

# Wonders of India

  
THE  
CAPTAIN'S  
CHOICE  
TOUR



TAJ MAHAL, INDIA

IF ONE COUNTRY IN THE WORLD stirs the passion of the traveller; if one country has the symbols of incredible wealth and culture surrounded by dramatic squalor; if one country captivates thousands of travellers that love the sights, sounds and smells of a unique and diverse group of people while others fear to tread on her soil – that country must be India. The Taj Mahal, the Red Fort, the burning ghats on the Ganges and the great Palaces of Rajasthan tempt the traveller but concerns about food, accommodation, transport and medical facilities mean many people will only see India on a screen. The Captain's Choice Tour of India by Private Jet eliminates these concerns and minimises the hassles and inconveniences of regular tours to India. Our Private Jet takes just 44 guests to experience the highlights of India – north and south – whilst staying in some of India's most luxurious hotels. We visit Chennai, the seat of ancient civilisations; explore the spectacular state of Kerala including an overnight cruise on its beautiful backwaters; stay at a luxurious resort in Goa; delve into the 'Pink City' of Jaipur, Rajasthan's resplendent capital; sightsee in Delhi; witness the spectacular Taj Mahal; experience extraordinary Varanasi; and see Kolkata, India's constantly changing city of culture.

## TRAVEL DATES

19 March – 3 April 2011 (16 Days)  
5 April – 20 April 2011 (16 Days)  
4 October – 19 October 2011 (16 Days)  
17 March – 1 April 2012 (16 Days)

### DAY 1

Australia – Chennai [Madras] (India)

JOIN YOUR PRIVATE JET in Melbourne this morning. Please talk to us about connecting flights from your home city. Relax aboard your Private Jet with a glass of French Champagne and fine wines. Upon arrival in Chennai we transfer to the luxurious ITC Sheraton Park Hotel & Towers, where Executive Floor rooms have been reserved for our three night stay.

### DAY 2

Chennai

We take a morning tour of Chennai, formerly known as Madras. The capital of Tamil Nadu is India's fourth largest city and the seat of ancient civilisations, with a rich heritage of fine arts, sculptures and architecture. Our morning tour includes the National Art Gallery & Museum plus Fort St George, reflecting the power of the Raj. After lunch we take a drive along Marina Beach and return to our hotel for some relaxation time.

We come together for a Welcome Reception and Dinner this evening.

### DAY 3

Chennai

► Enjoy a day for independent exploration and relaxation; or join a tour to Mahabalipuram, a World Heritage living museum of the Pallava Dynasty, located beside the sea. We see the monolithic monuments and stone sculptures including five raths (chariots) and the bas-reliefs on



KOCHI FISHERMAN

a huge rock, popularly known as Arjuna's Penance.

► Tonight is your first dine-around dinner, select from a variety of restaurants and dine from the a la carte menu.

### DAY 4

Chennai – Kochi [Cochin]

Enjoy breakfast and a leisurely morning before rejoining our Private Jet for the lunchtime flight to Kochi, formerly known as Cochin.

Named the 'Queen of the Arabian Sea' for its fine natural harbour and waterways, Kochi reflects the heritage of the Dutch, Portuguese, Chinese and Jewish traders of past times. We have two nights in sea view rooms at the Taj Malabar on Willington Island. This evening enjoy 'Kathakali' – the traditional dance drama of Kerala, followed by dinner.

### DAY 5

Kochi

The vibrant city of Kochi is situated on the south west coast of the Indian peninsula in the breathtakingly beautiful state of Kerala.

This morning we explore Kochi including the Fort Cochin area, Mattancherry Dutch Palace, the Jewish Synagogue and the Chinese Fishing Nets. Within India the Chinese Fishing Nets are only found in Kochi and it is believed that traders from the court of the Chinese ruler Kublai Khan introduced the fishermen of Kochi to the nets. This afternoon we take a boat trip on the enchanting backwaters through coconut groves and quiet lagoons to visit Bolghatty Palace, a beautiful Dutch colonial mansion built in 1744. We pass tiny fishing hamlets and see the fisher folk in their colourful outfits.

