



Bespoke India Travels Presents Tigers & Textiles of Central India with Judy Gula





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New Delhi - Bandhavgarh National Park - Khajuraho - Chanderi - Bhopal - Indore - Maheshwar - Mumbai
16 Days / 15 Nights



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Introduction

About Judy Gala

Judy Vincentz Gula, owner of Artistic Artifacts and Batik Tambal, is a published fiber and mixed media artist who loves to share her knowledge and skills in textiles and mixed media art with others.

Judy has had a passion for fiber most of her life. She began as a weaver, spinner, dyer, and a collector of all things vintage and ethnic fabrics and studied fashion design at Radford University, earning degrees in fashion design and business marketing. Judy spent fifteen years as a member of the Potomac Fiber Gallery at the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria, Virginia, and her studio at that time was included on the James Renwick Alliance Studio Tour.

Judy now enjoys merging all that she has learned from her many interests and channeling that into her business and making mixed media art quilts as well as shop samples using the unique collection of fabrics carried at Artistic Artifacts.

Overview of the tour

The traditions of Indian textile crafts are some of the oldest and most diverse in the world. They represent a unique and continuous ethos and aesthetic sensibility right through thousands of years. India has shown a remarkable ability to assimilate, remake, re-shape the incoming styles, techniques and ideas yet retain the core essence.

Indian textiles are a riot of colour, textures and motifs, materials and mediums that changes with each region, village and community having its own distinct style and history. The history, weather, geography and economic condition also have a great effect on the types of textile art & technique.

Central India's strength and passion are evident in the craft traditions. Craft arts such as handwoven silks and cotton, natural dyes, hand-block printing, bell metals, and beadwork are finding public and private support, a new generation of makers, and an appreciative international audience.

In villages along the rivers of Madhya Pradesh, handloom weaving traces back centuries, when saris and turbans were produced for the royal family. A typical sari, nine yards long, is still woven out of fine cotton (weft) and silk

(warp). The most traditional are known for their reversible borders of geometric designs or familiar motifs. While ancient motifs inspired by rivers, birds, animals, and architectural features are still common, modern weavers enjoy mixing these designs and exotic bright colors in new and unusual ways.

Besides weaving, Madhya Pradesh textile arts include Bagh printing, a wood block process based on natural dyes and organic shapes painstakingly applied on treated cotton. Traditional colors—reds, browns and blacks—are derived from local minerals and vegetables. Treating and printing one piece of fabric can take up to a month.

Other print processes include mud-resistant printing (Nandana and Dabu) and wax-resistant printing (Batik). Bead craft in the region originated from accenting traditional costumes with beads or sequins for festive occasions. Also designed to embellish fabrics is the ornate embroidery process called Zari-Zardosi. Gold and other precious metal threads are embroidered on fabric stretched over a wooden frame. Zardosi, popular with royalty in the Mughal Period, combines beads or sequins with the shiny threads. Little evening bags or slippers are commonly created from rich black velvet decorated with silver and gold Zari handwork.

Accommodation	Destination	Basis	Duration
Maidens Hotel	New Delhi	HB	2 Nights
Bandhav Vilas	Bandhavgarh National Park	FB	3 Nights
The Lalit Temple View Khajuraho	Khajuraho	HB	1 Night
MPT Kila Kothi	Chanderi	HB	2 Nights
Jehan Numa Palace Hotel	Bhopal	HB	2 Nights
Sheraton Grand Palace Indore	Indore	HB	1 Night
Ahilya Fort	Maheshwar	FB	2 Nights
Trident Nariman Point	Mumbai	HB	2 Nights

Key

HB: Half Board - Dinner, Bed and Breakfast

B&B: Bed and Breakfast

FB: Full Board - Dinner, Bed, Breakfast and Lunch

Day 1: Maidens Hotel, New Delhi

New Delhi

India's largest city, Delhi, has been one of the country's commercial and economic hubs for centuries and, as a result, is incredibly rich in culture and history. Made up of the ancient walled city of Old Delhi and the more modern sector, New Delhi, the city encompasses a staggering array of beautiful architecture, notable monuments and age-old temples, including three UNESCO World Heritage Sites – the Red Fort, Qutab Minar and Humayun's Tomb. Other key attractions include the 17th century Chandni Chowk marketplace – still one of the city's most popular retail centres

today, particularly for jewellery and traditional Indian saris; the iconic Bahà'i Lotus Temple – an award-winning architectural gem; and the Jama Masjid, India's largest mosque.

Day Itinerary

On arrival in Delhi : Having cleared immigration, collected your luggage and passed through customs, please make your way towards the exit of the terminal building where you will see a bank of people waiting for you. Amongst them will be Bespoke India Travel Personnel who will be waiting to greet you with a paging board with your name on.

Assistance upon arrival and check in at Hotel.

After Lunch , you will be taken to Dilli Haat.

Standard check in time at all hotel is 1400 hrs.

Dinner & Overnight stay at Hotel.

Overnight: Maidens Hotel

The Maidens Hotel is a heritage hotel established in 1903. It is a luxury hotel providing comfort and exhibits hospitality within a traditional setting. The establishment has 53 rooms categorized by superior rooms, premier rooms, deluxe suites and luxury suites. The assortment caters to the various requirements of visitors.

Dining facilities at the Maidens Hotel includes the Curzon Room serving selected Indian and European cuisine, the Garden Terrace a coffee shop serving Indian and continental cuisine and the Cavalry Bar serving cocktails and a variety of beverages.



