

## **Down the Ganges - AHGS**

15 days: Delhi to Kolkata

### **What's Included**

---

Rafting at Rishikesh, Evening Aarti at Haridwar, Taj Mahal and the Fort, Boat ride at Allahabad, Sailing on the Ganges and overnight Camp, Evening and Morning boat rides at Varanasi, Bodhi Temple and meditation camp at Bodhgaya, Boat ride on Hoogly river at Kolkata, Mother Teresa's home and Victoria Memorial

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

**VALIDITY:** Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2013 - December 31st, 2013

### **Itinerary**

---



### Day 1 Delhi

Arrive in Delhi at any time, there are no planned activities till the late afternoon, so check into to the hotel (check-in time is 12.00 midday) and enjoy the city. At 14.00pm we will have a group meeting where you will meet your fellow group members (Check the notice board in hotel lobby to confirm time) to go over the details of your trip. This will be followed by a short orientation to Connaught Place by metro and a walk to India Gate. Check the notice board to see where the group meeting will be held.

New Delhi, the capital of India is one of the most historic capitals in the world and three of its monuments- the Qutab Minar, Red Fort and Humayun's Tomb - have been declared World Heritage Sites. It offers a multitude of interesting places and attractions to the visitor, so much so that it becomes difficult to decide from where to begin exploring the city. In Old Delhi, there are attractions like mosques, forts, markets and other monuments depicting India's Muslim history. New Delhi, on the other hand, is a modern city designed by Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker. Tree covered wide streets with many roundabouts are notable in New Delhi. Home to many government buildings and embassies, as well as Rashtrapati Bhawan, the one-time imperial residence of the British viceroys; India Gate, a memorial raised in honor of the Indian soldiers martyred during the Afghan war. Further out in the southern suburbs you will discover more history including Humayun's Tomb, said to be the forerunner of the Taj Mahal at Agra; the Purana Quila, built by Humayun, with later-day modifications by Sher Shah Suri; Qutab Minar, built by Qutb-ud-din Aybak of the Slave Dynasty; and the incredible lotus-shaped Bahá'í House of Worship.

There are a number of outstanding museums worth visiting including the Craft Museum, National Gallery and Birla House (Ghandi Smirti) and Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum. (Note many museums are closed on Monday).

There are so many options for dining, from age-old eateries in the by lanes of the Old Walled City to glitzy, specialty restaurants in five-star hotels, Delhi is a movable feast. Restaurants and bars cater to all tastes and budgets.

The best of Mughlai cuisine can be enjoyed at Karims, (both in Jama Masjid and Nizamuddin) where recipes, dating from the times o

the Mughals have been the closely guarded secret of generations of chefs. The finest Frontier cuisine is available at the Bukhara, recently voted as the best Indian restaurant in the world!! And at the other end of the scale there are the many popular roadside eateries where kebabs, naan and rotis (Indian breads) and dosa (South Indian pancakes) are the order of the day.

A delightful outlet offering a range of Indian cuisines are the food stalls at Dilli Haat. Here, the cuisine of different states is made available. Set in the midst of a spacious crafts bazaar these cafes are a very pleasant place to enjoy food.

#### **Day 2-4 Rishikesh/Haridwar**

Rishikesh is a holy city for Hindus located in the foothills of the Himalaya in northern India. Legend states that Lord Rama did penance here for killing Ravana, the demon king of Lanka. It is also known as the gateway to the Himalayas and is located around 100 kilometers away from another holy city, Haridwar. Rishikesh is the starting point for traveling to the sites that form the Char Dham pilgrimage — Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri, and Yamunotri.

The sacred river Ganga flows through Rishikesh. In fact, at Rishikesh, it leaves the mighty Himalayas and enters into the northern plains. With several temples, ancient as well as new, along the banks of the Ganges, the city attracts thousands of pilgrims and tourists each year, from within India, as well as from other countries. Rishikesh, is also known as "the world-capital of Yoga", has numerous yoga centres scattered in its surroundings. The place is also the best destination for white water rafting in India, as it offers medium to rough rapids in the course of river Ganges. The stretch between Shivpuri and Rishikesh is considered as the rafting capital of the country with numerous white rapids going on for a long stretch. Here we go for half a day rafting session as we embrace this mighty river - also considered a lifeline of India.

