

Spiritual India
9 days - 8 nights
Delhi, Agra, Rishikesh, Haridwar
A journey for the mind, body and spirit

For years, travelers seeking serenity and spiritual renewal have made their way to India to learn the wisdom of ancient practices like yoga, meditation and Ayurvedic healing. Yoga believes that focusing the mind and body and exercising discipline can result in great clarity and wellbeing. Ayurveda means the "science of life". It originated in India more than 5,000 years back and is believed to be the oldest healing science in existence, from which all other systems emerged.

Nestled in the mountains, away from the city and with pristine air all around, Aloha on the Ganges is the perfect spot to relax, recharge, detox and surrender to nature and yourself. Awaken your potential energy and discover a new you through this integrated yoga program.

Trip Highlights:

- Ride like a local on a rickshaw in Delhi
- Visit Taj Mahal & Agra Fort World Heritage sites
- Attend a prayer ceremony at a temple
- Practice Yoga
- Witness a ritual immersion on the banks of Ganges
- Home hosted meal and cooking demonstration
- Visit a local orphanage and participate in the festivities with the children
- Visit a local NGO and understand the community projects they are operating

Day 1: Delhi

Arrive in Delhi International airport by your international flight. After immigration, you will be met and transferred to hotel for your stay. [D]

Delhi stands as the capital of Modern India. Here you can see the mingling of the Old and New India, the ancient and the modern. Delhi is made up of seven ancient cities, spanning the period from the 11th to 20th centuries. Delhi has seen the rise and fall of many emperors, which has left behind a plethora of monuments that commemorate the grandeur and glory of bygone ages. Very few cities in the world can express such a profusion of architectural styles.

Day 2: Delhi

Wake up early for a session of yoga at the hotel lawn or by the poolside. Meet with your tour guide in the lobby of your hotel and begin exploring Delhi, India's capital city that sports a rich history spanning over 2,000 years. Discover the secrets of the only clearly visible historic settlement of Delhi. From the majestic Red Fort to the gold lined shops of Dariba Kalan, this tour allows you to savor a 350-year old culture up-close. Arrive at Old Delhi and drive past the Red Fort and Jama Masjid - the largest mosque in India built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in year 1650 AD. From here you board your cycle rickshaw for a tour of Chandni Chowk (Silver Street) and a glimpse into an old world lifestyle slowly fading from Delhi. The hustle and bustle of everyday life can be felt in the Chandni Chowk's narrow lanes. While on the tour, stop at Khari Baoli, Asia's largest wholesale spice market operating since the 17th century and learn about the spices on sale and smell their aromas. The street is congested with shops on both sides selling spices, nuts and herbs. The overall appearance seems to be very chaotic but in reality it is very well managed! There are great photo ops here!!! Continue to Raj Ghat, a memorial to Mahatma Gandhi, set within a beautiful park. Lunch is at Chor Bizzare restaurant, an Indian specialty restaurant located close to old Delhi. Next, drive through New Delhi passing by the Presidential Palace, the one-time imperial residence of the British viceroys, India Gate, a memorial raised in honor of the Indian soldiers martyred during the Afghan war, Parliament house and other government buildings built in the first quarter of the 20th century by two famous English architects, Sir Herbert Baker and Sir Edwin Lutyens. It was during this time period that the capital of the British Empire was moved from Calcutta to Delhi. Then, visit the 16th century Humayun's tomb, the first garden tomb of Asia built by a Queen for her beloved husband Humayun, the 2nd Mughal Emperor of India, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

End the day visiting the Gurudwara Bangla Sahib one of the most prominent Sikh temples or houses of worship. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight. [B/L/D]

Day 3: Delhi, Agra, Delhi

At 7 am start a comfortable drive to Agra along the new expressway.

Agra - Once a small village on the banks of the Yamuna, it was transformed by two great Mughal monarchs, Akbar and his grandson Shah Jehan into the second capital of the Mughal Empire – Dar-ul-Khilafat, or ‘seat of the Emperor’ in the 16th & 17th century. A world of contrasting edifices of red sandstone and white marble, narrow galleys, bustling streets and small buggies, Agra retains the irresistible charm that made this the favorite city of the Mughals.

