

Le Passage  
to India

The journey of a lifetime,  
every time  
in India, Nepal & Bhutan



WHO

WE

ARE



Le Passage to India is one of India's premier Destination Management Companies with a country wide network and dedicated teams that specialise in every facet of travel. The company has an elaborate network of owned offices across India and strategic alliances in Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Maldives. With passion for travel in our DNA, we pride ourselves for our in-depth product knowledge and range of services offered, highly trained and motivated teams, exclusive panel of knowledgeable guides, and modern transport fleet equipped with Wi-Fi.

Our consistent performance has been possible due to our tireless and constant efforts to fine tune our service standards – we are the first DMC in India to be ISO 9001:2015 certified – and to introduce new products or innovate existing ones. The company recognises its social responsibility and mandate for sustainability through its own CSR Foundation 'Shaping Lives'.

**WHAT**

**WE**

**OFFER**



**Customised 360 degrees experiences**



**Living Cultures**



**Tailor-made FIT**



**Special Interest offers**



**Customised Group Tours**



**Wildlife experiences**



**Guaranteed Departures**



**Volunteering and CSR**



**Incentive Programs**

**OUR**

**KEY**

**DIFFERENTIATORS**



## Strong Industry Links

We have a very strong relationship with the government and actively participate in various committees. Our strong relationship with both the ministry of tourism as well as state tourism boards enable us to market Indian tourism products more effectively. We provide active support to associations to further the cause of tourism.



## Best business practices

We guarantee total support for your operation by applying the Group's best practice standards, a crisis management procedure, a toll free emergency number 24X7 along with an elaborate health & safety system based on the strict UK norms.



## Key Account Managers

Our company is market driven with our client dedicated key account management teams that specialise in various languages and caters to the specific needs of our clients. Our teams are well versed in French, German, Spanish, Italian and Russian.



## Modern transport fleet

We boast our modern and GPS fitted fleet of transport pan-India. This ensures safety of all our guests at any given time. To provide seamless connectivity to your clients, we provide Wi-Fi in every vehicle.



## Office Network

We have an elaborate network of owned offices across the country which gives us access to the entire country at any given time. Our network of offices enables us to maintain high standards of service delivery and flexibility and quality as well as scout for innovative products.



## Multi-pronged approach

We offer multi-pronged commercial support by offering tools running across various media– from our in-house tourism magazine called Inspiring Journeys to a more interactive medium such as specialised websites. We leverage from our presence in the digital space as well as from one on one interaction.



## Leveraging group strength

We have the advantage to leverage the group strength as we are a part of one of the largest DMC businesses in the world covering more than 40 countries globally.



## Continuous learning

We provide **continuous training** to our staff and take great care while selecting our **guides** and **drivers**. Once selected, they receive training with regular refresher courses and they are appraised on their knowledge on customer service and new procedures.



## Extensive buying power

We have one of the largest contracting powers in the industry and have the advantage of leveraging that for best rates in the market. Le Passage to India contracts for approximately 500,000 room nights per annum covering more than 3000 hotels across pan-India.



## Operational excellence

Our operations teams are one of the powerhouses of the company and we pride ourselves in providing the best and consistent service to all our clients across the country. We offer **24 hour concierge service** year round which is available across the country. We are now **ISO 9001:2015 certified**.



## CSR Initiatives

We are the only company in India that started a CSR initiative and the only company that has a travel foundation, Le Passage Travel Foundation. We have a flagship project called Project Arman that gives children of trash pickers a real opportunity to build a career.



## Product leadership

We are constantly innovating to provide the best products in the market. Our dedicated product development team and our Pan India office network work together to continuously create and scout for new innovative products. We offer a wide array of products through specialised platforms such as luxury, wildlife and adventure, meetings and incentives, golf and cruises.



## Insurance cover

We are the only company in India that offers insurance cover for its customers worth US\$ 1.1 million.

**OUR REACH IN INDIA**

**AND INDIAN**

**OCEAN REGION**



OUR OFFICE

NETWORK



As a premier DMC in the region, we earnestly contribute to the activities of associations that promote tourism in the country. We are also a member of trade bodies that address macro issues that affect the growth of tourism.

Active member



**STRONG**

**ASSOCIATIONS**





Just a taste of  
our fresh travel ideas  
in INDIA

## Andaman & Nicobar Islands



Enter into a unique world, with a rich and pristine ecosystem, where tribal communities virtually untouched by modern life provide a link to our ancient past as they are rich historical and anthropological narrative. One of the most remote areas of the world and yet the safest destination in India. The Andaman Islands are an ideal place to relax, to forget worldly worries in its natural splendours AND THUS AN IDEAL EXTENSION TO ANY INDIAN ROUNDTRIP EXPERIENCE. The best beach in Asia “Radha Nagar Beach”, is a perfect place for water sports and under-water explorations, with an active volcano and a resplendent rainforest to trek in, the islands offer many opportunities for the adventure lovers. The indigenous communities are protected by law and not accessible for tourism.

Today the Andaman & Nicobar Islands create a differentiation potential for any India specialist as they haven't been put onto the distribution map yet.



## Travel to Hampi crossing Western Ghats by train

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A dazzling Hindu capital devastated by a six-month Muslim siege in the second half of the sixteenth century, leaving behind ruins of the stucco structures, monolithic deities, crumbling houses and abandoned temples - Hampi, is the fascinating remains of a once glorious city in a serene riverside setting that still has an air of magic lingering on, making it one of the most remarkable sites of India.

It is a 26 kms stretch of surreal landscape of big and small brown boulders and leafy banana fields. Hampi is a village in northern Karnataka located within the ruins of Vijayanagara, the former capital of the Vijayanagara Empire. It was traditionally known as Pampakshetra of Kishkindha and that is where the history of the boulders started. According to the Hindu epic- Ramayana, Kishkindha was ruled by the monkey kings Bali and Sugriva and their ambassador, Hanuman-the Monkey God. The unpredictably-placed rocks – some balanced in perilous arches, others heaped in colossal, hill-sized piles – are said to have been flung down by their armies in a show of strength.





