



ITINERARY

RSAA 2017 India Tour to
Gujarat and Rajasthan



18th April 2016

Dear reader

Thank you so much for expressing your interest in the 2017 RSAA tour to Gujarat and Rajasthan.

We are very lucky to have Digvijay Ranawat (known as DV) confirmed as tour leader and Dr Rosaleen Llewellyn-Jones as our guest lecturer who will accompany the group throughout the tour. Between us all and our trusted ground agent in India you will be extremely well looked after throughout your stay in India.

Please also find below a copy of the itinerary and the relevant pricing. All meals are included from the evening of the arrival day in Bhuj to the breakfast on the departure day from Udaipur. Bottled water will be provided with all meals and on transportation.

It is important to note that twin rooms will be on request at the time of booking and are subject to confirmation. It is even more important to note that there is an obligatory supplement for those wishing to twin share for Devi Garh, since no twin rooms are available there, thus meaning single rooms will need to be booked there for those requiring twin beds. The Lake Palace also has very limited twin rooms and therefore the same may apply here depending on availability at the time (this should be no problem for those booking early enough).

Please note that Prohibition exists in Gujarat and liquor is not sold publicly. Duty-free allowances can be carried and liquor can be purchased at bonded stores after applying for a drinking permit on-site. Essentially I just want to make you all aware of this but enjoying a drink won't be a problem for those who wish to! Please note also that Haveli Brajbhushanjee is a vegetarian establishment and guests must carry their own alcohol.

If you have any special dietary requirements please discuss this with me before confirming your place.

In order to fully confirm your place on the tour a deposit will be required. Since we need a minimum number of people to operate the tour, please note that this deposit will be non-refundable once taken.

Tailor-made tour extensions, both pre and post are also possible and requests very welcome! Please just ask me.

Flights will be on booked on request. We are including the internal flights in the international tickets as the fare is better than booking London to Mumbai and then separate flights internally. If you wish to book your own flights to Mumbai, there is no problem and if you would like us to add on the internal flights only we can also do that. We are not holding a group option on the flights since last year many people chose to take different flights. Therefore the flight price is only confirmed once held but we expect it to be around £650 per person in

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Economy from London. Business Class is available upon request. The plan is to book Jet Airways but if anyone prefers to book a different flight, I am happy to assist.

If you have any questions at all or know anyone else that would be interested in joining the tour, please do let me know.

For those who have already expressed an interest and have their name on the list, I shall hold the places until Wednesday 11th May, after which I shall be requesting deposits of 30% and booking flights as appropriate. If you are reading this and are interested in joining the tour, please email or call me as soon as possible so that I can add your name to the list.

I look forward to hearing from you all.

With my best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Davina Roberts
The Explorations Company



Fraser House, Southrop, Gloucestershire, GL7 3NR, UK

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GUJARAT & RAJASTHAN



YOUR PLANS ARE BEING CO-ORDINATED BY:

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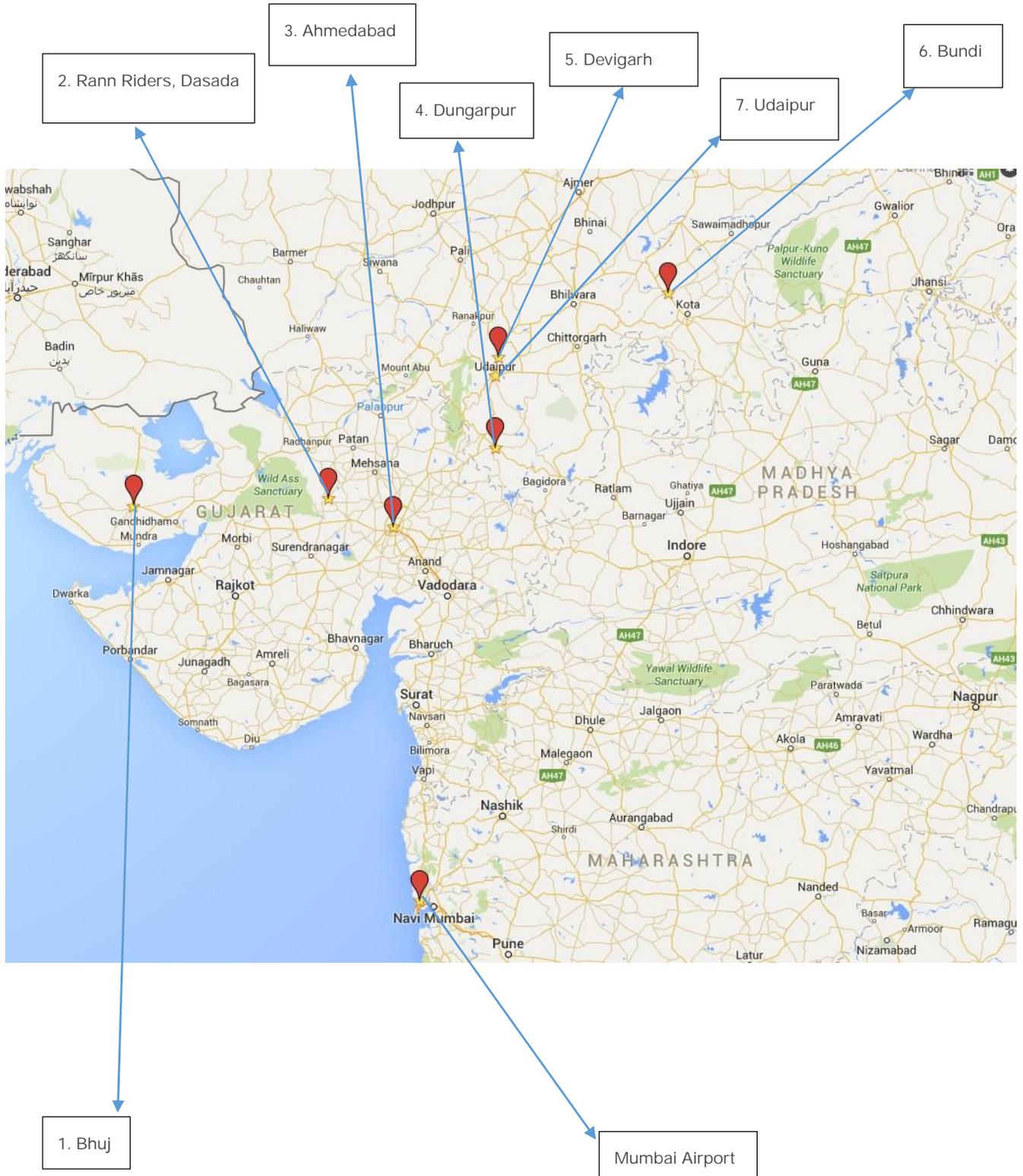
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INDIA

India is a vast country roughly divided into several regions. The largest differences lie between the northern and southern regions. The former offers predominantly a plethora of medieval Mughal and Rajput architecture, ancient cities, deserts, camel safaris, heritage accommodations, tiger parks, Buddhism and the snowcapped peaks of the Himalayas. The latter is rich with beautiful beaches, Ayurvedic spas, ancient Dravidian/Hindu temples, cosmopolitan colonial coastal towns and a generally more laid-back atmosphere.



Gujarat & Rajasthan -- With crenulated forts and impregnable palaces that rise like giant fairy-tale sets above dusty sun-scorched plains and shimmering lakes, Rajasthan -- literally "land of princes" -- epitomises the romance of India. Whether you choose to linger in the untainted medieval atmosphere of little towns like Bundi and Shahpura, browse the bumper-to-bumper shops in Jaipur, track tigers in Ranthambhore, overnight on the lake in the beautiful city of Udaipur or explore the world's oldest living fort in Jaisalmer, you will want to see it all. Meanwhile, Gujarat, immediately south of Rajasthan, is where you can explore a number of intriguing ancient sights in and around the capital city of Ahmedabad, including the magnificent Modhera Sun Temple and the 900 beautiful Jain temples atop the holy mount of Shatrunjaya. You can venture into the remote, arid, barren, bleak and beautiful province of Kutch, a part of Gujarat where you'll encounter several distinctive ethnic tribes, including the nomadic Rabari people who are known for their intricate embroidery and ornamental adornments.



ABBREVIATED ITINERARY

TUESDAY 07 FEBRUARY 2017

Depart UK on overnight flight to Mumbai.

WEDNESDAY 08 FEBRUARY 2017

Arrive Mumbai and connect to Bhuj. Met on arrival and transferred to your accommodation.

Four nights Kutch Safari Lodge Air-Conditioned Cottage Full Board Basis.

THURSDAY 09 FEBRUARY 2017

Morning drive out to Mandvi. Lunch at Beach Camp at Mandvi Palace. Return to Bhuj for Bhuj sightseeing. Later visit Bhujodi.

FRIDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2017

During the day visit textile and leather handicraft centres, possible meeting with Judy Frater.

Evening meal in a traditional Bhuj home.

SATURDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2017

Day spent in the Chari Dand grasslands enjoying wildlife and rural culture.

SUNDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2017

Driven to Rann Riders Dasada (6 hours/267km) with stops at Arjrakpur and Dhamadka.

Late afternoon wildlife / safari drive.

Two nights Rann Riders Air-Conditioned Cottage Full Board Basis.

MONDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2017

Excursion to Patan and Modhera (162km round trip/1.5 hours each way plus stop at Modhera).