Activities

Dilli Haat INA

Dilli Haat

Dilli Haat INA

Located in New Delhi, India, Dilli Haat is a permanent open-aired food plaza and craft bazaar. This complex sits on approximately 6 acres of land, which was formerly part of a reclamation project. There are many products on offers such as rosewood and sandalwood carvings, embellished camel hide footwear, sophisticated fabric and drapery, gems, beads, brassware, metal crafts, and many more.

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Basis

Half Board - Dinner, Bed and Breakfast

Day 2: Maidens Hotel, New Delhi**Day Itinerary**

After Breakfast, you will be taken to explore the Old Delhi area. Later you will be taken to visit the Craft Museum.

Evening is at leisure.

Dinner & Overnight stay at Hotel.

Activities

Delhi Half Day Tour (Old Delhi)

Craft Museum Delhi

Delhi Half Day Tour (Old Delhi)

The tour will begin with a visit to the Jama Masjid, one of Asia's largest mosques. It was built in red sandstone and marble by more than 5000 artisans. Later visit Chandni Chowk, Asia's largest wholesale market, a massive area packed with shops, bazaars and people. Drive past the Red Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, built by the Mughal emperor, Shah Jahan in 17th century. Also visit the Raj Ghat, a simple memorial to Mahatma Gandhi.

Basis

Half Board - Dinner, Bed and Breakfast

Day 3: Bandhav Vilas, Bandhavgarh National Park**Bandhavgarh National Park**

One of the most popular parks in India, Bandhavgarh National Park is renowned for the highest density of tigers in the region. The park has a large array of wildlife including sloth bears, deer, leopards and jackals. Birdwatchers will delight in the plethora of bird species inhabiting all terrains from rocky crags to the auburn forest floor and mottled forest canopy. Declared a national park in 1968, Bandhavgarh was named after an ancient fort built on 800-metre-high (2,624 foot) cliffs in the park. From its zenith one can enjoy incredible views of the park, however prior permission is required.

Day Itinerary

After breakfast, early morning transfer to Delhi Airport to board flight to Jabalpur.

Flight	SG 2871
Departs Delhi	1010 Hrs.
Arrives Jabalpur	1155 Hrs.

Upon arrival in Jabalpur, drive to Bandhavgarh [approx.: 4-5 Hrs].

Arrive Bandhavgarh and check in to hotel.

Dinner & Overnight stay at Hotel.

Overnight: Bandhav Vilas

Featuring a spa, outdoor pool and open-air restaurant, the Bandhav Vilas offers comfortable accommodation just a few kilometres from Bandhavgarh National Park and Bandhav Garh Tiger Reserve. The accommodation comprises of beautifully appointed villas that feature flat-screen TVs with cable channels, dining areas as well as airconditioning. To enhance the experience, guests can enjoy a massage at the onsite spa or enjoy a good book in the library.

**Basis**

Full Board - Dinner, Bed, Breakfast and Lunch

Day 4: Bandhav Vilas, Bandhavgarh National Park**Day Itinerary**

Early morning exclusive jeep safari for our group to Bandhavgarh National Park.

After that they return to hotel for breakfast.

Later, proceed to the Village Walk to nearby villages.

Village Walk to nearby villages

Between the excitement of morning and afternoon Game Drives, a lovely stroll and jaunt whilst accompanied by a Lodge Naturalist around local fields and the nearby village is a must. Season dependent, marvel at either post

monsoon or winter crops being hand sown, diligently tended or gloriously harvested. Join a local village class and partake in a session of interactive learning where you will be taken through the annual cycle of local agriculture and the erratic weather patterns that dictate the survival of rural communities.

Afternoon exclusive jeep safari for our group to Bandhavgarh National Park.

Dinner & Overnight stay at Hotel.

Expert Tips

Important - Central India National Parks are closed on Wednesday afternoon.

Activities

Bandhavgarh National Park

Morning and Afternoon Jeep Safari

Bandhavgarh National Park

One of the most popular parks in India, Bandhavgarh National Park is renowned for the highest density of tigers in the region. The park has a large array of wildlife including sloth bears, deer, leopards and jackals. Birdwatchers will delight in the plethora of bird species inhabiting all terrains from rocky crags to the auburn forest floor and mottled forest canopy. Declared a national park in 1968, Bandhavgarh was named after an ancient fort built on 800-metre-high (2,624 foot) cliffs in the park. From its zenith one can enjoy incredible views of the park, however prior permission is required.

Basis

Full Board - Dinner, Bed, Breakfast and Lunch

Day 5: Bandhav Vilas, Bandhavgarh National Park

Day Itinerary

Early morning exclusive jeep safari for our group to Bandhavgarh National Park.

After that they return hotel for breakfast and after lunch in afternoon you will be going for another exclusive jeep safari to Bhandhavgarh National Park.

Dinner & Overnight stay at Hotel.

Expert Tips

Important - Central India National Parks are closed on Wednesday afternoon.