# Hampi – A journey back in time

EASY☆☆☆☆☆



## ROUTE

○→○ Bangalore > Srirangapatna > Mysore > Sravanabelagola > Chikmaglur >  
○ ○ Hospet > Hampi > badami > Goa

## DURATION

10 Days  
9 Nights

## SEASON

October  
to April

## ACTIVITY

10 Hours

This tour covers the beautiful state of Karnataka for its historical town & cities such as Mysore, Chikmaglur, Hospet & Badami- each of them well known for various attractions that are architectural marvels. Our focus however will be on Hampi that we will explore through four different walks that have been specially crafted. Other highlights of the program include Somnathpur a village famous for its splendid and grand Keshava temple; Srirangapatna- a rocky island formed by Cauvery river and famous for Sri Ranganathaswamy temple; Mysore- housing the opulent Mysore Palace, former seat of the ruling Wodeyar dynasty; Chikmaglur- known for its coffee plantations, extending up to the horizon, natural beauty



and a pleasant climate; Sravanabelagola - Jain pilgrimage site noted for its 17 meter monolithic statue of Lord Gomateshwara. Badami - the capital of the Chalukya Dynasty that ruled over the most parts of peninsular India. Situated at an average elevation of 1922 ft above the sea level at the mouth a ravine, it is tucked in between two rugged sandstone outcrops.

Hampi is one of the UNESCO World Heritage

Sites in India located near Hospet town in the state of Karnataka and this tour explore its glory in a unique way. Visit this beautiful civilization, now in ruins though, on 4 different walks that will bring you up close to its history, forgotten glory, heritage and mystery. In Hampi the vast stretches of boulder-strewn hills make the backdrop quite unique. Dotted around the hills and valleys are 500 plus monuments. Among them are beautiful

temples, ruins of palaces, remains of aquatic structures, ancient market streets, royal pavilions, bastions, royal platforms, treasury buildings... the list is practically endless. Hampi is a backpacker's paradise, the same way a pilgrim's delight. Here every turn is a surprise and every monument hides more than it reveals. The attractions here are a cluster of many zones and villages.

## SKETCH ITINERARY

**Day 01:** Bangalore – Srirangapatna- Mysore

**Day 02:** In Mysore – Visit the Mysore Palace, Vrindavan Gardens & Chamundeshwari Temple

**Day 03:** Mysore – Sravanabelagola- Chikmaglur

**Day 04:** In Chikmaglur – Visit the lush green coffee plantation hills

**Day 05:** Chikmaglur – Hospet via Tungbhadra Dam and Vittala Temple

**Day 06:** In Hampi

**Day 07:** In Hampi

**Day 08:** To badami- Visit the Badami Fort

**Day 09:** In Badami – Visit Aihole & Pattadakal temples.

**Day 10:** To Goa



## Walking Trails in Hampi:

Vithalapura Morning Walk is a 3 hour walk through the ancient market and the temples of Vithalapura – a Hampi suburb known for its temple pillars that make musical notes; Virupaksha (Evening) Trail is a leisurely 2 hour enlivening walk up the Hemakuta hill – home to many temples built across centuries and sacred to the Kings (Rayas) of Vijayanagara; The Raya Morning Trail is a 3.5 hour walk about the story of the Hampi royalty – the palaces they lived in, the temples where they worshiped and important city structures they built and worked in; Kishkinda Trek is a 3.5 hour riverside hike over the boulders as you journey into the mythical land of Kishkinda.

## Holi at Diggi Palace Jaipur, Rajasthan



A burst of colour, a shower of petals a smear of coloured powder, fill in the world with the joy of a drenched body soaked in the shades of the earth. At the small and resplendent Diggi Place, Holi is a much awaited affair. With drums and dancers, mounds of organic colour, tubs of water, with traditional munchies and drinks, the day is one to remember.

On the evening prior to Holi, the fires of Holika-Dahan (burning of Holika) destroyed evil and saved the good and righteous. As the story goes, the evil demon King Hiranyakashyup demanded to be worshiped by his people. When his son refused, he ordered him to be burnt in the lap of his sister Holika who had a boon to save her from fire. But the gods intervened and it was evil Holika who was burnt and so the process of eliminating evil began.

Don your whites and join us at Diggi Palace, to dance and play, for fun and frolic, as your clothes transform into an ever-changing canvas.



## Indian Wildlife Travel Experts IWTE Initiative



I.W.T.E. (Indian Wildlife Travel Experts) is an alliance of India's finest jungle lodges that along with our adventure and wildlife arm within Le Passage works together to build and promote wildlife tourism to India. The group works collectively to market India worldwide through its combined presence in select travel fairs and roadshows. Our objective is to present our customers the best wildlife product in India through a collection of excellent itineraries featuring our members. Besides safaris, the members of IWTE offer unique experiences which make a jungle odyssey complete and in line with what discerning travellers expect. Each member has been carefully selected – these are boutique lodges committed to responsible and ethical wildlife tourism – to feature in the prestigious alliance. It is a one-stop contact for you to find and build memorable safaris for your guests. IWTE believes in continuous research to highlight India's wildlife potential on the international wildlife tourism map, through education, workshops and blogs.







## ROUTE

Delhi > Amritsar > Dharamshala > Pragpur > Shimla > Delhi

## DURATION

11 Days  
10 Nights

## SEASON

All except  
monsoon

## ACTIVITY

3 Hours

### Day 01 Delhi - Amritsar

Upon arrival in Amritsar transfer to your hotel, and enjoy some time at leisure. After dinner experience one of the great traditions of the city, the 'putting to bed' (Palki) ceremony. Twice a day, the holy book of the Sikh faith, the Granth Sahib, is moved in a grand procession from a dedicated chamber in the Sikh Parliament to the Golden Temple, and back again. This mass daily veneration, during which long lines of worshippers take turns to shoulder the burden of a heavy palanquin containing the scriptures, is something to behold, hinting at the tremendous spirituality of Amritsar.

### Day 02 Amritsar

Morning, return to the Harmandir Sahib, or



Golden Temple, the holiest shrine of Sikhism. At its heart, set within a sacred pool, gleams the Hari Mandir (Divine Temple) - a postcard-perfect, gold-plated architectural jewel topped with intricate spires and cupolas, and decorated inside and out with verses from the Granth Sahib. This is truly one of the world's iconic places of worship, thankfully (like all Sikh temples) open to visitors. Explore vast temple complex, including community kitchens which provide free meals to 10,000 pilgrims every day.