Once in Agra we visit the Taj Mahal, one of the seven wonders of the World (Closed on all Fridays), said to be one of the most elegant and a harmonious buildings ever built, erected by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in 1630 AD to enshrine the mortal remains of his beloved Queen Mumtaz Mahal. The Taj Mahal manifests the wealth and luxury of Mughal art as seen in architecture and garden design, painting, and calligraphy. The 144-foot double dome of the Taj is capped with a finial and the four minarets, each 131 ft. high and crowned by an open octagonal pavilion highlight the perfect symmetry of the tomb. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. Later visit the Agra Fort - the seat and the stronghold of the Mughal Empire under successive generations. Approachable by two imposing gates and constructed of red sandstone, the citadel was built by the Mughal Emperor Akbar between the years 1565 and 1573. Encircled by a moat, this dramatic city within a city was the palace of three emperors, Akbar, Shah Jehan and Aurangzeb, each of whom made significant contributions to the wonderful architecture of the inner buildings – a combination of Persian (Islamic) and local Hindu styles. Time for shopping and visiting the souvenir shop. Return to Delhi in the evening. [B/L/D]

Day 4: Delhi, Haridwar

Early morning pick-up your boxed breakfast from hotel and meet your guide from Haridwar who will travel with you by A/C train to Haridwar, leaving Delhi at 6:45 am and arriving at 11:22 am. This train 130 miles journey offers an opportunity to see the early morning life around the countryside. Though Indian railways are the largest rail network in Asia, travel by train in India isn't similar to travel on Amtrak or European rail service. You will be assisted in boarding the correct coach and finding the right seat and once you have reached the destination, just wait at the platform and do not leave the station without your guide. From Haridwar continue around 45 minutes by road to Rishikesh for check-in for your stay and lunch at your hotel.

Rishikesh is situated at a height of about 1360 feet above sea level in the Himalayan foothills beside the Ganges River. This small hill town got an introduction to the western world in the late 60's when The Beatles stayed at the ashram of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Today it styles itself as the ‘Yoga Capital of the World’, with masses of ashrams and all kinds of yoga and meditation classes. Most of this action is north of the main town, where the exquisite setting on the fast-flowing Ganges, surrounded by forested hills, is conducive to meditation and mind expansion.

In the afternoon meet with an astrologer to understand the importance of constellations in Indian astrology. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and find out what your future reserves. This evening participate in a discussion with the Yoga Guru followed by a meditation session. [B/L/D]

Day 5: Rishikesh

Wake up early for a session of yoga under the guidance of an expert yoga master. After breakfast visit the Kunjapuri Temple dedicated to Goddess Shakti and Lord Shiva and situated at 5,400 feet above sea level. You have the option of climbing 150 steep steps to reach the temple or take a soft trek on the hill trail with a breath-taking view of the Himalayas. Return to the hotel for lunch. In the afternoon visit Laxman Jhula, the iron suspension bridge built in 1939, and named after Lord Rama 's younger brother. We then visit Geeta Bhawan to see the beautiful wall paintings depicting the famous Ramayana and Mahabharata epics. A pleasant 1.2-mile walk leads to the Shivanand Jhoola, also known as Ram Jhoola, a recently completed suspension bridge, which spans the river. From here you will proceed to visit the Swargashram a quite and serene place filled with Ashrams just beyond Ram Jhoola, The small path in Swargashram runs right next to the river, and is crowded with shops, restaurants and Internet centers on one side and ashrams on the other side. Swargashram is known for its quietness and vibes and the Ganges flowing right next to it. [B/L/D]

Day 6: Rishikesh

Wake up early to practice Yoga and, after breakfast, visit an orphanage for girls and home for abandoned babies. This center offers shelter and education to children until they become independent. At the center, you will have the opportunity to interact with the orphanage manager, understand how they operate and how these children's grow and earn their livelihood. You can also interact with these children and play with them. As a gesture of goodwill we would encourage you to carry along sweets and distribute here.

Lunch will be at a local restaurant in Haridwar.

Haridwar- Situated at the base of the Shiwalik hills is a town of temples, ghats and ashrams. Its location at the point where the Ganges leaves the Himalayas to begin its journey across the plains makes it a particularly holy place. Every 12 years the Kumbh festival attracts millions of pilgrims who come and bathe in the river. Various episodes from the Hindu epic Mahabharata are set in this ancient town. Hari-ki-Pouri, the most popular ghat, has a footprint of Lord Vishnu set in stone.