During our stay at Rishikesh, we also visit the prominent holy city of Haridwar. In Hindi, Haridwar stands for Dwar of Hari or Gateway to God, with 'Hari' meaning god and 'dwar' meaning gate. Haridwar is regarded as one of the seven holiest places to Hindus. Haridwar is one of the holiest town for Hindus all across the world. It is believed that drops of the elixir of immortality, Amrit fell here when the pitcher was being carried by a celestial bird Garuda.

We can witness the evening Aarti (prayers) at Haridwar and also witness the rituals that are constantly performed by pilgrims from all across India on its banks.

Estimated train travel time: 5 hours.

#### **Day 5-6 Agra**

This morning we take the train to Agra arriving late in the afternoon.

On day 13 we see sunrise in the city of Agra a city that is best known as the site of India's most famous landmark, the Taj Mahal. We visit the great icon of Mughal architecture the Taj Mahal in the early morning for the best light- be sure to have plenty of memory in your camera! This afternoon we visit I'timad-ud-Daulah, also known as the 'Baby Taj'. It was built before the Taj Mahal by Nur Jahan, Queen of Jehangir, for her parents. The first Mughal building to be faced with white marble and where 'pietra dura', (precious stones inlaid into marble) was first used. We also ride one of the cycle-rickshaws to visit the Agra Fort.

Constructed between 1631 and 1654 by a workforce of 22 000, the Taj Mahal was built by the Muslim Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan as a mausoleum for his favourite wife, Arjumand Bano Begum, better known as Mumtaz Mahal. It is the romantic origin of the Taj as much as its architectural splendour that has led to its fame worldwide. Actually an integrated complex of many structures, the Taj Mahal is considered the finest example of Mughal architecture, itself a combination of Islamic, Hindu, Persian and Turkish elements.

The walled city of the Agra Fort was first taken over by the Moghuls, at that time led by Akbar the Great, in the late 16th century. Akbar liked to build from red sandstone, often inlaid with white marble and intricate decorations, and it was during his reign that the fort began changing into more of a royal estate.

However, it was only during the reign of Akbar's grandson, Shah Jahan (who would eventually build the Taj Mahal) that the site finally took on its current state. Unlike his grandfather, Shah Jahan preferred buildings made from white marble, often inlaid with gold or semi-precious gems, and he destroyed some earlier buildings inside the fort in order to build others in his own style. At the end of his life Shah Jahan was imprisoned in the fort by his son, Aurangzeb. It is said that Shah Jahan died in Muasamman Burj, a tower with a marble balcony with an excellent view of the Taj Mahal.

The fort was also a site of one of the most important battles of the Indian rebellion of 1857, which caused the end of the British East India Company's rule in India, leading to a century of direct rule of India by Britain.

On Day 6, we catch the overnight sleeper train to Allahabad.

Estimated train travel time: 8-9 hours

### **Day 7 Allahabad**

We arrive early in the morning at Allahabad. Allahabad is another very important pilgrim town on the banks of River Ganges. It is also the confluence point of two of the greatest rivers Ganges and Yamuna. It is also believed that a third river, which is extinct now also merged with the two rivers. This point is known as Sangam. Hindu pilgrims from far away lands come here to wash their sins. During the day we go for a boat ride to the point where the two rivers meet.

Every fourth year the Kumbh Mela where holy men, priests and common pilgrims gathers in millions to take a dip at the point of Sangam. We visit this area by boat ride.

### **Day 8 River bank camp (L,D)**

This morning after breakfast we drive to Mirzapur Board our sail boats and cruise along the river. This boat cruise during brings you face to face with the plural importance of this mighty river. One it is source of life to North India with its vast plains considered as the granary of the country, the rural and semi urban settlements along and the religious significance. Ganges is considered as the mother of Indian civilisation. As you cruise along the fresh water dolphins, you will be taken care of by a team of cook and helpers.

Overnight we will camp along the river bank in a Tented accommodation.

### **Day 9-10 Varanasi (B)**

Morning after breakfast we sail to Chunar Fort. A medieval fort with a very turbulent has a lot of stories behind. The mere sight of the Fort binds you in a spell. After exploring this magnificent Fort we drive for about an hour to Varanasi.