Later visit the historic Jallianwala Bagh, scene of the 1919 Amritsar Massacre, one of the most tragic episodes of the British Raj. We also take some time to admire the Durgiana Hindu temple, which clearly takes its inspiration from the Golden Temple. Late afternoon excursion to the India/Pakistan border town of Wagah to witness the Changing of the Guard ceremony.

### Day 03 Amritsar – Dharamshala

Morning drive to Dharamshala, a small hill

station surrounded on three sides by snow-capped peaks. This delightful town owes its current fame (and its nickname, the 'little Lhasa of India') to one particular resident, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who chose it as a place of spiritual exile in 1960

#### **Day 04 Dharamshala**

A morning sightseeing tour of Dharamshala includes the Tibetan settlement, residence of the Dalai Lama, and the Norbulinka Institute, a registered trust dedicated to the preservation of Tibetan culture in literary and artistic forms. The afternoon is at leisure.

#### **Day 05 Dharamshala - Pragpur**

A morning tour to the ornamental heritage village of Pragpur by way of a Dharamshala tea plantation and tea factory, where you can see the plucking and processing of Kangra tea. In the afternoon, a walking tour of Pragpur's beautiful cobbled streets, lined with richly decorated traditional buildings, offers an engaging glimpse of a regal past.

#### **Day 06 Pragpur - Shimla**

Morning drive to Shimla, 'Queen of the Hills' and the summer capital during British rule in India (when it was known as Simla). In this idyllic retreat, 2,200m above sea level, temperatures averaged 15 to 20 degrees cooler than Delhi and the baking plains. Surrounded by pine, deodar, oak and rhododendron forests, through which whisper picturesque streams, all set against the snow-covered lower ranges of the Himalaya.

#### **Day 07 Shimla**

Echoes of empire still abound in Shimla, now the state capital of Himachal Pradesh- in its churches, libraries and grand colonial edifices such as the Viceregal Lodge. There is plenty to enjoy on the morning walking tour, including a visit to the Jakhu Temple, dedicated to Hanuman, the monkey god. The afternoon is at leisure to make your own discoveries in sublime Shimla.

#### **Day 08 Shimla**

A further day at leisure to do what the British did here from 1819 to 1947 - relax in the beautiful surroundings of Shimla.

#### **Day 09 Shimla - Kalka - Delhi**

A scenic rail journey aboard the Himalayan 'Toy Train' transports us from Shimla through the Shivalik ranges to the delightful hill town of Kandaghat. Dive to Kalka railway station to board the Shatabdi Express, bound for Delhi. Upon arrival, we transfer to the hotel.

#### **Day 10 Delhi**

Delhi is eight remarkable historic cities in one- grand capitals of various dynasties, and then the glittering jewel of the British Empire. An endlessly fascinating sightseeing day takes in the best of Delhi, 'Old' and 'New', from the intricately hand-carved 12th century Qutab Minar minaret to the graceful garden-tomb of Emperor Humayun, the architectural inspiration for the Taj Mahal, and the beautiful Hindu Birla Temple to the grand avenues and government buildings of Lutyens' New Delhi. We also visit Raj Ghat, the memorial to Mahatma Gandhi and the 17th century Jama Masjid, the largest mosque in India, which can accommodate a remarkable 25,000 worshippers.

#### **Day 11 Delhi - London**

Morning departure transfer to Delhi Airport for your flight to London



## Bespoke experiences crafted at

### À Ta Maison (ATM)



Don't be thrown by the playful and cheeky use of the abbreviated ATM. Elegant meals presented by your personal butler, nibbles created by chefs emerging from Michelin-starred kitchens of Europe, an exhaustively curated wine and malt list, and some of India's award-winning cocktails, will define your experience at ATM. A quiet spot in busy Central Delhi within the elegant neighbourhood of Sunder Nagar, a tree-lined lane leads up to an exclusive club, where luxury is redefined. The elegant reading room, office spaces, movies on rent, salon, changing rooms and a sun-deck along with a formal dining room and a bistro is what makes ATM unique. While the cuisine is essentially French with a British twist, the ATM crafts food tasting workshops also introduces the flavours of India, tea-tasting, musical events, fashion exhibits, documentary screening which make for a distinctive dining experience.



## Kachhpura: a village experience, Agra

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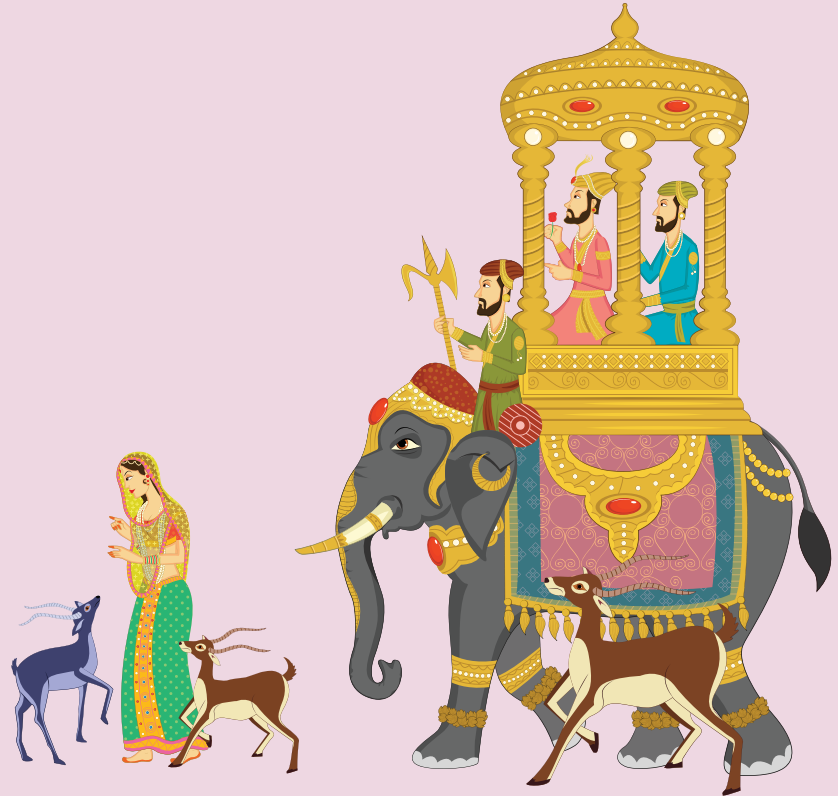
A picturesque village walk weaving together monuments from the Mughal era with the life of local communities, Kachhpura provides a unique experience. Meandering lanes decorated with Sanjhi art take us to ruins such as those of Humayun mosque, and the remnants of the astronomical observatory of which only the steps survive known as gyarah sisi. The central chowpal or village centre-place is where community issues get discussed and is the venue for entertainment and celebrations. Here, it also showcases the crafts of the villagers such as Agra's world famous footwear. Watch the skilled craftsmen and women at work producing encasings for the feet and other handicrafts such as cloth bags, pottery and henna tattoos. Local NGO's have done an admirable job of providing healthcare and sanitation projects, training women in gainfully using their skills and the youth in conducting tours. Enjoy local history and anecdotes from these community insiders. Observe the simplicity of local life and enjoy their hospitality right from the welcome to beverage and snacks prepared for you. Adding a final touch of beauty is the resplendent Mahtab Bagh (moonlit garden), the perfect place from which to savour the Taj.