Optional late afternoon wildlife / safari drive.

TUESDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2017

Depart Dasada for Ahmedabad with stop at Lothal. Dasada to Lothal 116km/2 hours. Lothal to Ahmedabad 77km/1-1.5 hours.

Four nights Lemon Tree Premier Ahmedabad Superior Room Full Board Basis.

WEDNESDAY 15 FEBRUARY 2017

Early morning walk through the old city. Back to the hotel for breakfast. After breakfast head out to Sarkhej. Return to Ahmedabad for sightseeing. Afternoon, drive north to see the 15th century Adalaj Vav stepwell. En-route on the return visit to the Gandhi Ashram at Sabarmati.

THURSDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2017

Morning visit to the Calico Museum. Today also visit Shreyas Folk Art Museum and the National Institute of Design.

Evening visit to old city markets

FRIDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2017

Full day excursion to Champaner (2 hours each way/146km).

SATURDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2017

Driven to Dungarpur (4 hours/175km). Afternoon visit to Juna Mahal Palace.

One night Udai Bilas Palace Standard Room (run of the house) Full Board Basis.

SUNDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2017

Driven to Devigarh Fort, Delwara (3 hours/140km)

Two nights RAAS Devigarh Palace Suite Full Board Basis

MONDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2017

Morning excursion to Eklingji and Nagada. Afternoon at leisure.

TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2017

Driven to Bundi (4-5 hours/262km) stopping at Chittorgarh

Two nights Haveli Brajbhushanjee Deluxe Room Full Board Basis

WEDNESDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2017

Sightseeing Bundi

THURSDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2017

Driven to Udaipur (5 hours/280km).

Farwell dinner

One night Lake Palace Udaipur Palace Room Full Board Basis

FRIDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2017

Driven to the airport. Depart Udaipur.

DETAILED ITINERARY

TUESDAY, 07 FEBRUARY 2017

Day 1 / London – Mumbai

Overnight flight from London to Mumbai (connecting to Bhuj)

WEDNESDAY, 08 FEBRUARY 2017

Day 2 / Mumbai – Bhuj

Transit through Mumbai airport to domestic terminal to connect on the afternoon flight to Bhuj. Met in Bhuj and transferred to your hotel.

Stay four nights at Kutch Safari Lodge, Bhuj.

Kutch Safari Lodge

On the outskirts of Bhuj, in the Rann of Kutch lies The Kutch Safari Lodge, an excellent base for excursions into the deeper landscape of the white desert, and to experience the unique lifestyle and beautiful traditional Banni Villages known for their handicrafts. The resort is located 14 km from Bhuj on the Khavada road, by the Rudramata Dam.

The cottages here are rustic with thatched roofs and whitewashed walls. All are en-suite and have air-conditioning. The restaurant is a central dining room in a pavilion style building complete with a veranda for al fresco dining.

THURSDAY, 09 FEBRUARY 2017

Day 3 / Mandvi & Bhuj

In the morning, drive out to Mandvi (102 km roundtrip/1 hour drive each way), the port town looking over the Arabian Sea that has existed since ancient times, exporting/importing merchandise from the Kutch to markets in the Middle East. Not as modernised as the rest of Gujarat, some of the old aura remains in its buildings, markets and the Vinay Vilas Palace. After lunch at the Beach Camp at Mandvi Palace, drive back to Bhuj.

In the afternoon, visit the pretty mediaeval town of Bhuj.

Although now a bustling busy town, Bhuj still retains many of the beautiful historic monuments that made it one of Western India's prettiest cities. Much of Bhuj was destroyed by the earthquake of January 2001 but many of the famous monuments remain.





Aina Mahal

The Aina Mahal palace, or “Hall of Mirrors” was built during the flamboyant rule of Lakhpattji in the middle of the 18th century. The palace was designed in a mixed Indo-European style and with its beautiful carved doorways, elaborate window boxes and balconies it is worth exploring.

Prag Mahal

Prag Mahal is a palace commissioned by King Pragmalji in the 1860s, designed by Colonel Henry Saint Wilkins in the Italian Gothic style and built in the middle of Bhuj next to the Aina Mahal. While little about it may seem Indian, there are elements; see if you can find them. In the courtyard behind the palace, there is a small Hindu temple with very nicely carved stonework. You can visit the main palace halls as well as climb stairs of the 45m bell tower for an exhilarating view of the city.

Later, visit Bhujodi -a major hub for the woven handicrafts of Kutch.



Bhujodi

A small town just 8 km southeast of Bhuj, Bhujodi is a major textile centre of Kutch, with the vast majority of the 1200 inhabitants involved in textile handicraft production. Here you can meet weavers, tie-dye artists and block printers, most of whom belong to the Vankar community. Many will let you watch them work; just ask around.