Activities

Bandhavgarh National Park

Morning and Afternoon Jeep Safari

Bandhavgarh National Park

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Basis

Full Board - Dinner, Bed, Breakfast and Lunch

Day 6: The Lalit Temple View Khajuraho, Khajuraho**Khajuraho**

Located southwest of Kanpur, Khajuraho is considered one of India's seven wonders and listed as a UNESCO world heritage site. The city encompasses the nation's largest array of medieval Hindu and Jain temples, decorated with intricately detailed erotic sculptures and reliefs. The site incorporates close to 100 sacred structures, some of them exquisitely preserved, and each evening, a light and sound show is staged here, covering the history, philosophy and craftsmanship encapsulated in this archaeological goldmine. Other highlights include: vibrant Annual Dance Festival of Khajuraho; the Panna National Park, home to leopards; the Arhanta Yoga Ashram, where visitors can take classical Hatha yoga classes. The city also boasts a wide variety of wonderful shops, markets and restaurants.

Day Itinerary

After breakfast, you will be driven to Khajuraho. [approx 6 Hrs.]

Arrives Khajuraho & check-in to hotel.

Rest of the Day at leisure.

Dinner & Overnight at Hotel.

Overnight: The Lalit Temple View Khajuraho

The Lalit Temple View Khajuraho overlooks the Western Group of Temples famed for their erotic sculptures. It is located just minutes away from the international airport and railway station.

The hotel features 47 rooms & suites, fine dining restaurants, a bar and Rejuve – the spa. Guests can enjoy a diverse range of leisure activities, from spa treatments and relaxing by the pool to programmes designed to fully immerse guests in the culture and traditions of "The City of Exotic Temples". Sporting activities and facilities available includes a 4-hole putting green, table tennis, cricket, a jogging track and bicycles for hire.



Activities

Khajuraho

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Basis

Half Board - Dinner, Bed and Breakfast

Day 7: MPT Kila Kothi, Chanderi

Chanderi

Chanderi is a small but historically significant town set on the banks of the Betwa River, in the Ashoknagar district of Madhya Pradesh. With origins in the eleventh century, ruled by Malwa Sultans and Bundela Rajputs in the 15th and 16th centuries, and functioning as an important trade hub to Malwa for hundreds of years, the town's rich heritage is fascinating and can be seen everywhere. Must-sees include the breathtaking Chanderi Fort, interesting Chanderi museum, and exquisite Jain temples. Surrounded by rolling green hills, dense forests, and several lakes, Chanderi is also an ideal holiday location for nature lovers and photographers. Make sure to see and learn about the gorgeous colourful Chanderi sarees made here, which have brought the town much acclaim.

Day Itinerary

After breakfast, proceed to visit Western Group of temples.

Late afternoon you will be transferred to Khajuraho railway station to board train to Lalitpur.

Train

Mahamana Express

Depart Khajuraho **1615 Hrs.**

Arrives Lalitpur Station **1933 Hrs.**

On arrival at Lalitpur Station, you will be driven to Chanderi [approx 1 Hr.]

Arrives Chanderi & Check-in to hotel.

Dinner & Overnight stay at Hotel.

Overnight: MPT Kila Kothi

MPT Kila Kothi is meant for those who are seeking regal hospitality in the historic city of Chanderi. This royal residence of the erstwhile Scindhia state has now been converted into a hotel by MPSTDC. The sprawling garden, restaurant and 6 airconditioned rooms host guests with full regality and class. Guests can also make use of the Wi-Fi, onsite parking as well as chauffeur services.



Activities

Western Group of Temples

Western Group of Temples

The Western Group of Temples is a beautiful temple complex located in Khajuraho, India. The complex is protected by a surrounding boundary wall. Temples featured in the Western Group of Temples include Devi Manda, Varaha Mandap, Lakshman Temple, Kandariya Mahadev Temple, Mahadev Shrine and Devi Jagdambi Temple.

Basis

Half Board - Dinner, Bed and Breakfast

Day 8: MPT Kila Kothi, Chanderi

Day Itinerary

After breakfast, Visit Chanderi village to meet and interact with the master crafts persons who weave the beautiful and intricate silk fabric.

Chanderi

Chanderi is blessed with scenic beauty in and around it. While picturesque hills, lakes and forts sit surrounding it, the exquisite hand-woven Chanderi saris adorn this historic town.

These saris are adored around the globe for the artistry behind their creation. The elegance of this matchless intricate art of embellishing silk and cotton fabric with *zari* weaving resides in harmony with the towering forts and palaces. It is a beautiful contrast rare to be found anywhere else.

The town of Chanderi, with its regal radiance, will leave you spellbound, and often, feeling like the royalty, you used to playact as a child.

Dinner will be organized at the craftsman house and interact with the family while discussing their collections.

Overnight stay at hotel.

Activities

Chanderi (MP)
Chanderi Silk Fabric , MP

Chanderi (MP)

Chanderi is a very popular but small town nestled just between Malwa and Bundelkhand in Madhya Pradesh. The place is located along the Betwa river, further, making it an amazing option to explore.

Chanderi was so centrally located during the historic era that it served as a trade route for Central India as well as the route to Malwa. The town was enriched with natural resources and was located in a very strategic position, making it an ideal trading hub back in the days. The place, because of its location, was also eyed by some of the major rulers across India back in the days.

Chanderi Silk Fabric , MP

The Chanderi sari tradition began in the 13th century. In the beginning, the weavers were Muslims. Around 1350, Koshti weavers from Jhansi migrated to Chanderi and settled there.