## Miniature Paintings (Mewar school of art), Udaipur



The history of Rajasthan has been lovingly inscribed by the artists of the region in diverse styles particular to each region. Of all the historical traditions in Rajasthani painting, the Mewar School is the most distinguished school of Indian miniature paintings of the 17th and 18th centuries. Simple themes, attention to fine details and bold colours which tell tales of mythology, religion and regional history are characteristics of this most excellent art form. Whether as standalone paintings or as illustrations in manuscripts, these are certainly worth one's attention.



## Sajjangarh Trek, Udaipur



In the parched desert, monsoons are a much awaited relief. The Sajjangarh Palace was built atop a hill, facing the Fateh Sagar Lake, primarily to watch the monsoon clouds roll in. Erstwhile royals would get a panoramic view of their beloved lands kissed by the rains. The palace overlooks the sanctuary, which is a reserve for reptiles, tigers, nilgai, sambhar, deer, wild boar, hyenas, panthers, and jackals. It is popular for bird watching as well, and also serves as a starting point for an exhilarating trek through the magnificent country side. Our trek starts from Gorilla view point from where we will walk downhill in order to fully enjoy the vista offered by the scenic Aravali hills. We will cross an abandoned hunting lodge named Aodhi on our way before arriving at our destination, the Shiva Temple on the foothill.



## Mumbai by night

### Maharashtra

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This city of many facets that enjoys its status as a commercial capital by day, transforms itself from a flourishing centre of commerce and trade into a dazzling entertainment centre when the sun sets and the lights come on.

After dinner on board, you immerse yourselves into this Maximum City starting with a visit to the beautifully lit monuments Asiatic Society library, built in the Greco Roman style with eight Doric columns and thirty stone steps leading up to the Library and a good time to see Gateway of India. Your drive includes a look at a most remarkable railway station. Inspired by St. Pancras Station in London, the Victoria Terminus was built during Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee year.

Before returning to the pier, a final stop will be made at one of the city's trendy bars where you'll enjoy a nightcap before concluding what will surely be a memorable evening.





## Dabbawalas with a twist

### Mumbai, Maharashtra

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Dabbawala meaning a person who carries a container, is the term given to the thousands of men responsible for transporting and delivering around 200,000 lunch boxes of freshly cooked food to the city's office workers every day.

This unique concept was started to meet the needs of British rulers. However, it's now continued on to help office goers who can't get home for lunch. Witness this incredible system in operation at Churchgate station from around 11.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m., as the dabbawalas unload the lunch boxes from the trains and prepare to head to their customer's offices. Four thousand five hundred semi-literate dabbawalas collect and deliver 175,000 packages within hours.

Make your clients join the dabbawalas for a day, let them follow the experience from the home of an office worker, where they place a note in the tiffin box whilst the housewife prepares the meal and see the right lunch box with the message being delivered at the husband's workplace, where all have a typical India dish and chat.



## New Hotel Features

### WelcomHeritage Haveli, Dharampura, Delhi

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The Haveli Dharampura with its distinctive features is attributed as Late Mughal style though parts of it has the influence of the 20th century architecture. During Mughal and late Mughal period, a large numbers of havelis were built by the courtiers. This Haveli in particular dates to 1887 AD and was originally designed to have mixed use pattern i.e. both residential and commercial.

The name Dharampura comes from the word “Dharam” – religion, likely because of the large number of small and big religious institutions including Jain and Hindu Temples. The building is situated in close proximity (two minute walk) from the historical Jama Masjid. The surroundings of the Haveli still bear the evidences of history through its physical features. Brackets, balconies, jharokas, multifoliated arched gateway, carved sandstone facades, wooden doorway from the virtual of the approach.

### Rajmahal Palace Jaipur

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Rajmahal makes a statement where style and symmetry dominate. It is both a classical and a contemporary home within the walls of a royal palace. From first being conceived as a pleasure garden for a favourite queen, this property, became the British Residency, and then finally reverted back to being the private home of His Highness Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II of Jaipur.