About a kilometre from Bhujodi is the Ashapura Crafts Park, set up by a corporate non-profit wing to help artisans display and sell their work and organizes dance and music events on weekends. Shrujan is a local non-profit set up 40 years ago to allow women to market their work better and earn a better living from it. The Shrujan campus is an interesting place to visit, with embroidery exhibits, a production centre and excellent examples of local architecture with environmental awareness in mind.



FRIDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2017

Day 4 / Bhuj

Visit to the textile and leather handicraft centres for which Bhuj and Kutch are famous. We will try and get Judy Frater the Founder Director of Somaiya Kala Vidya – an institute for the education of artisans. She is an acknowledged expert on the handicrafts of Kutch. In the evening we hope to have dinner organized at Bhuj House – a beautifully traditional Parsi home or some other traditional home. We hope to enjoy a presentation from Judy Frater.



SATURDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2017

Day 5 / Chari Dand grasslands

Drive out to the Chari Dand grasslands, one of the last remaining unaltered grassland habitats that made Kutch the home of colourful shepherd communities and some magnificent wildlife. This is a very enjoyable day spent in the outdoors enjoying wildlife and rural culture.



SUNDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2017



Day 6 / Bhuj – Dasada in Little Rann of Kutch

Drive 6 hours/267km along excellent roads plus stops east of Bhuj at the villages of Ajrakpur and Dhamadka where the art of wood block printing on textiles originated) to the edge of the Little Rann to Rann Riders camp.

Stay two nights at Rann Riders, Dasada



Rann Riders

This delightful small eco resort is ethnic in style and located amongst wetlands and agricultural fields. Located near Dasada village, the resort is well located for exploring the cultural aspects of the region as well as the wildlife. They have their own fleet of open vehicles for safaris into The Little Rann of Kutch, a 4950k m² sanctuary, home to a huge variety of wildlife from the endangered Indian wild ass to Indian wolf and striped hyena to the spiny-tailed lizard and golden jackal amongst many, many others.

The rooms here have been designed to give the appearance of a village and have a traditional and local style to them. Each cottage has air-conditioning. There is a swimming pool also to cool off in for guests.

MONDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2017



Day 7 Dasada – day trip to Patan and Modhera Sun Temple

Dasada/Modhera/Patan/Dasada - 162 km roundtrip/1.5 hours each way plus stop at Modhera



Today you will enjoy a day trip to view the incredible thousand year old Sun Temple at Modhera with the associated step well of Surya Kund. Then the city of Patan famous for its amazing step well the Rani ka Vav which is a World Heritage monument. There are several other sites here. Patan is also famous for the Patola sarees that are hand woven here. Return to Rann Riders. You have the option of another safari into the Little Rann.



"Lothal – one of the biggest and most important excavated cities of the pre-historic Indus Valley Civilisation"



TUESDAY, 14 FEBRUARY 2017

Day 8 / Tuesday 14th February: Dasad – Lothal – Ahmedabad

Drive to Ahmedabad stopping at Lothal – one of the biggest and most important excavated cities of the pre-historic Indus Valley Civilisation. Dasada/Lothal - 116 km/2 hours (lunch can be arranged at Utelia Palace)

Lothal/Ahmedabad - 77 km/1-1.5 hours.

Stay four nights Lemon Tree Premier, Ahmedabad

Lemon Tree Premier Ahmedabad

This modern hotel is situated on the banks of the Sabarmati, overlooking the river. The spacious rooms are very comfortable and there is an indoor swimming pool and even a gym here.

WEDNESDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2017

Day 9 / Ahmedabad

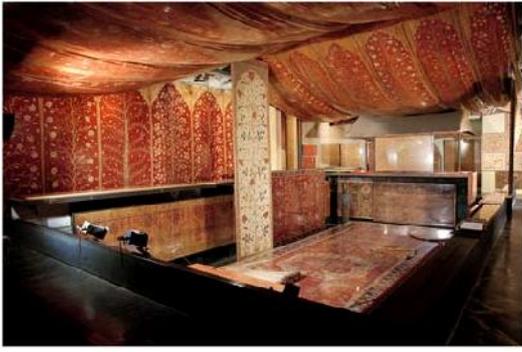
Sightseeing of the Muslim Old city with its superb mosques, temples and bazaars.

Early morning walk through a section of the old city known as the pols that house artisans in another era. On view on either side of the narrow lanes are homes in a variety of superb designs and decorations.

After breakfast, head out to Sarkhej, a medieval Muslim enclave noted for its provincial style of architecture before returning to Ahmedabad to view the Jami Masjid, Rani Sipri's Tomb and the shaking minarets of Sidi Bashir.

In the afternoon, drive to the north of Ahmedabad to view the 15th century Adalaj Vav stepwell.