Chanderi is a traditional ethnic fabric characterized by its lightweight, sheer texture and fine luxurious feel. Chanderi fabric is produced by weaving in silk and golden Zari in the traditional cotton yarn that results in the creation of the shimmering texture. The fabric borrowed its name from the small town Chanderi in Madhya Pradesh where traditional weavers practice the art of producing textured sarees in cotton and silk decorated with fine zari work.

This fabric can be classified into three types – Chanderi silk cotton, pure silk and Chanderi cotton. Traditionally, Chanderi fabric was primarily used in weaving Sarees and Salwar Kameez material.

Basis

Half Board - Dinner, Bed and Breakfast

Day 9: Jehan Numa Palace Hotel, Bhopal

Bhopal

Known as the City of Lakes, Bhopal is the capital city of the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. The city known for its exquisite landscapes characterised by lush forests, green hills and a number of natural and manmade lakes. While the old part of the city features a maze of narrow winding alleyways lined with grand old mosques, ancient palaces and bustling bazaars, the newer part is better planned and contains some excellent museums and galleries, manicured parks and gardens, and upmarket hotels and restaurants. Bhopal serves as a gateway to the nearby a UNESCO World Heritage Site of Sanchi, one of the most impressive Buddhist monuments in Asia. Other must-see attractions in the area include the Van Vihar National Park, home to tigers, lions and leopards; and the State Museum, displaying fossils, paintings and rare Jain sculptures

Day Itinerary

After breakfast, you will leave for Bhopal [5 Hrs approx.] with stop en-route to visit the Dhurrie making area near Sironj.

Apart from Sironj, Jhabua, Raigarh, Jabalpur and Shahdol are leading centres of durrie weaving in Madhya Pradesh. Cotton and woolen punja durries, handwoven in various colors are designed to suit fixed as well as recent home decor. Patterns are usually based on kiln designs, geometric traditional motifs & animal and human figures.

Arrives Bhopal & Check-in to hotel.

Dinner & Overnight stay at hotel.

Overnight: Jehan Numa Palace Hotel

Jehan Numa is a 19th-century palace to be found on the slopes of Shamla Hill. This establishment is set in 5 acres of green lawns and bougainvillaea. The design of the palace was influenced by British colonial, Italian Renaissance and classical Greek architecture. In 1983 the palace was converted into a heritage hotel.

The hotel has 100 beautifully appointed guest rooms each containing amenities for a comfortable stay. When it comes to dining, guests are spoiled for choice as the hotel is home to four remarkable multi-cuisine restaurants. Leisure facilities available for guests to make use of include a swimming pool, fitness centre and spa.



Activities

Dhurrie Making Art Sironj (Bhopal)

Dhurrie Making Art Sironj (Bhopal)

Dhurrie making area near Sironj.

The floor coverings of Madhya Pradesh consist primarily of durries and carpets in a rich variety of designs. A durrie, essentially a thick cotton woven fabric, is meant for Spreading on the floor, and is made all over Madhya Pradesh, especially near Sironj. The basic technique of weaving a durrie in its most primitive form can be seen in rural areas. The more universal durries are made by women in their homes, in the 'Punja' technique. They are usually in bold patterns and bright colors with folk designs.

Basis

Half Board - Dinner, Bed and Breakfast

Day 10: Jehan Numa Palace Hotel, Bhopal**Day Itinerary**

After Breakfast, you will be visiting **visiting the Taj-ul-Masajid mosque and Tribal Museum.**

Afternoon workshop on Gond painting and enjoy enjoy Zari

work. Dinner & Overnight stay at hotel.

Activities

Taj-ul-Masjid
Tribal Museum , Bhopal
Gond Painting Bhopal
Zari work at Bhopal

Taj-ul-Masjid

The Taj-ul-Masajid in Bhopal, India, is the largest mosque in the country and one of the largest in Asia. The mosque features a pink facade flanked by octagonal marble domed minarets, and a spectacular main hallway with pillars and marble flooring, and ceilings that are ornately decorated with petaled designs. During the day the mosque is used as an Islamic religious school.

Tribal Museum , Bhopal

Tribal Museum

The Tribal museum in Bhopal is very thoughtfully planned and the entire campus is theme based right from its entrance. Every art work has some meaning to it which is beautifully depicted but difficult to decipher without basic knowledge of the tribes.

Best way to understand is ask for a copy of their colorful brochure which describes meaning of all the major artifact in Hindi. (It can also be downloaded from Tribal Museum Website).

The well-planned campus is divided into 6 galleries depicting Cultural Diversity, Tribal Life, Tribal Art, Tribal Mythology, Tribals of Chattisgarh and Tribal Games. It also has Art Exhibition Gallery and Open Air Theatre. All the artifacts in Galleries are majorly taken from 7 major and most important tribes of state namely Gond, Bheel, Korku, Kol, Bharia, Baiga and Saharia.

Gond Painting Bhopal

Gond paintings are a form of painting from folk and tribal art that is practiced by one of the largest tribes in India with whom it shares its name. Gond comes from the Dravidian expression, Kond which means 'the green mountain'. While Gond paintings are considered to be from predominantly from Madhya Pradesh, it is also quite common in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhatisgarh and Odisha. Gond art has become so predominant that the Government of India has stepped in to preserve their art form for future generations to enjoy.

Gond paintings can best be described as 'on line work'. The artist makes sure to draw the inner as well as outer lines with as much care as possible so that the perfection of the lines has an immediate effect on the viewer. Lines are used in such a way that it conveys a sense of movement to the still images. Dots and dashes are added to impart a greater sense of movement and increase the amount of detail.