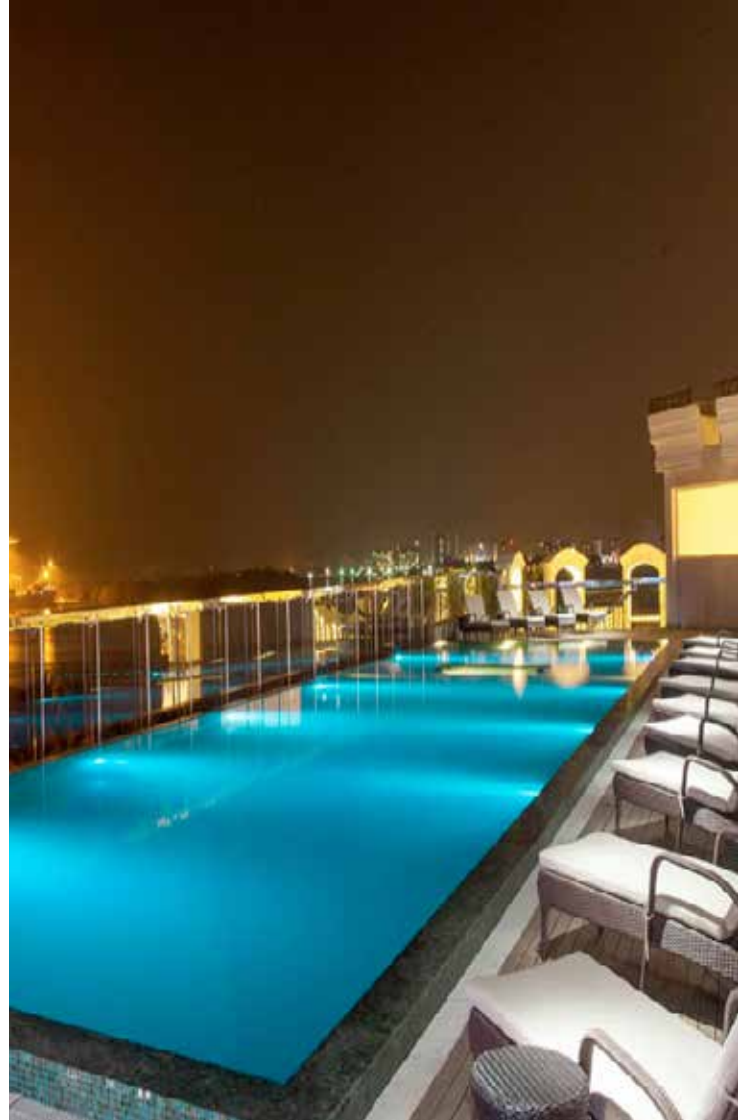
One of the oldest and most treasured palaces in the ‘Pink City’ of Jaipur. This exquisite royal palace is located at the heart of Rajasthan’s bustling capital. An enclosed oasis, secluded in verdant gardens, Rajmahal Palace is the repository of a celebrated history. Tall bay windows, mirrored doors and meticulously appointed interiors allow guests to be transported to a new era of 21st century regal living. Conceived by H.H Sawai Jai Singh II as a private palace, a garden retreat, built for his beloved wife, Chandra Kanwar Ranawat ji, the daughter of the Maharana of Mewar, Rajmahal Palace has stood witness to over two hundred and fifty years of history.

### Fragrant Nature Kochi

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Fragrant Nature, Kochi—a five star boutique hotel—features contemporary styled rooms with magnificent views of the harbour. Located in the erstwhile office of East India Company, the majestic facade with a clock tower is a landmark. The hotel features period trompe-l’œil art work by two popular English artists in the lobby—emphasising importance of art element in the boutique design. Loose yourself to the breathtaking luxury, underlined by world-class hospitality and service.

Fragrant Nature’s accommodation offers premium and authentic experiences. The exquisitely designed guest rooms - both elegant and spacious - are spread on three floors. Most of the guest rooms have an excellent harbour view, facilitated with all modern fittings and comforts. You will find an imaginative and contemporary design with an invigorating expansive view of the harbour. Coupled with a truly comprehensive range of amenities, ensure your total comfort and care.



## Corporate Social Responsibility

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The Le Passage Travel Foundation, also called Shaping Lives is a CSR initiative created with intent to form a bridge between your clients and society. It is an attempt to give something back to society through carefully scrutinised and selected NGOs. Our CSR initiative is an attempt to nurture children, rehabilitate old, marginalised and abused as well as actively pursue programmes on animal welfare. Preserving and protecting our fragile ecosystem and endangered wildlife is also one of the causes we espouse.

### **Vision**

A smile on every child's face and their families

### **Mission**

To facilitate change for the less privileged through the travel industry

### **Values**

Through our responsible leadership role in the travel industry, we wish to become pioneers of change in the lives of the less privileged



## Rehabilitating children of waste pickers

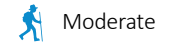
### DURATION



### SEASON



### ACTIVITY



Project Arman is Shaping Lives key CSR project across India for Le Passage to India, to ensure a no child in trash in the Nizamudin area. The project is located in the vicinity of the famous Sufi shrine, the Dargah of Hazrat Nizamuddin, close to Humayun's Tomb. The project, totally financed by the Foundation, appreciates that hundreds of poor children must earn their livelihoods but seeks to phase them out of this highly hazardous work of collecting waste. It currently offers non-formal education, house visits, admission into mainstream schools, health check-ups, clean drinking water, daily health supplements and educational assistance to over 160 children of the waste-pickers' community. Your clients can teach students arts and crafts, computers, undertake English and story-telling sessions, engage in outdoor



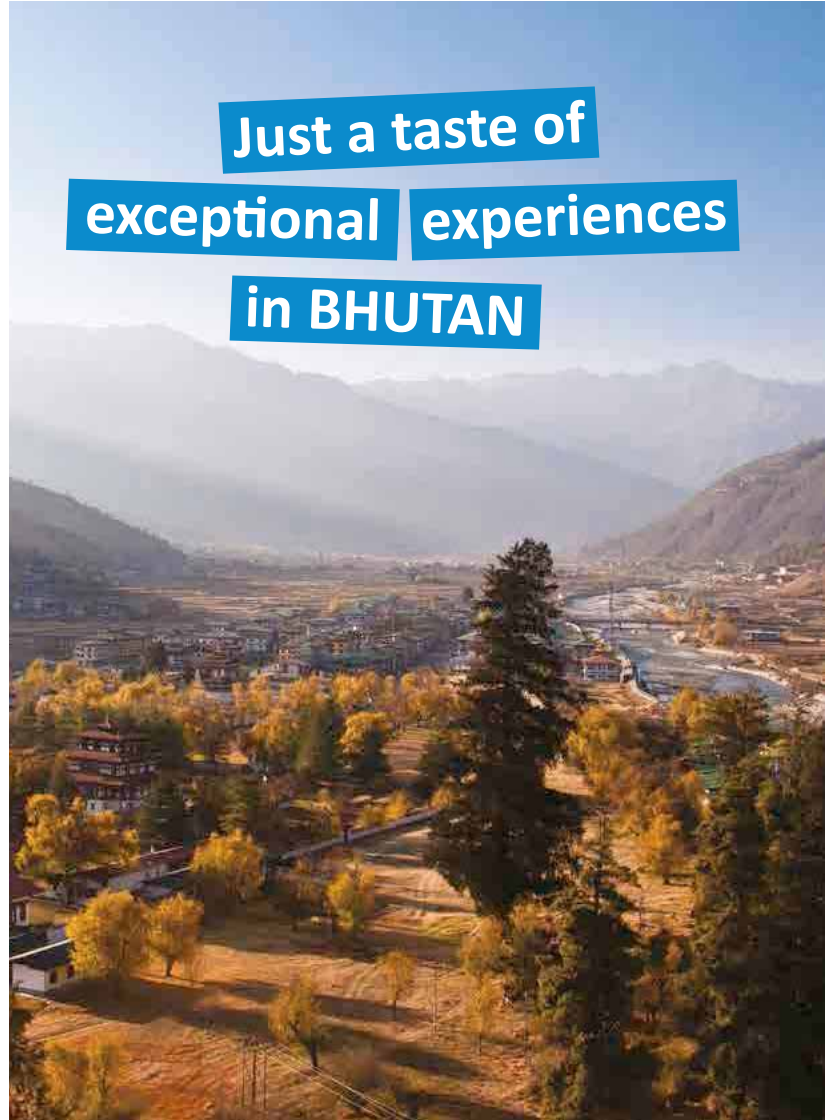
activity to include picnic and games outings or render experience if you are a re-cycling or sustainability expert.