Driving back to Ahmedabad, stop at Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram. We will also try a meeting or reception with the Sarabhai family – one of Gujarat's most famous industrial families and great patrons of the arts who also own the calico museum.



THURSDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2017

Day 10 / Ahmedabad

Begin the day with a visit to the world famous Calico Museum, and then later during the day, visit Shreyas Folk Art Museum, another outstanding collection. During the course of the day, view the city's architectural perspectives through the works of Le Corbusier (Mill Owners Association Building), Louis Kahn (Indian Institute of Management, Institute of Public Administration) and Balakrishna Doshi (Centre for Environment and Planning Technology). A visit is also arranged to the National Institute of Design. In the evening, visit the old city markets.



FRIDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2017

Day 11 / Ahmedabad – Champaner – Ahmedabad

Day trip to Champaner. This is two hours from Ahmedabad and is one of the most magnificent medieval cities of Western India marking the transition between Hindu and Islamic architecture. The entire Pawagadh Hill Fort is designated a World Heritage monument. The city also houses the magnificent Jama Masjid built by Mehmud Begada. Lunch will be arranged at Champaner Heritage Resort.



SATURDAY, 18 FEBRUARY 2017

Day 12 / Ahmedabad – Dungarpur

Drive about 4 hours to Dungarpur to stay at the beautiful restored palace Udai Bilas Palace. In the afternoon we shall get special permission to visit the old Juna Mahal Palace with its superb frescoes.



"a wonderful, rambling 19th century palace"

Dungarpur is a picturesque town situated in the Aravallai Hills 110 kms south of Udaipur. Once a princely state, the old palace known as Juna Mahal was first established in the 13th century with additional wings, rooms, terraces being added to it over the centuries to create a sprawling structure that dominates the hill country. Abandoned only in the early 20th century it was one of India's oldest inhabited buildings. Although reduced to a state of disrepair with the sumptuous painted interiors being vandalised, enough remains to showcase princely life in a remote and relatively poor Rajput state - including a fabulous pictorial Kama Sutra album hidden behind a cabinet. The quality of the art, the location and architecture of the palace and the tranquil peace of the Dungarpur palace make this a more than worthwhile place to visit from Udaipur.

Udai Bilas Palace

You will stay one night at Udai Bilas Palace, which is the converted palace of the Maharaja of Dungarpur situated by a lake. This is indeed a



lovely peaceful place to break the journey. Dungarpur is a picturesque town situated in the Aravallai Hills 110 kms south of Udaipur.

Lying on the banks of Gaibsagar Lake, Udaibilas Palace is one of the few 'true' heritage hotels.

Contrary to other heritage hotels which have been renovated in either a Rajasthani or contemporary style, Udaibilas Palace has been beautifully restored but remains true to its origins. Much of the interior has strong Art Deco features, whilst the architecture is a fascinating fusion of past styles. It is a wonderful, rambling 19th century palace, which remains the Royal residence, and the traditional rooms and suites lie in different parts of the palace complex. The grand but cosy sitting rooms provide both history and warmth on cold, winter nights. The majestic dining room is stunning - walls decorated in river stones and a marble table to seat 40 with what could almost be mistaken for a 'lap pool' in the middle – truly a sight to be seen!



The owning family were keen and respected hunters. As a result, the walls of many parts of the palace are adorned with past hunting trophies and relics of what was then a widely accepted custom. A sunset visit to the old, hilltop palace is a must and will reveal some of the finest and most colourful frescoes and miniature paintings in India.

With its glorious lakeside infinity pool and expansive gardens, it is a paradise for birdwatchers, painters, nature lovers and architecture buffs or for those looking for a little peace and tradition.



Udaibilas Palace is well on the way to becoming full organic and strives towards that. They grow their own vegetables to support their organic food policy and also try to source organically grown vegetables and grains when needed. They have solar power for 90% of their hot water needs and their waste water and sewage is treated and used for irrigation purposes. Energy saving light bulbs are used throughout the palace.

All old towels and bed sheets which would be discarded from the hotel are donated to the poor and schools for poor and handicapped children. Redundant soap is also donated. All waste paper, beer bottles, mineral water bottles and other scrap is sold and the money is used for animal welfare like feeding stray animals etc.

"a paradise for
birdwatchers,
painters, nature
lovers and
architecture
buffs "

SUNDAY, 19 FEBRUARY 2017

Day 13 / Dungarpur – Devigarh

Drive to the splendid Devigarh fort (140km / 3 hours) and palace with its superb heritage hotel to break your journey to Bundi. Spend two nights here. Rest, relax and explore.



You will stay two nights at Devigarh, Delwara.

Devigarh

Housed in an imposing 18th-century palace, this heritage, all-suite hotel is set on a hilltop overlooking the town of Delwara. It lies nine kilometres from the ruins of the 10th century SahastraBahu Temples.