Varanasi is the quintessential Indian holy city where millions of Hindu travel to for pilgrimage, to worship, to mourn or to die. Walk the narrow twisting alleys, poke around some of the literally thousands of temples and shrines, and experience the energy of the dawn rituals of bathing and burial as you float past the famous ghats of the Ganges.

Sitting on the banks of the River Ganges, you can contemplate what it means to be in Varanasi, the oldest continually inhabited city in the world, dating back thousands of years. The culture of Varanasi is deeply associated with the river Ganges and its religious importance; the city has been a cultural and religious centre in northern India for thousands of years. Or wander through the Old City with its maze of narrow alleyways full of small shops and stalls. Perhaps you could visit the monasteries and ruins of nearby Sarnath, the site of Buddha's first sermon.

We take boats out onto the sacred Ganges River, both for sunrise and sunset. For the evening boat journey we enjoy a candle flower ceremony on the boats.

During our stay in Varanasi you will have time to shop, wander and absorb the atmosphere of this unique city, while optional activities include the monasteries and ruins of nearby Sarnath, site of the Buddha's first sermon.

### **Day 11-12 Bodhgaya**

Estimated travel time: 4 hours

Bodhgaya is the birth place of Buddhism. It is believed that Lord Buddha achieved its enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree. It is said that Buddha, then Prince Siddharth after the renunciation dwelled in the area for six year, but when it did not lead to realisation, he sat under the Banyan Tree facing east; he resolved that he would not stand till he got enlightened.

The Mahabodhi Temple was later constructed by Emperor Ashoka. Today this place is a pilgrimage place for every Hindu and Buddhist. The basement of the temple is 15 mtr. square, 15 m in length and eight of 52 mtr. Inside the temple there is a huge image of Lord Buddha in a sitting (touching the ground pose).

Here we explore the serene Mahabodhi Temple and the Banyan tree. It has become an international place of pilgrimage for Buddhists from all over the world. A host countries like Srilanka, Thailand, Burma. Tibet, Bhutan and Japan have established their monasteries and temples near the Mahabodhi Complex.

### **Day 13-14 Kolkata (Calcutta)**

Early this morning we catch the day train to Kolkata. Kolkata, capital of the state of West Bengal, is primarily a British legacy and was their capital till the 1911 when it was shifted to New Delhi. There is a strong influence of European architecture on the administrative and state buildings. The city, the banks of Hoogly, a major tributary of Ganges as it flows into the Bay of Bengal, got its name from Kali temple at Kali Ghat. Kali symbolizes victory over evil and that reflects in the many festivals celebrated in Bengal. We explore the city by local transport of Trams, Metros and Ferries on the river.

City is also known for its intellectual contribution to Indian philosophy, Rabindranath Tagore, , Swami Vivekananda, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and many others were the biggest influence on the social reforms in India during the British period. Film Maker like Satyajit Ray, economist Amartya Sen, Artist Jamini Roy , freedom fighters like Netaji Shubash Chandra Bose are all names that turned the course of Indian History and Culture.

Mother Teresa an Albanian born nun is today considered a saint and revered by everybody in Kolkata. She established her Missionaries of Charity here in 1952 and served the poor people of Kolkata all her life.

Here we visit the home of Mother Teresa, Kalighat temple, the botanical garden with the great Banyan about 250 years old with 2800 prop roots and covers an area of 1.5 Hectares and the Victoria Memorial.

### **Day 15 Kolkata**

Depart at any time

## **What's Included**

---

Rafting at Rishikesh, Evening Aarti at Haridwar, Taj Mahal and the Fort, Boat ride at Allahabad, Sailing on the Ganges and overnight Camp, Evening and Morning boat rides at Varanasi, Bodhi Temple and meditation camp at Bodhgaya, Boat ride on Hoogly river at Kolkata, Mother Teresa's home and Victoria Memorial

## **Highlights**

---

Sailing along the Ganges River, Whitewater rafting through exciting rapids, Experiencing the spirituality of India during an evening Aarti, Marvelling at the beauty of the Taj Mahal.

