The Splendor of India – Itinerary

30-Oct/Day 1: Arrive in New Delhi
Upon arrival into Delhi, a transfer is waiting to take you to the hotel. The rest of the day is free to relax or to explore. Overnight in New Delhi

31-Oct/Day 2: City Tour of New & Old Delhi
We spend the day in Delhi, exploring some of the sights in both the “Old” and the “New” cities. In Old Delhi, we visit the Jama Masjid, enjoy a rickshaw ride through Chandi Chowk, explore Qutub Minar, Gandhi’s tomb and a drive around the India Gate that leads to the Indian Parliament. Overnight in Delhi.

01-Nov/Day 3: To Varanasi, Evening Ceremony
Fly to the "Eternal City" of Varanasi - India's most sacred city. Many devout Hindus move to Varanasi to end their days and have their ashes scattered in the holy Ganges. Overnight in Varanasi.
02-Nov/Day 4: Varanasi, Sunrise on the Holy Ganges River, Aarti
Early morning boat trip on the Ganges River takes us past the ghats where pilgrims come to purify themselves by bathing in the river. Visit Sarnath, the ancient site where the Buddha gave his first sermon. This evening we travel by rickshaw to visit a ghat at Aarti (prayer) time. Overnight in Varanasi.

03-Nov/Day 5: Khajuraho
In the morning, we take a short flight to Khajuraho, a medieval city filled with intriguing temples. In the afternoon we will explore Khajuraho’s temples (declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site). Intricately carved, these ancient temples depict human and divine forms engaged in daily life. Overnight in Khajuraho.

04-Nov/Day 6: Orccha, Local Home Experience
This morning, we depart to Orccha arriving in time for our cooking class in a local home. While relaxing in a local home, we will watch and learn how some of the local Indian dishes are made and after enjoy them! Learn about how life is like in India as you interact with this family in their home. After lunch, we say goodbye to our host and explore the temples of Orccha. In the evening, we will see these ancient temples come alive with the brilliant lights that make them shine. Overnight in Orccha.

05-Nov/Day 7: Amermahal Palace (Train to Agra 2.5 hours)
In the morning, we visit the Amermahal Palace, which resembles a European-style castle. In the afternoon we drive to Jhansi where we board the train for Agra, home to the Taj Mahal. Upon our arrival in Agra we check into the hotel for dinner. Overnight in Agra.
06-Nov/Day 8: Agra, Taj Mahal and Agra Fort and Itmad-Ud-Daulah Tomb
We have a full day to explore some of the most famous sights of Agra, including the Taj Mahal (UNESCO). This white marbled jewel was built over a 22-year period by Shah Jehan as a monument to his great love for his wife. We also visit Agra Fort (UNESCO) built by Akbar the Great, which includes the Pearl Mosque, the Palace and the Halls of Private and Public Audience. Later, we visit the Itmad-Ud-Daulah Tomb, which was also known as the mini Taj Mahal. We will learn why this tomb pre-dates the Taj Mahal as we marvel in the lace design that makes this tomb so unique. Overnight in Agra.

07-Nov/Day 9: Jaipur, Bollywood night (4.5 hours drive)
In the morning, we depart Agra for Jaipur, the "Pink City" of Rajasthan stopping en-route to visit the ancient ghost town of Fatehpur Sikri, and wander amongst its beautiful stone buildings set in the desert. Pink city was built in 1728 and holds many attractions for the modern-day traveler. It earned its moniker as the Pink City because the rock that was used in the city's construction has a pink hue. Enjoy a relaxing evening in the Pink City or for those who want to learn more about the famous Bollywood, we will attend a true Hindi Bollywood movie at one of the oldest and most extraordinary cinemas in Jaipur. Overnight in Jaipur.