This formidable palace was once the royal residence of the rulers of Delwara principality, from mid-18th to mid-20th century.

Contemporary suites with bright, minimalist decor provide flat-screen TVs, minibars and coffeemakers, as well as balconies, or private gardens and tented terraces.

There's an elegant restaurant with a terrace, plus private dining areas and a bar with a tasting menu. Other amenities include a full-service spa and an exercise room, in addition to an outdoor pool, a hot tub and a croquet lawn.



MONDAY, 20 FEBRUARY 2017

Day 14 / Devigarh

Today you will visit Eklingji and Nagada.

The ancient temples of Nagda dating back to the 7th and 8th centuries or earlier. This was the original capital of the Mewar dynasty founded in the 6th Century from where they ruled until the beginning of the 8th century. All that remains are picturesque ruins, tucked away in a rural haven by the shores of a small lake in the folds of the scenic Aravalli Hills. The only complete structure being the Sas Bahu Temple dating to a much later period. Close to Nagda is the temple of Eklingji – the tutelary deity of the rulers of Mewar (Udaipur). In their belief they are the temporal deputies of Eklingji, his ministers or regents so to speak on Earth. Indeed they never adopted the title of Raja or King but always named themselves Rana – War Chief – or in its inflated form 'Maharana' Great War Chief. The town of Eklingji is a popular spot for pilgrims and visitors. The interesting thing about the Eklingji statue is that in this form he is Shiva incorporating both Vishnu and Brahma and standing for the Ultimate Reality. It is images like this that represent the seminal Hindu belief that the different Gods are simply aspects of the universal Divine energy.



TUESDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2017

Day 15 / Devigarh – Bundi via Chittorgarh

Drive to Bundi (262 km/4 - 5 hours) stopping at Chittorgarh – the legendary fortress capital of Mewar before Udaipur was built.





The Chittorgarh Fort seated on a 180 metre hill, covers an expanse of 700 acres (2.8 km²). It was constructed by the Mauryans in the 7th century AD. There is also a belief that it was constructed by Bhima of the Pancha Pandavas. This fort was the citadel of many great Rajput warriors such as Rana Kumbha, Maharana Pratap, Jaimal, etc. Besieged on several occasions by the Sultans of Delhi and Gujarat and the Mughal Emperor Akbar, Chittorgarh has come to epitomise Rajput pride and courage for the people of Chittor always chose death before surrender. The heroism and sacrifice of its past is still sung by the bards of Rajasthan. Though it is now an abandoned citadel there is much more to this huge fort than dramatic ruins. It is a symbol of all that was brave, true and noble in the glorious Rajput tradition.



There is much to see here:

Kalika Mata Temple was originally built in the 8th century for Sun God and was later converted to a temple for mother Goddess, Kali in the 14th century.

Vijay Stambh, is a huge nine storey tower which was built by Maharana Kumbha to commemorate his victory over the Muslim rulers of Malwa and Gujarat in 1440. The tower is 122 ft (37 m) high and stands on a 10 ft (3.0 m) high base. There are sculptures and carvings on the exterior walls of the tower. The tower is visible from any section of the town below. And for reaching tower top one have to climb 157 steps, one can take great view of the surroundings. The inside walls of the tower are carved with images of Gods, weapons, etc.



Kirti Stambh is tower is dedicated to Adinatha, the first of the Jain Tirthankar. It was built by a merchant and is decorated with figures from the Jain pantheon.

Rana Kumbha's Palace is near the Vijay Stambh. This is the birthplace of Maharana Udai Singh the founder of Udaipur. His life was saved by the heroic act of the maid Panna Dhay, who replaced her son in place of the prince & consequently her son was killed by Banbir. She carried the prince away to safety in a fruit basket. Rani Meera Bai also lived in this palace. This is the place where Rani Padmini committed jauhar with the other ladies in one of the underground cellars.[6]



Rani Padmini's Palace is from which Alauddin Khalji (one of the rulers of khalji dynasty during sultanate rule over India) was allowed to watch a reflection of the Rani by replacing the mirror in such an angle that even if Khalji turned back he could not see the room. Khalji had been warned by the rani's husband that if he turned back they would cut his neck.

Stay two nights at Haveli Braj Bhushanjee, Bundi.



Haveli Braj Bhushanjee

This is the most authentic and beautiful of the heritage hotels in Bundi. Built almost 200 years ago by a family that gave as many as four prime ministers to the erstwhile Bundi state, the mansions is wonderfully atmospheric with murals, black and white portraits, period furniture and the most magnificent location nestling close under the palace walls. Each of the rooms is spacious and has a particular theme or art treasure which makes it special. All the rooms have a fridge where beer etc can be kept as they are not allowed to serve alcohol within the walled area of the old town which is considered as holy as Kashi or Varanasi. The service and hospitality here is warm and friendly and the food – all vegetarian – quite delicious. It is a perfect base from which to explore this intriguing Rajput town. NOTE: All except one room are accessed by stairs. In fact anyone with a walking problems should avoid Bundi because of all the climbing that needs to be done.