## **Dossier Disclaimer**

---

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and the operator. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

## **Itinerary Disclaimer**

---

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

## **Important Notes**

---

1. India is a country which is very different to anything you will have experienced before. Although this means it is not the easiest place to travel, this is also what makes it so special. Pollution, poverty and the crowds can result in initial culture shock but should be seen as an exciting new challenge. During our time here we have come to love this large and wonderfully different country but we know that we should always expect to encounter some difficulties along the way.
2. In India there are very different attitudes to time keeping, public cleanliness, privacy and service. Trains will sometimes be late, plumbing can sometimes be temperamental and power will often just vanish. Optimistic menus turn out to have only one dish available and everyone, just everyone, will want to know your name. If you are able to travel with a lot of patience and a healthy sense

of humour, then we know that you - like all of us - will be captivated by what India has to offer.

---

## Group Leader Description

All G Adventures group trips are accompanied by one of our Chief Experience Officers (CEO). The aim of the CEO is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also use local guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting - we think it's the best of both worlds.

---

## Group Size Notes

Max 15 Avg 10

---

## Meals Included

1 Breakfast, 1 Lunch, 1 Dinner.

---

## Meals

Eating is a big part of traveling. Travelling with G Adventures you experience the vast array of wonderful food that is available out in the world. Generally meals are not included in the trip price when there is a choice of eating options, to give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat. It also gives you more budgeting flexibility, though generally food is cheap. Our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There is no obligation to do this though. Your CEO will be able to suggest favourite restaurants during your trip. Vegetarians will be able to find a huge range of different foods - India is vegetarian heaven. For all trips please refer to the meals included and budget information for included meals and meal budgets.

---

## Meal Budget

Approx USD280-350 for meals not included

---

## Transport

Boat, raft, train, bus, rickshaw.

---

## About our Transportation

There are no restaurant or buffet cars on Indian Railways, but on long distance trains an attendant will appear in your coach and ask you if you would like to order food. Regular stops are made at stations where food is also available and on some trains many vendors board the train selling chai, cold drinks and crisps and biscuits.

Don't expect pristine western standards anywhere in India, but you'll find AC3 and AC Chair class fairly clean by Indian standards, with both western-style and squat toilets usually in a reasonably sanitary condition. Sleeper Class and 2nd class toilets may be a different matter! Bring your own toilet paper and hand wash soap or liquid.

Indian trains are quite safe to travel on, even for families or women traveling alone, and you are unlikely to have any problems. Having said that, theft of luggage, although rare is not unheard of, so just for peace of mind you might like to take along a chain and padlock to secure your bags (readily available at all Indian stations).

Generally, Indian Railways are very efficient, but Indian trains do run late, and sometimes it's hours rather than minutes. Make sure you have something to occupy your time – a good book, music, a magazine or photos of your home country and family to show the Indian travelers also waiting for the train. You should also have snacks and water for the journey.

## ROAD

Traveling by road in India or Nepal is certainly not what people are used to in Western countries. Rules are not always followed, drivers appear to speed, do not stay in their lanes, overtake in seemingly dangerous situations, rarely use their mirrors or driving lights at night time. The horn however is used very frequently and can range from the latest Bollywood tune to Britney Spears! In India, although the government is investing large sums of money improving the road infrastructure, there is a lot more to be done. As a result, in both India and Nepal, some of the roads are poorly maintained, pot holed and uneven. This gets even more pronounced particularly during and after the monsoon. Travel time covering relatively short distances is very long in comparison to Western

countries.

## BOATS

While on the Ganges, travel in groups of five by teakwood boats measuring 19 feet long and 7 feet wide. The boats have ample space to spread out, along with pillows for comfort. Life vests are on board. The boats have a cooler stocked with water and cold drinks for purchase.

## Solo Travellers

---

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

## Accommodation

---

Hotels/guesthouses (12 nts), camping (1 nt), sleeper train (1 nt).

## My Own Room

---

Please note that if you have booked the "My Own Room" option for this tour, you will receive your own single room for all night stops

## About Accommodation

---

A variety of styles of hotels/guest houses are used in India. These can vary in terms of service, efficiency and cleanliness. In many instances they might not be like what you are used to back home. Power cuts can and are a regular occurrence in many places, especially throughout North and Central India. Although a number of hotels have generators there may be times when these won't work. It is also recommended when you are in your room to lock the door, as staff will sometime enter without reason.