Another very striking facet of Gond paintings has to be the use of bright vivid colours such as white, red, blue and yellow. The paints are usually derived naturally from objects such as charcoal, coloured soil, plant sap, leaves and even cow dung. More specifically, yellow from Chui mitti which is a type of local sand, brown from Gheru mitti which is another type of sand, green is readily procured from leaves while the colour red is obtained from the Hibiscus flower.

Zari work at Bhopal

Embroidery done with metallic threads is called kalabattu and forms the zari. The main zari production centres are Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh. Here the metal ingots are melted into metal bars called pasa from which lengths are got by beating it after treatment. This is then pulled through perforated steel plates to make it into wires, followed by the tarkashi process to make it thin with rubber and diamond dies. The last stage is called badla where the wire is flattened and twisted with silk or cotton thread to become kasab or kalabattu. This has uniform evenness, flexibility, softness, and ductility. Kasab can stand for real silver/gold, as well as for plated silver/gold or for an imitation in which a copper base is given a coat of silver or golden color to make the product less expensive.

Zari thread is used widely in weaving but more selectively in embroidery. For intricate patterns gijai or a thin, stiff wire is used; sitara, a small star-shaped metal piece is used for floral designs. This type of embroidery is called salma-sitara. The thicker kalabattu is a braided gold thread used for borders while the thinner variety is used at the end of the drawstring of purses or batwas, and in tassels, necklaces, and strings. Tikora is a gold thread spirally twisted for complicated designs. The dull zari thread is called kora and the more shiny one is called chikna. The equipment that is used for embroidery is a rectangular wooden-frame called karchob and a wooden leg called thapa used for sewing laces

Basis

Half Board - Dinner, Bed and Breakfast

Day 11: Sheraton Grand Palace Indore, Indore

Indore

Indore is the largest city in Madhya Pradesh, owing its growth to its dominance in the trade industry. This city is also known for its cuisine and is sometimes referred to as the 'Street Food Capital of India'. For a wide selection of Indian fast food, the best place to visit in Indore is the Sarafa Bazar.

Indore is also a city of religious and historic depth. Interesting sites worth visiting is the Rajwada Palace, the Gandhi Hall and the Lal Baag Palace.

Day Itinerary

After breakfast, drive to Ujjain **and participate in Batik printing workshop** and later proceed to Indore, check-in at hotel. (approx. 6 hours' drive)

Dinner & overnight stay at hotel.

Overnight: Sheraton Grand Palace Indore

Experience the touch of royalty at this beautiful hotel, located across a lush expanse of 8.62 acres with striking gardens. Sheraton Grand Palace Indore serves as an idyllic location from which travellers can explore the surrounding area.

This palatial hotel is home to 115 rooms and suites, each showing elegant decor and equipped with modern amenities and wonderful views. During their stay, guests can look forward to delicious meals at the all-day dining 'S Cafe', a signature Indian dish at the Malt Restaurant or a baked delicacy at the stylish Infuse Bar. Leisure facilities include a wonderful fitness centre and inviting swimming pool.



Activities

Batik printing Ujjain , MP

Batik printing Ujjain , MP

Batik is a combination of art, as there is a free moment of the hand while working on the patterns which are artistically done and craft, the way the whole process of waxing and designing takes place. This form of designing

cloth has been skillfully carried on over for centuries. The Indonesia-Java's batik is considered to be the ancient and finest of all. The word batik is Javanese (Java-Place in Indonesia) in origin and gets form the word 'titik' which means dot. It was highly developed in the island of Java in Indonesia and the finest batik till date is said to be from this place. The cloth is washed, patterns are marked or sometimes drawn directly on the cloth with the help of a pen-like instrument called Tjanting. The wax flows through the column on a wooden handle and forms lines and dots as it moves on the fabric. The cloth is dyed and the wax is removed by treating it with hot steaming water. This is the basic process of batik printing, the process can be repeated while obtaining more colors.

Basis

Half Board - Dinner, Bed and Breakfast

Day 12: Ahilya Fort, Maheshwar

Maheshwar

Idyllically set on the bank of the mighty Narmada River 91 kilometres southwest of Indore, the small holy town of Maheshwar is known for its ornate shrines along the sacred river, stunning forts and palaces, and splendid saris. Mentioned in the Hindu holy texts and dedicated to Lord Shiva, the city draws many pilgrims. One of the most significant shrines is that where the cenographs (chhatris) of Queen Ahilyabai and Prince Vithoji Rao are erected, next to the consecrated stairs (ghat) leading down to the water. The imposing, elaborately decorated 16th century fort, to which the same queen added a palace and numerous temples, looms over the town and offers panoramic views of the mighty river. Don't miss the opportunity to watch the local weavers create the intricate, colourful saris for which the town is famous.

Day Itinerary

After breakfast, drive to Maheshwar [approx. 6 Hrs] with stop en-route to visit **the Bhil and Bagh village for the block printing workshops.**

Dinner & Overnight stay at hotel.

Overnight: Ahilya Fort

Swap your sunglasses for a sceptre, deck chair for a dynastic seat and bikini for a ball gown and you'll be ready for a royal retreat at luxury hotel **Ahilya Fort**. Once the private palace of the Holkar dynasty, today, this former regal stronghold plays host to tiara-coveting travellers. Choose a recliner and hold court by the hotel's large outdoor pool, or swan through the Narmada River's holy waters on a boat tour. Having lived like a noble by day, dine like a true heir by night, feasting on dishes designed for owner Prince Richard Holkar's titled ancestors. Altogether, this blue-blooded stay behooves those with a taste for the finer things.