Bundi

"...but the Palace of Bundi, even in broad daylight, is such a palace as men build for themselves in uneasy dreams – the work of goblins rather than of men."



Settled in 1241 and guarded by the immense walls of Tara Garh (Star Fort), Bundi is undoubtedly the most authentic of Rajasthan's cities. Within the walled town, with its blue-painted houses, old temples, step-wells and crumbling mansions or havelis, one gets a sense of what a genuine medieval Rajput town (without the litter though) would have been like. The setting is spectacular – set within a hollow of the Vindhya Hills and overlooked by the beautiful palace rising in graceful and remarkably cohesive tiers along the slopes below the fort walls. Ranged under the foundation walls of the palace and squeezed vertically onto the slope are the mansions of former nobles and merchants – many of which have now been converted into heritage hotels and restaurants. Presumably they all make a living for one of the great joys of Bundi is the relative absence of tourists. You can wander through the labyrinth of the palace, chancing upon the most beautiful rooms with walls covered in murals of astonishing quality including one clearly created by Chinese or Central Asian craftsmen and artists. You need to be reasonably fit though for the palace itself is approached up a steep path that leads to the Hathi Pol or Elephant Gate. But it is worth the effort if for nothing else than a chance to visit the Chitra Shala – an entire suite of rooms covered in the most exquisite murals in all of Rajasthan. Continue past the palace to the great walls of the fort and you will be rewarded with panoramic views of the town and the country-side beyond with its fertile fields. Best to try and time this climb at sunrise or sunset both for the magical light and the gentler temperatures. Unfortunately one of the great treasures of Rajasthan – the step-well known as Raniji Ki Baori is now so choked with refuse that it isn't worth visiting. The best places to stay in Bundi are undoubtedly the heritage hotels like Braj Bhushanjee Haveli, Bundi Vilas and Bundi Haveli. Here, sitting on a terrace one can enjoy the spectacular view of the palace brilliantly lit at night.





WEDNESDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2017

Day 16 / Bundi

Enjoy the superb frescoes of the Taragarh palace. Spend time exploring the unchanged medieval quarter of this historic and quintessential Rajput city.

THURSDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2017



Day 17 / Bundi – Udaipur

Today you will be driven to Udaipur (280 km/5 hours) for your last night.

Relax in this lovely hotel this afternoon. Tonight enjoy a farewell dinner. Stay one night at Lake Palace, Udaipur a wonderful setting for your last night in India...for now at least!

THURSDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2017



Day 18 / Udaipur - Delhi – London

This morning you will be transferred back to the airport in time to check in for your flight.

Depart on Jet Airways to London connecting through Mumbai (exact time TBA but expected to be early morning arriving back in London later that day)

PRICES

Cost of Holiday:

The cost of the tour, excluding international flights, comes to:

£3,990.00 per person, sharing a double room

£4,385.00 per person, sharing a twin room

£5,730.00 per person based on single use room

Please note that if you wish to share a twin room with a friend to bring the overall cost down, Devigarh does not have twin rooms and therefore we have had to include an obligatory supplement of £395 for a single room for two nights for those sharing on twin share basis. We also have limited twin rooms at Lake Palace and therefore if we are not able to provide a twin room there, there will also be a supplement to be advised (as necessary). This only might be a concern for last minute bookings.

Information:

Feel free to contact me on 01367 850566 or on d.roberts@explorationscompany.com for more information about booking.

INCLUSIONS

Services as follows:-

- 16 nights' accommodation on the RSAA tour 2017 through Gujarat and Rajasthan in hotels as stated, Full Board Basis
- Services of a tour guide throughout

and also:

- All transfers in an air-conditioned bus
- Meals as stipulated
- Bottled water with all meals
- Bottled water/soft drinks on board the transfer bus
- Farewell drinks in Udaipur
- Applicable camera/entry fees (professional equipment excluded)
- Porterage at airports and hotels
- All Park and Conservancy fees where relevant
- All safari activities where relevant and as stated
- All services as mentioned in the itinerary
- Please note that there are luggage weight and dimension restrictions on internal flights

EXCLUSIONS

- International flights, especially from/to client's country of origin. (Quoted separately).
- Visa fees
- Gratuities/tips etc.
- Personal or other items such as film, curios etc.
- Travel insurance. (Treat this as mandatory please. Insurance should be arranged at, or close to, the time of booking to cover any unforeseen events.)
- Medical items including inoculations etc.
- Drinks other than bottled water as stated
- Items not mentioned in the itinerary or specifically excluded.
- Credit Card charges of 2% for payment using GBP Visa/ Mastercard credit cards (Amex 2.5%). Personal credit cards only, please. We require email authorisation for customer-not-present transactions. UK personal debit cards incur no charge.
- Extra Aviation (or other transport) costs necessitated by passenger or luggage weights being over and above the minimum normally accepted for local or charter flights in the destination concerned.