The tents provided during the one night of camping are nylon double gate domed 2-person tents with a fly sheet covering.

## Joining Hotel

---

Hotel La Vista  
938/3, Naiwalan (Illahi bux road)  
Karol Bagh  
Delhi  
India  
011 – 28753184/2875755

## Joining Instructions

---

When arriving at the airport in New Delhi taking a cab is the most convenient way to get to your hotel. Because taxi drivers are famous for tampering with their meters and overcharging, use the prepaid taxi service offered at the airport - you can make the arrangements at designated counters outside the baggage-claim area of the domestic terminals and international terminal. Unfortunately scammers have set up similar services, so make sure the counter is operated by the Delhi Traffic Police. Your destination, the time of your arrival and the amount of luggage determine the rate, which you pay in advance at the counter, but should be between INR200-300. Take the receipt and locate your assigned taxi. Taxis are black with yellow tops and have yellow number plates. Once you get into the taxi, don't give the driver the payment slip until you reach your destination. If the driver demands more rupees, politely refuse, although if they have driven safely you may like to tip INR30-50.

Be aware too, that touts at the airports, even at hotel-reservation counters, may try to trick you into booking a hotel room by claiming that your prior reservation is invalid. Ignore them.

If this is your first trip to India an arrival transfer is recommended. If you have paid for an arrival transfer when you booked your trip our driver/local operator will be waiting for you with a G Adventures sign with your name on it. Please check carefully once you exit the baggage hall as there seem to be hundreds of people waiting outside in the arrival area. Our Airport Transfer contact numbers are +91958690755 (Dipesh) and +919958690753(Manish). The office number is (+91-11) 45464546.

## Arrival Complications

---

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your trip CEO (if you are not on a group tour please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier). If you are unable to get in touch with your CEO, please refer to our emergency contact details. If you have pre-booked an airport transfer and have not made contact with our representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, we recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions. Please apply to your travel agent on your return for a refund of the transfer cost if this occurs.

## Emergency Contact

---

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call either the G Adventures Local Representative (if one is listed below) or our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

### AIRPORT TRANSFER

If you have purchased an arrival through G Adventures or if an arrival transfer is included in the cost of your tour, please note that:

Your arrival transfer has been arranged based on flight information provided to us. If you are advised of a flight schedule change within 48 hours of your scheduled arrival time, we will do our best to rearrange your arrival transfer however we cannot guarantee this. If your arrival transfer does not arrive within 30 minutes after you have exited the arrivals area please take a taxi to your start point hotel.

If your call is specifically concerning Airport Transfer complications please call our local G Adventures Transfer providers directly at: New Delhi Airport:

Dipesh

From outside India: +91 9958 690755

From within Delhi: 9958 690755

From outside Delhi: 09958 690755

Manish Singh

From outside India: +91 9958 690753

From within Delhi: 9958 690753

From outside Delhi: 09958 690753

### EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

G Adventures Local Office (Delhi)

G Adventures South Asia Manager, Rishab (Delhi, India)

Emergency number:

From outside of India: +91 99 7179 5447

From within Delhi: 99 7179 5447

From within India, but outside Delhi: 099 7179 5447

G Adventures Office Bangkok, Thailand

During Office hours (Weekdays, 9am-5pm Local Time): +66-02-3815574

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below, which will connect you directly with our 24 hour Sales team, who will happily assist you.

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from UK: 0844 272 0000

Calls from Germany: 01805 70 90 30 00

Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from New Zealand: 0800 333 307

Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

## What to Take

---

What you need to bring depends on the trip you have chosen and the countries or regions you are planning to visit. We suggest that you pack as lightly as possible as you are expected to carry your own luggage. As a rule we try not to have to walk more than 15-20 minutes with your bags which is why we recommend keeping the weight of your bags between 10-15kg/22-30lb. Suitcases are not recommended for G Adventures trips! Most travellers carry a backpack or rolling bag of small to medium size (no XXL ones please!) as they need to fit under the beds when travelling on sleeper trains. You will also need a day pack/bag to carry water, cameras and other electronics like ipods and mobile phones. If your trip involves overnights in homestays, villages or camping then you usually have the opportunity to rent sleeping bags if need be instead of bringing them with you.