Visiting hours: Between 1330 hrs to 1730 hrs Monday to Friday.





Just a taste of  
exceptional experiences  
in BHUTAN



## Meeting with Monks

An interaction session with monks can be arranged at hotel in Paro or at monastery depending on the convenience of monks. During meeting elaborated discussion on various aspects of beliefs and spiritual practices largely based on teachings attributed to Gautama Buddha are discussed.

A meeting with monks is subject to prior acceptance by monk, donation for the welfare of monastery is expected in lieu of such meeting.



## Bird watching tour

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Despite its small size, about 770 species of birds have been recorded in Bhutan and it is identified as the centre of 221 global endemic bird areas. Within country's borders there is an extraordinary range of habitats, from some of the Himalaya's most extensive and least disturbed subtropical forests, upwards, through truly exquisite warm and at higher elevations, cool broad leaved forests to towering evergreen forests of fir, hemlock and spruce. The Eastern Himalayas are notably moister and much warmer than areas further to the west and as a consequence, the tree line occurs at much higher elevation and above this tree line are extensive alpine pastures which from late spring to early autumn present one of the greatest botanical spectacles on our planet.

The entire country is bisected by a well maintained paved road, permitting relatively easy access to habitats from 150 to 3750m. One of the important features of Bhutan is that birding, especially in mid to late spring (late March to mid May) is good virtually anywhere below 3,030m. Unlike many parts of Asia one is not obliged to seek out a park or reserve or remnant patch of 'good looking' habitat, since any stop, even in the midst farmland, exciting birds are visible.





## TENTATIVE FESTIVAL DATES FOR 2017

SL#	FESTIVAL	PLACE	DATES
1	Domkhar Tshechu	Domkhar, Chummi, Bumthang	5th – 7th May
2	Ura Yakchoe	Ura Lhakhang, Bumthang	7th – 10th May
3	Nimalung Tshechu	Nimalung Dratshang, Chummi, Bumthang	1st –3rd July
4	Kurjey Tshechu	Kurjey Lhakhang, Choekhor, Bumthang	3rd July
5	Haa Summer Festival	Haa	5th July
6	Mushroom Festival	Genekha, Thimphu	15th –16th August
7	Masutaki Mushroom Festival	Ura, Bumthang	23rd –24th August
8	Tour Of The Dragon (Bicycle Race)	Bumthang To Thimphu	2nd September
9	Thimphu Drubchen	Tashi Chhodzong, Thimphu	26th – 29th September
10	Wangdue Tshechu	Tencholing Army Ground, Wangduephodrang	28th – 30th September
11	Gangtey Tshechu	Gangtey Gonpa, Phobjikha, Wangduephodrang	3rd–5th October
12	Tamshing Phala Chhoepa	Tamshing Lhakhang, Choekhor, Bumthang	29th September –1st October
13	Thimphu Tshechu	Tashi Chhodzong, Thimphu	30th September –2nd October
14	Thangbi Mani	Tangbi Lhakhang, Choekor, Bumthang	4th –6th October
15	Jumolhari Mountain Festival	Dangochong, Thimphu	14th –15th October

## TENTATIVE FESTIVAL DATES FOR 2017-18

SL#	FESTIVAL	PLACE	DATES
16	Jakar Tshechu	Jakar Dzong, Choekhor, Bumthang	29th – 31st October
17	Dechenphu Tshechu	Dechenphu Lhakhang, Thimphu	30th October
18	Jambay Lhakhang Drup	Jambay Lhakhang, Choekhor, Bumthang	3rd – 7th November
19	Prakhar Duchhoed	Prakar Lhakhang, Chummi, Bumthang	4th – 6th November
20	Black Necked Crane Festival	Gangtey Gonpa, Phobjikha, Wangduephodrang	11th November
21	Mongar Tshechu	Mongar Dzong, Mongar	26th – 28th November
22	Pemagatshel Tshechu	Pemagatshel Dzong, Pemagatshel	26th – 28th November
23	Trashigang Tshechu	Trashigang Dzong, Trashigang	27th – 29th November
24	Jambay Lhakhang Singye Cham	Jambay Lhakhang, Choekhor, Bumthang	3rd December
25	Nalakar Tshechu	Ngaa Lhakhang, Choekhor, Bumthang	3rd – 5th December
26	Druk Wangyel Tshechu	Dochula, Thimphu	13th December
27	Trongsa Tshechu	Trongsa Dzong, Trongsa	26th – 28th December
28	Lhuentse Tshechu	Lhuentse Dzong, Lhuentse	26th – 28th December
29	Nabji Lhakhang Drup	Nabji Lhakhang, Nabji, Trongsa	2nd – 4th January 2018

## Thimphu Festival

Festivals or Tshechu in local term is a religious event celebrated every year in various monasteries, temples and fortresses across the Kingdom of Bhutan. The dates and duration of the festivals vary from one district to another but they always take place on or around the 19th day of the lunar calendar corresponding to the birthday of Guru Padmasambhava, an 8th century Buddhist scholar.

During Tshechus, the dances are performed by monks as well as laymen wearing ornate costumes and masks; the each aspect of dance has a symbolic meaning mostly depicting events from the life of Guru Padmasambhava. It is widely believed that one gains merit by attending any of these festivals. Some of the festivals are observed to purify the souls and ward off evil spirit. Such high spirited sacred events are conducted & choreographed by fully ordained religious heads.