Activities

Bagh village for the block printing workshops. (MP)

Bagh village for the block printing workshops. (MP)

Bagh Print is a traditional hand block print with natural colours, an Indian Handicraft practised in Bagh, Dhar district in Madhya Pradesh, India. Its name is derived from the village Bagh on the banks of the Bagh River. Bagh print fabric with replicated geometric and floral compositions with vegetable colours of red and black over a white background is a popular Textile printing product.

In this printing technique the cloth used is cotton and silk cloth which are subject to treatment of a blend of corroded iron fillings, alum and Alizarin. The designs are patterned by skilled artisans. On completion of the printing process, the printed fabric is subject to repeated washing in the flowing waters of the river and then dried in the sun for a specific period to obtain the fine luster.

Basis

Full Board - Dinner, Bed, Breakfast and Lunch

Day 13: Ahilya Fort, Maheshwar

Day Itinerary

After breakfast proceed to visit Rehwa society where you will see the silk weaving and manufacturing and enjoy Maheshwar saree weaving, later visit to houses of weavers & enjoy weaving, block printing and thread spinning and dyeing process

Early evening leave for a boat ride on the Narmada river followed by Aarti ceremony on the ghats

Dinner & Overnight stay at Hotel.

Activities

Rehwa Society , Maheshwar (MP)

Rehwa Society , Maheshwar (MP)

Rehwa Society is a not-for-profit foundation, working with weavers in Maheshwar, Madhya Pradesh in the year 1978, Richard and Sally Holkar were taking a stroll on the ghats during a visit to Maheshwar. The young successors of the Holkar Dynasty were stopped on their way by a man with a piece of cloth hanging off his arm. He eagerly showed them the light, fine fabric, telling them of the hardships his people faced due to the decline of handlooms. Encouraged by their keen interest, he asked a favour of them- to, somehow, help his people find a source of income again. The Holkars were captivated by the thought of helping the people of Maheshwar, and soon their thoughts became words and actions. In 1979, with a grant from the Central Welfare Board and an investment of 79,000 rupees to train weavers, they established REHWA Society as a non-profit organisation. REHWA's weavers are very well trained and rank among the best around Maheshwar. Years of training and experience ensure beautiful, high quality weaving . Each product, from fibre to finished product, is handmade and goes through several hands before reaching the customer. We always ensure that every design created, be it traditional or contemporary, does not lose the essence of Maheshwari handlooms.

Basis

Full Board - Dinner, Bed, Breakfast and Lunch

Day 14: Trident Nariman Point, Mumbai

Mumbai

The thriving metropolis of Mumbai is a go-to destination for travellers curious to experience a modern Indian city. Lapped by the Arabian Sea, this urban seaside peninsula is a melting pot of old and new India. Towering office blocks and shiny apartment buildings shoulder crumbling grand dames of architecture. Men play cricket in the leafy central parks, taxis navigate the jam packed streets and families stroll along the seaside promenades of Mumbai, while kilometres away children beg on the peripheries of Asia's biggest slum. In the wide avenue of Colaba's high street, western culture overshadows the brightly lit storefronts, where Levi's, Adidas and McDonalds vie for retail space.

Day Itinerary

After breakfast, Morning is at leisure to enjoy independent activities

By noon, drive to Indore airport [95 Kms: 3 Hrs] to board flight to Mumbai.

Flight	AI 636
Departs Indore	1705 Hrs.
Arrives Mumbai	1815 Hrs.

Upon arrival in Mumbai & you will be transferred to your hotel.

Dinner & Overnight stay at Hotel.

Overnight: Trident Nariman Point

The 33-floor **Trident Nariman Point** overlooks Marine Drive, nicknamed the 'Queen's Necklace' for its resemblance to a rope of diamonds when the evening lights begin to glow. It's one of Mumbai's finest hotels, with fabulous views, sterling service, a lovely spa and a seafront pool. Trident Nariman Point, looking out to sea, has a fantastic location: a

short distance from the sights and historic buildings of Colaba and Fort, as well as Marine Drive, Chowpatty Beach, the Gateway of India and Mumbai's museums. Southeast-Asian and Japanese cuisine are served at India Jones restaurant, where chefs entertain with spectacular sleight-of-hand cooking on the teppanyaki grill. The sushi is excellent, as is the dim sum. There's the garden-side Mediterranean Frangipani restaurant.



Basis

Half Board - Dinner, Bed and Breakfast

Day 15: Trident Nariman Point, Mumbai

Day Itinerary

Early morning you will be taken to experience the hustle n bustle of Mumbai during the dawn. After breakfast, proceed for the orientation tour of Mumbai followed by the half day Workshop on Block Printing .

Evening free to explore on your own or rest at Hotel.

Dinner & Overnight stay at Hotel.

Activities

Mumbai by Dawn

MUMBAI ORIENTATION TOUR

Block Printing workshop , Mumbai

Mumbai by Dawn

Get up at the crack of dawn for an exclusive peek into the underbelly of the city, and insights into what makes this magnificent city tick. The tour starts with the newspaper vendor distribution network. Next men and women bargain with the wholesale fruit and vegetable vendors to pick up fresh produce for the day ahead. Our exploration continuous and we reach Sassoon docks to see how 10 to 20 tonnes of fish arrive in the city every day. Finally we see glimpses of daily lives - bread-boys carrying fresh bread, the milkman riding past with milk canisters, the flower market and green fresh vegetable market.