## Checklist

---

passport (with photocopies)  
Travel insurance (with photocopies)  
Airline tickets (with photocopies)  
USD cash  
Credit or debit card (see personal spending money)  
G Adventures vouchers, pre-departure information and dossier  
Any entry visas or vaccination certificates required  
Day pack for daily personal items  
Lock for all bags  
Wet wipes / Moist towelettes  
Alarm clock  
Flashlight  
Sun hat, Sun block, Sunglasses  
Insect Repellent  
Water bottle and Plastic mug for train journeys  
Ear plugs for train journeys or light sleepers  
Small towel and swim wear  
Toiletries (biodegradable)  
Sturdy walking shoes/Sport sandals  
Money belt  
Shorts  
Long trousers  
Hiking pants/track pants  
Shirts/T-shirts  
Warm clothes for November-March: fleece, jacket, hat and gloves, warm layers  
Umbrella or waterproof jacket.  
Cover for backpack or plastic bags to keep clothes dry.  
Camera and film  
Reading/writing material  
Binoculars  
Pocketknife  
First-aid kit (should contain lip salve, Aspirin, Band Aids, anti-histamine, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, re-hydration powder, extra prescription drugs you may be taking).

## Laundry

---

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels for a charge. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

## Visas

---

Please note that visas for India are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. For the most up to date information please check your governments foreign ministry website or with your travel agent as rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself. For most travellers there will probably have an embassy and consulate in the country that you live in.

Standard Indian tourist visas are good for 6 months with multiple entry and exits. THEY ARE NOT AVAILABLE AT PORT OF ENTRY AND must be obtained in advance.

Please note that the Indian government has recently made some changes to visa regulation due to misuse of the Tourist visa. We

encourage all passengers to contact the Indian consulate or embassy in their home country to get up to date information on entry requirements. This is especially important for those that are planning on entering India multiple times in a two month period. Foreigners holding a Tourist Visas, who after initial entry into India plan to visit neighboring Nepal, Bhutan or Sri Lanka and then re-enter into India within 2 months need to get special authorization.

a) If you are already in India you must register with FRRO (Foreign Regional Registration office).

b) If you are still outside of India you must advise consulate or embassy at time of visa application of your plans. You will need to provide supporting documents which includes airline tickets.

If you are departing India to visit a non-neighboring country (all countries other than Nepal, Bhutan or Sri Lanka) and plan to return to India within a 2 month period you may not be able to re-enter.

---

## Detailed Trip Notes

In India English is widely spoken and transportation and infrastructure is good, but please remember that this is India- expect the unexpected! If you are able to bring with you a lot of patience, a great sense of humour and a willingness to try and interact with the local people, your travel experience will be greatly enhanced

---

## Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

---

## Money Exchange

Exchange rates in Asia fluctuate often we ask that you refer to the following website for daily exchange rates: [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) As of Feb 2012 the exchange rate for INDIA was 1 USD = 49.00 (Indian Rupees). There are many ATM machines that accept both Visa and Mastercard but these are limited to major cities. We also recommend the use of cash and travellers cheques in USD currency. Major credit cards are accepted in most shops but they may charge a 2-4% transaction fee.

---

## Emergency Fund

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD \$200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

---

## Tipping

It is customary in Asia to tip service providers such as waiters, at approximately 10%, depending on the service. Tipping is expected - though not compulsory - and shows an expression of satisfaction with the people who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides or drivers we use. You may do this individually, or your CEO will offer to collect the money and tip as a group. Recommendations for tipping drivers and local guides would range from USD1-2 per person per day depending on the quality and length of the service; ask your CEO for specific recommendations based on the circumstances and culture. Also at the end of each trip if you felt your G Adventures CEO did an outstanding job, tipping is appreciated. The amount is entirely a personal preference; however as a guideline USD20-30 per person, per week can be used.

