
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Breakfast and check-out, before driving to Dholpur visit the Tomb of Ghaus Mohammed, It is a sandstone mausoleum of the Afghan prince - Ghaus Mohammed, who later turned into a Sufi saint. Constructed in the 16th century, the tomb originally belonged to the time of Akbar. An example of Mughal architecture, the screens of the monument have been carved and developed using the pierced stone technique. The tomb has number of chhatris that are covered with blue tiles. The walls feature intricate carvings and latticework.

The Memorial of Tansen, also known as the "Tomb of Tansen", is located in the vicinity of the tomb of Muhammad Ghaus. Surrounded by gardens, the tomb is has a typical Mughal architectural style. Tansen was a follower of the Sufi saint. He also learnt Hindustani classical music and several ragas from Muhammad Ghaus, his music teacher. Tansen was an exponent of the Dhrupad style and developed the Gwalior Gharana style. He was regarded as "the father of Hindustani classical music". Tansen was one of the 'Nine Jewels' in Emperor Akbar's court.

Arrive and check-in at Raj Niwas Palace.
Visit Machkund temple in the evening.
Return to hotel for overnight stay.



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Day 7	Dholpur – Jaipur	By Surface	280KM/04-05 Hours
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Breakfast, AM - Boat ride (for 01 hour) in Chambal river and excursion to Ramgarh fort. Return to hotel and later check-out. Drive to Jaipur, the picturesque capital of Rajasthan, Jaipur is colour washed in Pink - the colour associated with hospitality in Rajput culture.

Arrive Jaipur city and proceed to hotel for check-in, relax for a while in your hotel room.

In the evening visit the Birla Temple to learn more about the Hindu religion. Built recently in 1985, houses ornate statues including one of Lakshmi (Goddess of Wealth and Beauty) and Narayan dressed in gaudy robes, representing a Hindu vision of heavenly luxury. Witness the Aarti Ceremony (Prayer ceremony) which involves oil lamps being lit and waved, in order to awake and invoke the deity. Photo stop at Albert hall.

Return to hotel for overnight stay.

Day 8	Jaipur		
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After your breakfast at hotel, embark for an excursion to Amber Fort in the morning, situated outside the city, it is perhaps the most beautiful example of Rajput forts, this complex stands amidst wooded hills, with its threatening battlements reflected in the motionless waters of the Maota Lake below. You can have the unique experience of riding on a decorated elephant to the top of the hill. One of the premium examples of Rajput architecture, it was the ancient capital of the Kachhawaha rulers. The original palace was built by Raja Man Singh and additions were made later by Sawai Jai Singh. Here are the personal chambers of the Queens with windows having latticed screens so that the ladies could look at the events of the Royal court in privacy. There is also the Jai Mandir or the "Temple of Victory", with its well-known Sheesh Mahal, the sparkling "Hall of Mirrors". Within the Palace are the Diwan-e-Aam or the "Hall of Public Audience", the Diwan-e-Khas or the "Hall of Private Audience" and the Sukh Niwas where a cool breeze blows across channels of water for the purpose of air-conditioning.

Return to city and visit City Palace complex, located in the heart of Jaipur known for its blend of Rajput and Mughal architecture, the museum houses the rare and rich collection of Ornaments, 15th century Arms & Weapons, Royal Costumes, Carpets, Sangneri block prints, Kashmiri Pashmina Shawls, folk embroideries and Decorative Art objects of traditional Rajasthani and Mughal art and architecture. Complex has several palatial structures like the Chandra Mahal, Mubarak Mahal, Badal Mahal, Shri Govind Dev Ji Temple and the City Palace Museum and is divided into two parts - One part Sawai Man Singh Museum and other is still the residential Palace of the former Maharaja.

Next visit the Jantar Mantar, a solar observatory - It is the largest of the five astronomical observatories built by Sawai Jai Singh-I, the founder ruler of Jaipur. It is an astronomical treasure house, with solar device that give accurate predictions till date, it is classified as UNESCO World heritage site.



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Photo-stop at Hawa Mahal or the Palace of Winds, a four storeyed facade of Pink sandstone and one of the most picturesque landmarks with semi-octagonal and delicately honeycombed windows overlooking the main street of the old city. It was built in 1799 so that veiled royal women could see the royal processions through its 593 stone screens without being seen by the outsiders.

Return to hotel for overnight stay.

Day 9	Jaipur – Delhi Departure Delhi	By Surface By Flight	288KM/04-05 Hours
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Breakfast at hotel and check-out from hotel, later drive to Delhi. Arrive in Delhi and proceed to a local restaurant for farewell dinner. Later you will be transferred to International Airport to board the return journey flight.