MUMBAI ORIENTATION TOUR

Drive Past Marine Drive, Mumbai's most popular seaside promenade , Hanging Gardens on the slopes of the Malabar Hills, offering a nice view of the marine lines , the Chowpatty Beach. Drive past the Flora Fountain, the colourful Crawford Market and Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (Formerly Victoria Terminus Train Station).

Block Printing workshop , Mumbai

'Block Printing' refers to a process of repeat patterning on a fabric using carved wooden or metal blocks. Block prints have been used in India for many centuries, and several distinct centres have emerged, each with their own trademark style. Although it is a traditional craft, it is so versatile that even today, it is on the forefront of the fashion scene. There are no limits to the designs - borders, floral motifs, paisleys, elephants, peacocks, human figures, and much more! Multiple designs or patterns can be created from a limited number of blocks - truly, the end product is much more than the sum of it's parts!

Basis

Half Board - Dinner, Bed and Breakfast

Day 16: End of Itinerary**Day Itinerary**

After breakfast, at appropriate time you will be met by your Bespoke India Travel Personnel, who will assist you with your transfer to Mumbai airport to board Flight to UK

Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Transport**Flight Information**

Date	Flight	Airline	Departure Airport	Time	Arrival Airport	Time	Class	Ref
	Scheduled		Indira Gandhi International Airport [DEL]		Jabalpur Airport [JLR]			
	Scheduled		Devi Ahilyabai Holkar Airport [IDR]		Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport [BOM]			

Transfers

Date	Company	Pick Up	Drop Off	Time	Vehicle
		Indira Gandhi International	Maidens Hotel		Transfer

Airport [DEL]		
Maidens Hotel	Indira Gandhi International Airport [DEL]	Transfer
Jabalpur Airport [JLR]	Bandhav Vilas	Transfer
Bandhav Vilas	The Lalit Temple View Khajuraho	Transfer
The Lalit Temple View Khajuraho	Khajuraho Railway Station	Transfer
Lalitpur Railway Station	MPT Kila Kothi	Transfer
MPT Kila Kothi	Jehan Numa Palace Hotel	Transfer
Jehan Numa Palace Hotel	Sheraton Grand Palace Indore	Transfer
Sheraton Grand Palace Indore	Ahilya Fort	Transfer
Ahilya Fort	Devi Ahilyabai Holkar Airport [IDR]	Transfer
Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport [BOM]	Trident Nariman Point	Transfer
Trident Nariman Point	Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport [BOM]	Transfer

Journey Information

Date	Train	Agency	Departure Platform	Time	Arrival Platform	Time	Class	Ref
	22164 / Mahamana Express (Train)	Indian Railway	Khajuraho Railway Station	16:15	Lalitpur Railway Station	19:33	Chair Car	

Urgent Contact Numbers

Company Name	Telephone	Email Address	Contact Person
BESPOKE INDIA TRAVEL	+44 (0) 203 617 1133	sanjay@bespokeindiatravel.com	

Service Provider Directory

Service Provider	Ref. Number	Telephone	Address
Ahilya Fort		+91 11 4155	

	1575	
Bandhav Vilas	+91 88 60 518887	Village Kuchwahi, Bandhavgarh, Distt Umaria, Tala, 484661, Madhya Pradesh, India
Jehan Numa Palace Hotel	+91 755 266 1100	157, Shamala Hills, Bhopal - 462013 Madhya Pradesh (India)
Maidens Hotel	+91 11 2397 5464	7, Sham Nath Marg, New Delhi
MPT Kila Kothi		Chanderi India
Sheraton Grand Palace Indore	+91 731 488 0000	Omaxe City 1, Mayakhedi Bypass Road, Indore 452016 India
The Lalit Temple View Khajuraho	+91 76 86 272333	Opposite Circuit House, Sevagram, Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh 471606, India
Trident Nariman Point	+91 22 6632 4343	Nariman Point, Mumbai 400 021, India

Travel Information



Vast, diverse, deeply spiritual and utterly unforgettable, India is unlike anywhere else on earth – a melting pot of ethnicities and religions, a treasure trove of history and culture, and a curious mixture of chaos and serenity. Stretching across more than three million square kilometres, it encompasses a staggering array of landscapes, vistas and environs, and offers unparalleled travel experiences – from the beautiful beaches of Goa, to the compelling craziness of Kolkata, the sacred Ganges river banks of Varanasi, the snow-capped peaks of the Himalayas in Kashmir and the ancient, exquisitely crafted temples dotted across the entire country. Not to mention the vibrant, friendly people, and the incredible cuisine.

Banking and Currency

Currency

The Indian rupee is the official currency of the Republic of India. The modern rupee is subdivided into 100 paise (singular paisa), though as of 2011 only 50-paise coins are legal tender. Banknotes in circulation come in denominations of ₹5, ₹10, ₹20, ₹50, ₹100, ₹500 and ₹2000. Please note that as of November 2016, the older ₹500 note is no longer valid legal tender and only new ₹500 notes will be accepted.