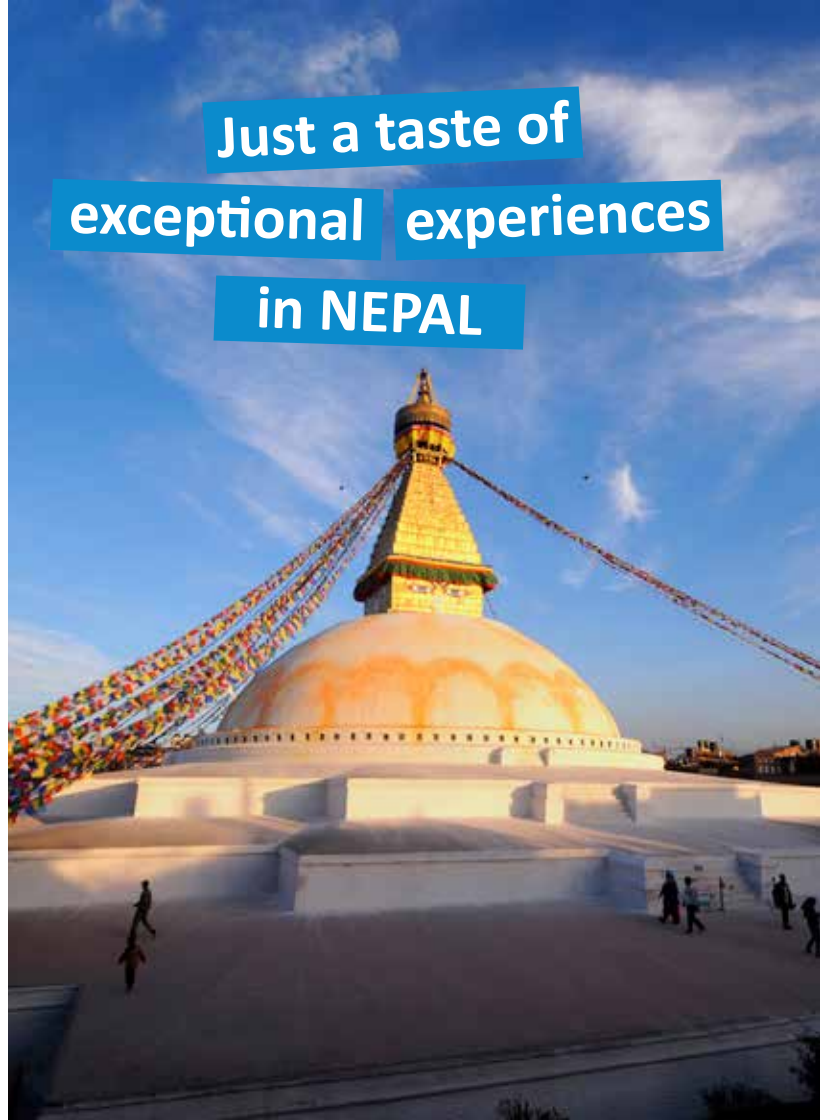
The Thimphu Tshechus, Paro Tshechus & Jambey Lakhang are among the biggest in terms of participation and audience. Most Tshechus also feature the unfurling of a Thongdrel (or thangka) – an embroidered painting. Thongdrols are especially impressive examples of Buddhist art and are considered so sacred that simply seeing a Thongdrol is said to cleanse the viewer of sin.

Moreover, it is also a yearly social gathering where the Bhutanese people, dressed in all their finery, come together to rejoice, taking a break from their everyday life.





Just a taste of  
exceptional experiences  
in NEPAL



## Blessing by Tibetan Lama

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### **Ceremonies & Blessings:**

Rinpoche or incarnate Lamas have long been offering a variety of blessings and ceremonies for the well-being and benefit of individuals, the community, and all sentient beings.

### **The Blessings include the following:**

House/Land Blessing - This is a blessing to promote the health, peacefulness, and productivity of house and land.

Blessing For Children - This is a blessing to promote fecundity.

Blessing Of Children. -This is a blessing that promotes the safety, health and auspicious development of children.

Anniversary Blessing - This is a blessing to commemorate an event or special occasion.

Pet Blessing - This is a blessing for the sentient beings that people adopt as a loving part of their lives.



### **The Ceremonies are:**

Marriage Ceremony, Long Life Ceremony - This ceremony promotes long life for the sponsor and family, as well as invoking the great compassion of the Buddhas to bless and augment the vitality of all living beings.

Special Long Life Ceremony - This is a unique and powerful way to magnetize all vital forces to assist the recovery and well-being of individuals in need of such methods.

Tibetan Buddhist Funeral Ceremony - This is to promote the enlightenment and good migration of the departed person's mental continuum.

## Dinner at Dwarikas restaurant in Kathmandu

One of the best places for Nepali food is the Krishnarpan Restaurant at Dwarika's Hotel, east of the centre near the Ring Rd. The atmosphere is superb and the organic food gets consistent praise from diners. To spend an evening at Krishnarpan, the Nepali specialty restaurant at Dwarika's, is to take a culinary journey through the fascinating terrains and cuisines of Nepal. Serving the finest Nepali of Nepali flavors, Krishnarpan is a slow dining experience reminiscent of the ritual feasts enjoyed by the Kathmandu Valley's Newari community.

Set Meals range from six to twenty two courses and are prepared using the freshest vegetables from the Dwarika's own farms. The courses are offered on traditional brass and earthenware, and served by hostesses representing Nepal's diverse ethnic communities.



## Swayambhunath Stupa

The Swayambhunath Stupa is one of the crowning glories of Kathmandu Valley architecture. This perfectly proportioned monument rises through a whitewashed dome to a gilded spire, from where four faces of the Buddha stare out across the valley in the cardinal directions. The nose like squiggle below the piercing eyes is actually the Nepali number ek (one), signifying unity, and above is a third eye signifying the all-seeing insight of the Buddha. The site was shaken severely by the 2015 earthquake but the main stupa sustained only superficial damage.

The entire structure of the stupa is symbolic – the white dome represents the earth, while the 13-tiered, beehive like structure at the top symbolizes the 13 stages that humans must pass through to achieve nirvana.

The base of the central stupa is ringed by prayer wheels embossed with the sacred mantra om mani padme hum ('hail to the jewel in the lotus').

Pilgrims circuiting the stupa spin each one as they pass by. Fluttering above the stupa are thousands of prayer flags, with similar mantras, which are said to be carried to heaven by the winds.