08-Nov/Day 10: Jaipur, Palace of the Winds, Amber Palace Fort, Astronomical Observatory and City Palace.
In the morning, we will go back in time and enter the Amber Palace and Fort like the ancient kings did, riding on an elephant's back. We stop at the Hawa Mahal (Palace of the Winds) to catch the morning sun on this beautiful structure. We will explore this majestic fort and learn the history of Jaipur and how life was like in the king's day. In the afternoon, we will journey to the famous Jantar Mantar the largest stone astronomical observatory built by Maharaja Jai Singh (UNESCO). We will also visit the City Palace. In the afternoon, we will end our sightseeing with some free time to wander the colorful markets of Jaipur or take a rickshaw ride through the old city. Overnight in Jaipur.

09-Nov/ Day 11: Pushkar Camel Festival (2.5 hours drive)
We travel overland to Pushkar. Situated on the edge of the Thar Desert in Rajasthan, the town of Pushkar is a peaceful oasis where travelers escape the bustle of big city India - to a place frozen in the ancient ways of an India from the past. Arriving in the afternoon you have free time to sit by the lake and watch the pious perform their ablutions in the holy waters, or explore this fascinating town as troops of monkeys perform their antics around you. Orientation walk around the lake. Overnight in Pushkar.
10-Nov/Day 12: Pushkar
Pushkar is an oasis in the desert and is a special place in its own right. Every year Pushkar becomes a world-class spectacle during the Camel Festival, whose dates are timed with the lunar calendar. For centuries, traders have been coming to this event to buy, sell and trade oxen, cattle, mules and even elephants, but it is camels who hold center stage at Pushkar. It is estimated that up to 50,000 camels are bought, sold and traded every year at the Camel Fair. Overnight, Pushkar is transformed - devotees, traders, musicians and jugglers flock to the town. Pushkar bursts with color, people and gaiety during the week of the autumn full moon. Held for five days and culminating on the auspicious Purnima (full moon of the Hindu month of Kartik), the Pushkar Camel Fair is one of India's greatest festivals. We will get up early to walk around the fair grounds and watch the trading of livestock in action. Talk to the farmers and learn where they travelled from to sell or trade their camels. Make sure your camera is ready at all times as the colorful decorations and amazing designs that the camels show off are truly something you will want to capture. We will watch the day's competitions and street theater and walk amongst the variety of vendors selling interesting handicrafts. In the evening we will take a camel safari to watch the sunset over the fair grounds and the desert. Overnight in Pushkar.

11-Nov/Day 13: Udaipur (4.5 hours drive)
We continue our long journey to Udaipur. We arrive in Udaipur for lunchtime and settle into our hotel. A short orientation and some free time to explore on your own before our culture show. Overnight in Udaipur.
12-Nov/Day 14: Udaipur City Palace, Lake Pichola Lake
Set in the Girwa Valley amidst the Aravalli Hills of south Rajasthan, Udaipur is a beautiful city — regarded by Indians and foreigners alike as one of the most romantic city in India. It is a lovely city to explore with fairy tale white marble palaces, placid blue lakes and green hills that create a feeling of serenity. Udaipur is undoubtedly an oasis of color in an arid region of India. Visit the City Palace, a local artist studio to see how the famous miniature paintings are created and a walk to through the windy streets. After lunch we board a small boat and cruise on Lake Pichola to view this wonderful city from the water including a view of the famous Lake Palace. Overnight in Udaipur.

13-Nov/Day 15: Cultural Experience New Delhi
Fly back to Delhi where we will transfer to our hotel for a quick check in and then journey to the Spice Market. We will then take cycle rickshaws through out the busy streets of Delhi to the Sikh Temple to see this temple in action. Tour the kitchen where massive pots cook the free meals this temple serves on a daily basis. We will return to our hotel in the afternoon to pack for your departure the next day and to get ready for our farewell dinner. Overnight in Delhi.

14-Nov/Day 16: Depart New Delhi
We say goodbye to this remarkable part of India. You are transferred to the airport for your international departure flight.