The import and export of local currency is prohibited. The import of foreign currency is unlimited. However, amounts exceeding US\$5,000 or equivalent in cash, or US\$10,000 or equivalent in all forms of currency must be declared. The export of foreign currency is allowed up to the amount imported and declared.

Currency can be changed at banks, airports or authorised money changers. Many hotels also have facilities to change money but this is a more expensive option. It is illegal to exchange money through unauthorised money changers. US Dollars and Pounds Sterling are the easiest currencies to exchange.

Travel, Transport and Getting Around

India is big and there are lots of interesting ways to travel around it, most of which could not very well be described as efficient or punctual. Allow considerable buffer time for any journey with a fixed deadline (eg. your flight back), and try to remember that getting there should be half the fun.

India's large size and uncertain roads make flying a viable option, especially as prices have tumbled in the last few years. Even India's offshore islands and remote mountain states are served by flights, the main exceptions being Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh (although crossing over from neighbouring states is fairly easy). Due to the aviation boom over the last few years, airports have not been able to keep up with the air traffic. Most Indian airports continue to function with one runway and a handful of boarding gates. Check in and security queues can be terribly long, especially in Delhi and Mumbai.

Railways were introduced in India in 1853, more than one and half a centuries ago, by the British, and today India boasts of the biggest network of railway lines in the world, and the rail system is very efficient, if not always on schedule. Travelling on Indian Railways gives you the opportunity to discover the Indian landscape and scenic beauty first hand and is generally more economical than flying domestic. It is one of the safest ways of travel in India. With classes ranging from luxurious to regular, it's the best way to get to know the country and its people. Most train passengers will be curious about you and happy to pass the time with a chat.

In central locations of big cities like airports or stations reliable pre-paid taxis are available and will save you money as well as the bargaining hassle. However beware of touts who would claim themselves to be running pre-paid taxis. Always collect the receipt from the counter first. The receipt has two parts - one part is for your reference and the other part you will need to handover to the taxi driver only after you reach your desired destination. The taxi driver will get his payment by submitting or producing this other part to the pre-paid taxi counter. Normal taxis running by meter are usually more common. In many non Metro Cities (or even in Metros depending on time) taxis or autos may ply without the usual meter.

While you can't take a cross-country bus-ride across India, buses are the second most popular way of travelling across states and the only cheap way of reaching many places not on the rail network (eg. Dharamsala).

Food, Drink and Cuisine Advice

Indian food is world-renowned for its tantalising flavours, spiciness and enormous variety. Curries are created from the subtle and delicate blending of spices such as cumin, turmeric, cardamom, ginger, coriander, nutmeg and poppy seed although these vary from region to region and every spice has medicinal properties and use.

Vegetable dishes are more common than in Europe, particularly in the fruity, coconutty dishes of southern India, while northern India has an entirely different but equally satisfying cuisine to sample. Breads like paranthas, chapatis, naans and rotis are also part of the main diet in several states like Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Achars (pickles), relishes and chutneys again vary by region and add more resonance to amazing meals.

Sweets or mithai too have regional specialities. They tend to be milk based and some are syrupy and fried. Well-known northern sweets are gulab jamun, jalebi (it's worth watching how these syrup-based confections are made in the street), kulfi, *kheer*, halwa and laddu. From the east are rasgulla and rasmalai. The south has several burfi and halwa-type desserts like coconut burfi and badam halwa made from almonds.

Non-vegetarians will find fabulously spiced mutton dishes according to regional specialities including fish dishes typical to coastal areas.

10 to 15% is usual in restaurants that impose no service fee; optional where service fee is added to bill.

Climate and Weather

The weather is mainly hot most of the year with significant variations from region to region. The coolest weather lasts from around the end of November to the beginning of March, with fresh mornings and evenings, and mostly sunny days. The really hot weather, when it is dry, dusty and unpleasant, is between April and June. Monsoon rains occur in most regions in summer anywhere between June and early October.

Clothing and Dress Recommendations

For most locations and seasons in India, thin, loose linen or cotton pants and button-down shirts will keep you comfortable in hot, humid weather and help you blend in. While you may see Indian young adults sporting tight jeans and fitted brand-name tops, you'd stand out significantly more in the same outfit. If you visit anywhere in northern India - not just the mountains, Delhi too - during the winter, prepare for seriously cold weather. Bring jeans and heavy shirts and pick up an Indian wool wrap.

When visiting temples and other religious sites on your own or part of a tour, be on the lookout for signs advising visitors to dress in a specific way to enter the temple. The government of India advises that some religious institutions require visitors to cover their heads or remove their shoes, and covering your legs and arms in respect goes without saying. Certain sites may carry more specific requirements, such as donning a certain colored sash or sarong-like covering. Take your cue from other visitors exiting the site.

Electricity and Plug Standards

For the most part, electrical sockets (outlets) in India are the "Type D" 5 amp BS-546 sockets. This is actually an old British standard. The "Type D" Indian plug and socket is not to be confused with the "Type M" South African plug and socket. In pictures, they look very similar, but the South African type is much larger than the Indian type, and they are physically incompatible. If your appliance's plug doesn't match the shape of these sockets, you will need a travel plug adapter in order to plug in.

Electrical sockets (outlets) in India usually supply electricity at between 220 and 240 volts AC. If you're plugging in an appliance that was built for 220-240 volt electrical input, or an appliance that is compatible with multiple voltages, then an adapter is all you need. If your appliances are not compatible with 220-240 volt electrical output, a voltage converter will be necessary.