The afternoon guided walking tour of Haridwar provides a great opportunity for you to experience Indian culture as well as local people's day-to-day life. On this walk, you will not only visit interesting places but also sample famous local food and learn more about local costumes, Hindu rituals and religion. While walking you can check out local shops and test your bargaining skills. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight. [B/L/D]

Day 7: Rishikesh

Wake up early and practice yoga at the hotel. After breakfast visit 'Purkal Youth Development Society', an NGO situated in the Himalayan foothills dedicated to enhancing the lives of underprivileged young people in the community. Purkal nurtures children, especially girls from very poor backgrounds through free quality education, mentorship, day long attention to nutritional needs, complete healthcare and long years of attention. The children are given outstanding education accompanied by complete nutrition, comprehensive health support and transportation. All this is done entirely free of cost. Children gaining entry into professional programs are also supported financially and otherwise. As a result, many hopelessly poor girls and boys have found opportunities in life that only the economically advantaged enjoy in this country. Spend the day at the center, talking to the children's and Mr. G K Swami – the person who started this project and now runs the operation. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight. [B/L/D]

Day 8: Rishikesh

As usual, join your yoga practice at the hotel before breakfast. Then, visit the Maharshi Ashram – popularly known as the Beatles Ashram because it was there that Beatles travelled to attend an advanced Transcendental Meditation (TM) training session. Swarg Ashram was abandoned in 1997, however, the shells of many buildings, meditation cells and lecture halls can still be seen, including Maharishi's own house and the guesthouse where the Beatles stayed and apparently wrote much of the White Album. Later return to the hotel and meet an expert to discuss Ayurveda, the science of life and the traditional Hindu system of medicine. Rest of the day is at leisure. Towards the evening, join your local hosts for dinner with interactions on the Indian family value system. During your visit, learn the secrets of herbs and spices used in Indian cuisine and try your hand at simple local dishes. [B/L/D]

Day 9: Rishikesh, Delhi, USA

Join your last early morning yoga practice and enjoy breakfast at the hotel. The rest of the morning is free for you to pack your bags or maybe try an Ayurveda treatment (not included). Early afternoon, start your 6-hour drive to Delhi to board your flight back to the USA. [B]

[B] = Breakfast | [D] = Dinner | [B/L/D] = Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Your Tour Includes:

- Transfers as required
- 8 nights hotel accommodation:
 - Delhi – 3 nights
 - Rishikesh – 5 nights
- Meals:
 - Buffet breakfast daily
 - 7 lunches
 - 8 dinners
- Assistance on train journey from Delhi/ Haridwar/ Rishikesh
- A/C chair car train tickets for travel Delhi to Haridwar
- Rickshaw ride in Delhi
- Yoga and meditation sessions at hotel with an instructor
- Witness an evening Aarti ceremony in Rishikesh
- Visit to an orphanage in Haridwar
- Visit a NGO in Dehradun

- Transportation by A/C vehicles
- Entrance fees to the places of visit as per the itinerary
- English speaking local guides
- Packaged drinking water in the vehicle throughout
- All applicable taxes.

Your Tour does not include:

- International or Domestic airfares
- Any taxes and surcharges relating to airfares
- Travel insurance
- Wi-Fi at hotels
- Visa fees for India
- Camera fees at the monuments (if applicable)
- All alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks
- Other meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Extras and gratuities
- Early check-in, late check-out

Hotels in your Tour:

City	Hotel Name	Room Type	Tripadvisor
Delhi	Hyatt	King	4
Rishikesh	Aloha On the Ganges	Deluxe	4.5

Hotels will be confirmed at time of booking

Tour Prices:

Departure Dates	2-3 Pax		4-6 Pax		7-9 Pax		10-14 Pax *		15-19 Pax *		20-24 Pax *	
	Double	Single	Double	Single	Double	Single	Double	Single	Double	Single	Double	Single
2018 Departures												
Oct 1-Dec 9	\$2,225	\$2,839	\$2,029	\$2,645	\$2,009	\$2,625	\$1,995	\$2,609	\$1,839	\$2,455	\$1,285	\$1,899
2019 Departure												
Jan 6-Feb 21	\$2,225	\$2,839	\$2,029	\$2,645	\$2,009	\$2,625	\$1,995	\$2,609	\$1,839	\$2,455	\$1,285	\$1,899
Mar 8-Mar 24												

Prices are per person and may change without notice

*1 Tour Leader free

Tour Code: IN11DEL18IT