► Select from a choice of restaurants at a dine-around dinner.





CITY PALACE, JAIPUR



DAY 6  
Kochi – Backwater Cruise

We drive south through the tropical beauty of Kerala State for the unique experience of a leisurely cruise on the backwaters of Kerala. Fringing the coast and winding far inland an intricate network of lagoons, lakes, estuaries and deltas of 44 rivers drain into the Arabian Sea.

Over 900km of this waterway is navigable. For centuries rice barges have been poled through the backwaters as the main form of transport; now some of these barges have been converted into boutique houseboats. We will join a fleet of houseboats to soak up the cultural and natural beauty of this area. Each houseboat is comfortable without being elaborate, has two rooms (each with private facilities), open deck space and caring staff. We sail through lush tropical forests, paddy fields, rubber plantations and villages unchanged with time. Meals will be served onboard as our convoy cruises the backwaters – a unique travel experience.



ABOVE RIGHT: KERALA  
ABOVE: VARANASI

DAY 7  
Backwater Cruise –  
Goa

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast onboard as we continue our cruise before disembarking and driving to Kochi to join our awaiting aircraft for the lunchtime flight to Goa. We spend the next two nights at the sumptuous Taj Exotica Goa, a delightful property set in 56 acres of lush tropical gardens beside the Arabian Sea. The remainder of the afternoon is free to relax and enjoy the facilities of our fine hotel.

▶ This evening choose from the wonderful restaurants within our hotel.

RED FORT, AGRA

DAY 8  
Goa

This morning we take in the sights and sounds of Goa, a city with a distinctly relaxed atmosphere – an unusual attribute for an Indian city! We visit both the old town and the newer Panjim City, otherwise known as Panaji, situated on the banks of the Mandovi River. Our tour of the old town will include the Basilica of Bom Jesus, a World Heritage monument and one of the finest baroque churches in India. We also visit the Se Cathedral, the largest church in Asia, featuring the enormous Golden Bell. The rest of the day is free to explore more of the area independently or relax by the beach.

▶ Enjoy a dine-around dinner this evening.

DAY 9  
Goa – Jaipur

▶ Join an early morning yoga or meditation session.

After a delightful breakfast we transfer mid morning to the airport and rejoin our Private Jet for the short flight to the Pink City of Jaipur. We have two nights to enjoy one of India's most fascinating cities in style. Our accommodation in Jaipur is at the resplendent Oberoi Rajvillas, where Premier Rooms are reserved for your luxury.

▶ This afternoon you may choose to relax at our hotel; or embark on a shopping excursion tailored to your desires. Our expert shopping guides take individuals to top quality stores of one's choice including carpets, jewellery and crafts.

▶ This evening you may select from any of our hotel's restaurants for a dine-around dinner.





**DAY 10**  
**Jaipur**

We tour the fascinating city of Jaipur, capital of Rajasthan. Jaipur, with its rich and colourful past, resplendent with tales of valour and bravery, is now one of the most important heritage cities in India. This morning we visit the Amber Fort.

After lunch our tour takes in the Jantar Mantar Observatory, City Palace and the beautiful Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds). Constructed out of pink sandstone in 1799 it was designed to extend the chambers of the harem and allow royal ladies to observe everyday life in the street below without being seen. Finally, we visit a famous fabric market. This evening a special dinner is planned within the gardens of our hotel.

**DAY 11**  
**Jaipur – Delhi – Agra**

This morning our Private Jet will fly us directly to Delhi to see the sights of India's most pleasant major city, where wide tree lined streets and beautiful Mughal buildings in New Delhi contrast with the breathless clamour of the crowds in Old Delhi. Some of the fascinating sights we see include the Jama Masjid Mosque, the amazing Chandi Chowk Street in Old Delhi, the Red Fort, the Raj Ghat (memorial to Mahatma Gandhi), Humayun's Tomb and the huge Qutab Minar (the tallest brick minaret in the world at 72.5m, dating from 1368).