SOME VERY IMPORTANT GENERAL NOTES:

1. **"Full Board" and "Fully Inclusive":** Different properties apply different meanings to these terms. To simplify matters, we usually say:

- "Full Board" when the property includes all meals and accommodation, but excludes items such as drinks, laundry and, often, activities (although on safari, expedition cruises and in the jungle the latter are normally always included in the itinerary cost; your itinerary will explain this or do ask us).

- "Fully Inclusive" when the property includes all accommodation, meals, house drinks*, the main activities** and quite often laundry.

* "House drinks" normally means "house" wines, beers, spirits (not always), soft drinks etc.. Please check when ordering what is or is not included to avoid confusion; non "house" items will be charged extra, eg cigars, cigarettes, fine or "cellar" wines, premium spirits etc.

** Activities excluded are mainly obvious "extra cost" items such as diving or motorised watersports at the ocean or major "non-standard" items/excursions elsewhere.

2. **Pricing:** We are proud that it should never be possible to purchase a specific detailed itinerary that we have created at a lower price. Whilst we treat the base quality of each and every safari or holiday as the prime factor in building the holiday, value is equally important no matter what the bottom line may be. We make the following pledge:

We will match (and try to beat) any quote for any safari or holiday, providing that: A) we see the exact itinerary quoted elsewhere, B) it exactly matches what we have (or may not yet have) quoted upon, and C) we feel that the itinerary (if the other quote is not based on one of our hand-crafted itineraries) is actually suitable for the requirements of you, our valued client!

3. **Internal and charter flights:** Please note that aircraft used for light-commercial internal flight transfers (especially charters) are often small, usually seating between four and sixteen people including the pilot/s. Such aircraft are often single-engine and, very frequently, single-pilot operation if smaller aircraft. Upgrading a charter from a single to a twin (or to 2 pilot operation) can be done but the additional cost may be considerable.

Very important re luggage in Africa: The norm for small aircraft in Africa is maximum 15 kgs per person (the actual figure varies between destinations and operators, we will advise) and, please, SOFT BAGS ONLY. Hard luggage – Samsonite etc - may be left behind at departure!!

4. **Disclaimers:** Managers and staff at camps and properties that we tend to use, especially in the bush, jungle, wilderness or polar regions, work very hard to ensure guest's safety but guests are often asked to sign a disclaimer which are a condition of your stay. Please be prepared for this possibility.

5. **Main Points Of Our Terms:**

Flights:	Require paying for immediately on booking**.	
Deposit:	30% of the cost of the holiday is due immediately on booking.	
Balance:	70% of the cost of the holiday is payable +/- 12 weeks before travel.	
Insurance:	Is crucial (often mandatory) for travel to the destinations we feature and must cover repatriation and cancellation, note that deposits etc are non-refundable. (Wherever possible we arrange local flying doctor insurances to be included).	
Cancellation:	Our own cancellation terms are driven by individual terms the hundreds of potential suppliers:	
Cancellation	84 days or more pre travel:	Deposit forfeited.
	Cancellation within 84 days of travel:	100% of holiday cost is payable

** Please note that international flight terms and conditions are per flight supplier's contract. The above are excerpts from our full terms and conditions, available at our website or on request.

6. **Despite everyone's best efforts, timing is not always precise in some destinations!** Please bear in mind that some destinations should be considered slightly flexible in terms of logistics. We and all our carefully chosen co-respondents work very hard to make sure that all transfers, flights, logistics and other itinerary details work 100% on time and seamlessly but there can, very occasionally, be slight delays or hiccoughs that are beyond anyone's direct control (eg a flight headwind or vehicle puncture). This is very rarely an inconvenience but clients have phone numbers for either the properties they are staying at (or our ground handlers) and, of course, we are here to deal with any issues. Normally a small degree of patience is all that is required if there is a slight delay; onward connections and arrangements are usually met/honoured with no problems. Our point is common sense: Just very occasionally there may be slight alterations to plans to accommodate unavoidable logistical or scheduling changes; any such will be dealt with by ourselves or our co-respondents so as to ensure the smoothest possible continuation of the itinerary. Please see our terms and conditions.

7. **Booking Form:** We include a booking form with all our confirmed itineraries which also asks for important client information. Please sign and return, we cannot fully confirm arrangements until this is done. It may be necessary to share information supplied with your host/s but will otherwise be treated as entirely confidential.