---

## Optional Activities

Delhi - Red Fort - INR250  
Delhi - Qutab Minar - INR250  
Delhi - Humayuns Tomb - INR250  
Agra - Akbar's Mausoleum - INR235  
Agra - I'timad-ud-Daulah (Baby Taj) – INR100  
Agra - Nature Park – INR50  
Varanasi - Sarnath Deer Park - INR230  
Varanasi - Ram Nagar Fort - INR10  
Bodh Gaya - Barabar Caves  
Kolkata - Victoria Memorial - INR 250

---

## Health

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit and hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as any personal medical requirements. Please be aware that sometimes we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities, and for legal reasons our CEOs are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. In Asia pharmacies tend to stock the same western drugs as you get at home but they are usually produced locally so please bring the full drug name with you when trying to purchase a prescription drug. When selecting your trip please carefully read the brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please refer to the Physical and Culture Shock ratings for trip specific information. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if in the reasonable opinion of our group CEO they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

## **Safety and Security**

---

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

[www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/](http://www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/)

## **Trip Specific Safety**

---

We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

## **Medical Form**

---

Our small group adventures bring together people of all ages. It is very important you are aware that, as a minimum, an average level of fitness and mobility' is required to undertake our easiest programs. Travellers must be able to walk without the aid of another person, climb 3-4 flights of stairs, step on and off small boats, and carry their own luggage at a minimum. Travellers with a pre-existing medical condition are required to complete a short medical questionnaire, which must be signed by their physician. This is to ensure that travellers have the necessary fitness and mobility to comfortably complete their chosen trip. While our CEOs work

hard to ensure that all our travellers are catered for equally, it is not their responsibility to help individuals who cannot complete the day's activities unaided. Please refer to the physical ratings in this Trip Details document for more information.

Please note that all passengers traveling to Antarctica are required to fill out this questionnaire.

The medical questionnaire can be found online at:

- [www.gadventures.com/medical-form](http://www.gadventures.com/medical-form).

---

## A Couple of Rules

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

---

## Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

---

## Planeterra-The G Adventures Foundation

Through our commitment to responsible tourism we have developed the Planeterra Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of people and communities around the world through support of international charities, local organizations and community projects in the places that we visit on our tours. G Adventures matches all individual donations and pays all administration costs, which means that 100% of each donation is doubled and goes directly to support our projects. For more information about Planeterra and the projects we support, or to make a donation, please visit [www.planeterra.org](http://www.planeterra.org)

### Planeterra Dollar-A-Day Program

Our Dollar-A-Day Program provides travellers with the opportunity to help us give back to the people and places visited on our tours by donating one dollar per day for the duration of their tour. 100% of these proceeds will go directly to support our Planeterra projects.

To participate in this program please indicate at the time of booking that you would like to participate in G Adventures' Dollar-A-Day program, either by clicking the check box online, or by advising your G Adventures specialist or travel agent. (Note: Donation will be charged in the currency of your booking)

---

## Local Dress

In Asia the dress standard is more conservative than it is back home. When packing try to pick loose, lightweight, long clothing that will keep you cool in the usually hot and humid climate of Asian summers. In predominately Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim countries we ask that you dress respectfully and avoid very short shorts/skirts and singlets/tanktops when visiting small rural communities or visiting temples or mosques or other holy sites as this may restrict your entry.

India is very conservative and you should dress accordingly. As a general guideline shoulders and knees should be covered at all times. The wearing of shorts is not allowed as it will restrict your entry into buildings of a religious nature and family homes. A light water and windproof jacket is useful and a hat essential.

NB: During our trip there will be many opportunities for you to meet and "talk" with locals. One way to start any conversation is with pictures. We recommend that you bring some photos/postcards of your family, home, city or country where you live, animals peculiar to your country etc.

---

## Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that we'll give you 5% off the price of your next G Adventures trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 30 days of finishing your trip. Your tour evaluation will be

e-mailed to you 24 hours after the conclusion of your trip. If you do not receive the tour evaluation link in the days after your tour has finished, please drop us a line at [customerservice@gadventures.com](mailto:customerservice@gadventures.com) and we will send it on to you.

## Newsletter

---

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at [www.gadventures.com/newsletters/](http://www.gadventures.com/newsletters/)

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for [Planeterra's monthly news](#) to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

## Travel Forum - The Watering Hole

---

Be sure to stop by [The Watering Hole](#), our adventure travel forum. If you're interested in meeting others booked on your upcoming trip, check out the [Departure Lounge](#) section of our forum and introduce yourself. Otherwise, just drop in at anytime to share some travel tips, ask questions, meet other travellers and quench your thirst for travel. Our forum is located at [wateringhole.gadventures.com](http://wateringhole.gadventures.com).