Later this evening we rejoin our aircraft for the short flight to Agra, home of the Taj Mahal. We are staying only 600m from the extraordinary Taj Mahal at the luxurious Oberoi Amarvilas.

Your room is booked to ensure a view of the Taj and the hotel itself is in a beautiful setting.

AMBER FORT, JAIPUR



**DAY 12**  
**Agra**

Wake this morning to an incredible view of the Taj Mahal from the privacy of your room's balcony. This morning we dedicate to visiting the Taj Mahal, built in 1684 by Shah Jahan as a monument to his beloved wife. Perfectly symmetrical it took 22 years and 20,000 workers to create this stunning architectural wonder. The Taj is India's, if not the world's, most breathtaking building.

After lunch we visit the magnificent red sandstone Agra Fort.

► *This afternoon you may choose to visit the abandoned city of Fatehpur Sikri, an almost completely intact ancient ghost city; join your personal shopping guide to explore the shops of your choice; or relax with a massage at our hotel.*

► *Early this evening you may like to return to the Taj Mahal and watch the sunset.*

► *This evening is a dine-around dinner, offering you a choice of restaurants.*

**DAY 13**  
**Agra – Varanasi**

After a leisurely breakfast our Private Jet awaits for the flight to Varanasi. Varanasi is India's most holy city, located on the River Ganges. This afternoon we visit Sarnath, where Buddha gave his first sermon to his first five disciples. We see the Dhamek Stupa, the extensive ruins of an ancient monastery and the Archaeological Museum. An early evening visit to observe life on the Ganges

is a memorable experience. This evening we stay at the comfortable (but not elaborate) Ramada Plaza JHV.

► *Select from a choice of restaurants at another dine-around dinner.*

**DAY 14**  
**Varanasi – Kolkata**

This morning we rise early for one of India's most amazing sights, a serene boat ride on the River Ganges as dawn breaks over the burning ghats. Witness the time honoured ritual of bathing in the holy river – a scene of colour and rituals performed in an almost eerie setting. After our boat trip we walk through the narrow lanes of the old city before returning to our hotel for a late breakfast. Later this morning we fly to Kolkata. Kolkata is a sensory delight and constantly changing cultural extravaganza. On arrival we explore the city including the Victoria Memorial and Dalhousie Square (once the centre of British colonial power and trade) before checking in to the opulent Oberoi Grand Kolkata.

This evening we enjoy a Farewell Dinner



GOA

aboard a private boat as we cruise around the city of Kolkata.

**DAY 15**  
**Depart Kolkata**

► *This morning you may opt for further independent exploration of the city, perhaps partake in some last minute shopping; or join a tour to the Jain Temple (Jewel Box Temple of Kolkata) and Kumartuli. Those on the tour will also see the Marble Palace, Kali Temple and visit the Cima Art Gallery.*

Early this afternoon we transfer to the airport for our flight back to Australia.

**DAY 16**  
**Arrive Australia**

We arrive in Melbourne mid morning. Please let our team know if you would like us to obtain flights to return you to your home city.

**TOUR COST**

Based on twin share – per person, from Melbourne in Australian Dollars.  
Prices from other cities are available on request.

BUSINESS CLASS.....	\$29,990
SINGLE ROOM SUPPLEMENT.....	\$3,100

*Prices apply to 2011 tours. Prices for 2012 will be set in May 2011.  
Deposits for 2012 tour are refundable until 1 month after prices have been published.  
Please enquire for prices and schedules to/from Melbourne from other cities.  
Single rooms are available at a supplement or we will allocate two single travellers of the same gender to a room without any additional cost.*