**Exclusive:** *We will ensure butter lamps are available so that you can light and place them at the main entry of the Stupa. It is believed in the Eastern philosophies that lighting the pathway to God for the pilgrims making their journey it is earning good karma.*

*After visiting the stupa, you will enjoy a tea with the monks on the viewing platforms nearby. Listen to their stories and admire the stunning views of Kathmandu valleys while sipping from the soothing and flavorful tea.*

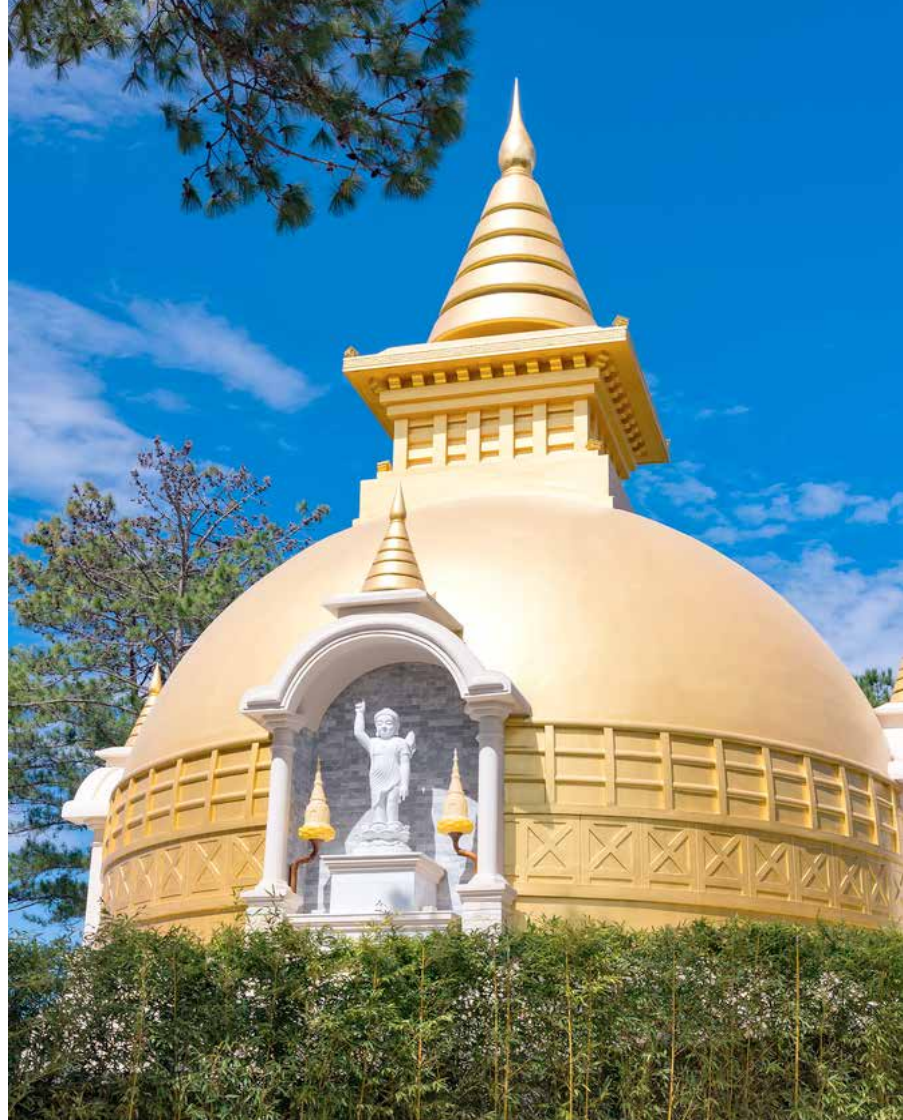


## Visit Kopan Monastery

The Kopan Monastery is a gated community of Buddhist monks found on a hilltop north of Boudhanath. Founded by Lamas Thubten Yeshe and Zopa Rinpoche in the early 1970s, the Monastery houses 360 monks in grounds which include an enormous Bodhi tree, the Chenrezig gumpa (temple), statues, prayer wheels, prayer flags (at the top of Kopan Hill) and the colourful Thousand Buddha Relic Stupa.

Those visiting should expect to replace the hubbub of central Kathmandu with morning chanting, an evening pooja/puja ceremony (involving pageantry and traditional Tibetan music made from cymbals and large horns), study, silence, peace and love. The Monastery also provides a panoramic views over the Kathmandu valley, and has an immaculately kept and beautiful garden.

**Exclusive:** *Take an introductory lecture on Buddhism and learn its fundamental principles from a Western teacher. He will tell you about the different types of meditation that can be used to calm the mind and will also teach you how to apply Buddhism principles to your daily life.*





## Everest Mountain Flight

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Also known as the 'roof of the world', Mount Everest is the world's highest peak. Standing majestically among the other impressive peaks of the mighty Himalayas it is a special privilege to be able to scale this particular peak for any climber. Fortunately for you, you do not have to make the actual trek. This morning, you take instead a comfortable mountain flight up into the mountains and get a glimpse, up close and personal, of the Himalayas and of course Mount Everest.

Sit back, buckle your seatbelt and get ready to be awed...

***Exclusive:** We will invite a renowned mountaineer to accompany you before and after the flight and answer all your questions. He will also speak about the intricacies of climbing to the world's greatest heights and the role of the indispensable Sherpas – an ethnic group from the most mountainous region of Nepal without whom no expedition is possible.*



## Dhulikhel - a slice of village life

This is a Newari town situated 30 km and it boasts fantastic views of the Himalayas. The spectacular snow capped mountains seen from Dhulikhel must be one of the most stunning panoramas anywhere in the world. Dhulikhel is popular for its natural beauty and ancient traditions.

You will get a taste of village life-quiet, unhurried and surrounded by mountains and natural beauty. Wander down the traffic-free streets of Dhulikhel's old medieval town and admire the traditional Newari houses with beautiful examples of Newari craftsmanship carved into the doors and windows - you get a sense of being in a different world and time!

***Exclusive:** After the visit through the village and the old medieval town of Dhulikhel, enjoy a relaxing high tea with savory samosas and lose yourself again in the astounding beauty of the area.*



**Thank You,**  
We look forward to serving you



**Maria do Carmo Camacho**



**Arvind Bhatia**



Le Passage  
to India

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