


# EXPLORE EXPERIENCES



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ANDTHEN

A Hindu priest with a long grey beard and a saffron turban is performing a ritual. He holds a tall, multi-tiered metal lamp (diya) with many small flames. The background shows a sunset over a body of water with several boats. The scene is peaceful and spiritual.

India, a land of breathtaking landscapes, deep-rooted traditions, and vibrant cultures, offers a journey like no other for those in search of authentic and immersive experiences. From sacred spiritual sanctuaries to hidden treasures cradled in nature, we invite you to discover India through a lens few have explored. This curated selection of exclusive adventures combines luxury with local essence, offering everything from spiritual transformations to thrilling outdoor escapades. Whether you're retracing ancient paths, indulging in regional flavors, or embracing peaceful retreats, these exceptional experiences will forge a profound connection with the essence of India.





# LAND OF DEITIES

Trivandrum. The Endless City; Home to the royalty of Travancore; The Fabled City of Gold. Powerful queens and pious saints, haunted forts and blessed ponds, ghosts and ghastly nobles, great victory and despicable betrayal – it's all a part of the glorious history of Trivandrum. Take a walk and learn of the hidden histories, wondrous fables and strange truths that make up this hallowed city. How did the Padhmanabhaswamy temple come to be? Why were the Travancore kings' consorts never called queens? What treachery caused the western gates of the fort to be haunted? How did a local king defeat the famed Dutch armada?







# A TASTE OF FRANCE

## PONDICHERRY

Join us on a walk through the French Quarter of Pondicherry. The quaint boulevards and sleepy streets will come alive as you explore the city's colonial past.

Behind every charming façade, you'll find incredible stories; Quirky twists of history and unforgettable characters; a general bravely fighting a battle when the war itself was over, poets and revolutionaries hiding from the law – all of whom wove their way into the fabric of Pondicherry. Surrounded by the British in India, the French here were gritty and stayed on till much after Indian independence. They left behind a lasting influence on the local culture. We'll explore the architecture and the ironies, the contradictions and the culture of this sea-side town.







# TRAILS OF ELEGANCE

Ever wondered why there are so many Gods in India? Or what the stars have to do with your future? There are many stories hidden away in the mundane rituals of daily life. And as you walk through Mylapore, you'll discover that every sight you behold has a story to tell. Mylapore, a bustling neighbourhood in the heart of Chennai, pre-dates the city by at least 2000 years, and has kept alive many traditions and arts that Chennai is so well known for. The trail is an easy, enjoyable walk through Mylapore. A walk that comes packed with a bundle of stories – stories of local life, of Gods and demons, of ancient customs and symbolisms, and of Mylapore and Madras – some amusing, some baffling, and some that might just help you make sense of the sights around you.







# MYSTICAL THEYYAM

Discover the enchanting world of Theyyam, a ritualistic dance form originating in North Kerala. Immerse yourself in the cultural heritage of Malabar as ancient tales come to life through dance, mime, and music. Explore the diversity of over 400 Theyyams, each with unique stories and traditions. Join the annual Theyyam festivals in Kannur and Kasaragod from December to April, where the divine dance of the gods captivates massive crowds. Witness the majestic attire, symbolic expressions, and the living tradition that preserves Kerala's rich cultural legacy.

The essence of Theyyam lies in its seamless integration of dance, mime, and music.

Accompanied by the resonant chorus of traditional instruments such as Chenda, Elathalam, Kurumkuzal, and Veekkuchenda, the ceremonious dance unfolds like a musical symphony. This art form is a celebration of the ancient tribal reverence for heroes and ancestral spirits, a belief system that is embodied in every graceful movement.







# OPEN ROADS

Experience the thrill of India's diverse landscapes on a luxury motorcycle tour designed for adventure enthusiasts. Ride through majestic mountain ranges, coastal roads, and scenic countryside, while enjoying top-tier accommodations, gourmet cuisine, and personalized services. These guided tours blend the freedom of the open road with the elegance of a curated travel experience, offering a unique way to explore India's vibrant cultures, historical landmarks, and hidden gems. Whether cruising through the rugged terrains of the Himalayas or along the tranquil shores of Kanyakumari, these luxury motorcycle expeditions promise an unforgettable journey.





# FOUNDERS' QUEST

Explore the core of Bangalore's vibrant startup ecosystem. Discover why Bangalore is hailed as the startup capital of India, as you explore co-working spaces, tech hubs, and meet visionary founders who are reshaping industries. Gain invaluable insights into the challenges and triumphs of building a startup and learn firsthand what fuels this city's spirit of innovation. Perfect for anyone looking to immerse themselves in the dynamic culture driving India's entrepreneurial revolution. The Founders' Quest offers a unique glimpse into the innovative culture that fuels the city's entrepreneurial spirit







# INSIDE THE PALACE WALLS

The iconic Mysore Palace, or Amba Vilas Palace, is a symbol of grandeur and one of the most visited landmarks in India. Still home to the royal Wodeyar family, it is a living testament to India's regal history and architectural brilliance. As we walk through the opulent halls and vibrant courtyards, you'll gain insight into the monumental effort it took to construct this masterpiece, from its intricate carvings and exquisite domes to the sophisticated engineering that brought it to life. You'll hear the untold stories of royal celebrations, political intrigue, and cultural legacies that echo through its corridors.







# WINGS OF ADVENTURE

Experience breathtaking 360-degree views of India's most historically and culturally vibrant state, which draws hundreds of thousands of visitors from around the globe to explore its captivating sights and experiences. Whether you're passionate about culture, history, or adventure, the land of kings offers stunning landscapes that you can admire from a thrilling hot air balloon ride. Float gracefully over magnificent palaces, glorious forts, and picturesque lakes, and witness the vibrant cityscape from a unique perspective. Hot air balloon flights in Rajasthan are not just exhilarating; they provide an experience unlike any airplane journey. As the gentle breeze lifts you into the sky among the birds, you'll feel the exhilarating freedom that you always dreamed of becoming a reality.







# ECHOES OF SHAKTI

Located in Bhubaneswar and nestled among lush paddy fields, the temple is referred to as Mahamaya Mandir by the locals, after Durga, the central deity. It is believed that Queen Hirapur of the Bhaumakara dynasty built it during the 9th century CE when the Yogini cult was at its peak. The cult celebrates the triumph of the feminine cosmic power (Shakti) — represented by Durga and Mahakali — over evil. Chausath ('64' in Odia) refers to the 64 yoginis that once adorned the temple wall. If legend is to be believed, the demon king Raktabija was blessed with a boon that caused thousands of progeny to spring forth when his blood touched the ground. Durga unleashed 64 yoginis who drank every drop of his blood before it fell to the ground, thus vanquishing Raktabija. The temple remained hidden in plain sight until 1953. Since then, it is listed under and protected by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).







# CARVED DESIRES

India's most tantalizing town, Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh), is renowned globally for its breathtaking and provocative stone carvings that adorn its three groups of UNESCO World Heritage-listed temples. This unique town is a celebration of art and architecture, with the Western Group of temples standing out for its extraordinary craftsmanship and intricate sculptures. The sculptures depict a rich tapestry of human emotions, divine beings, and sensual encounters, making them some of the finest examples of temple art in the world. These artistic expressions challenge conventional norms and invite viewers to explore themes of love, beauty, and the complexity of relationships. As you wander through the temple complex, the harmonious blend of spirituality and sensuality becomes evident, inviting contemplation of the cultural values that have shaped Indian society over the centuries







# DANCE OF WARRIORS

Step into the enchanting world of Kalaripayattu, an ancient martial art form that embodies the spirit of Kerala's rich cultural heritage. You will be transported to a 100-year-old Kalari, a traditional training ground that has been the heart of this remarkable discipline for generations. Here, you will have the unique opportunity to witness skilled practitioners demonstrate the breathtaking techniques of Kalaripayattu, showcasing a blend of grace, strength, and agility. As you observe the performers, you'll be captivated by their fluid movements and intricate choreography, which tell stories of warriors and ancient battles through the dance of combat. This immersive experience not only allows you to appreciate the physicality of Kalaripayattu but also deepens your understanding of its historical significance and philosophical roots.







# CAVES OF SERENITY

Karla & Bhaja Caves tour is a day trip from Mumbai where we go back 2000 years to explore rock cut Buddhist caves on an ancient trade route .The Karla Caves were constructed between the 2nd and 5th centuries under the patronage of contemporary kingdoms, establishing them as a significant center for Buddhism in Western India. This remarkable site features 16 impressive Buddhist caves, with the oldest dating back to AD 160. The caves are adorned with stunning sculptures, and their horseshoe-shaped windows allow natural sunlight to flood the interiors, creating a refreshing atmosphere. A highlight of the visit is the prayer hall in the main cave, recognized as one of the largest rock-cut structures in India, with a stupa located at the end as the focal point of worship. Another unforgettable experience is Cave No. 12, which boasts a unique feature: its ceiling is supported by wooden ribs that have remarkably survived for two millennia.







# SPIRITUAL SYMPHONY

Varanasi, the spiritual capital of India, is a city that emanates spirituality and mysticism. Nestled along the sacred Ganges River, Varanasi is home to a timeless ritual known as the Ganga Aarti. This mesmerizing ceremony takes place every evening on the banks of the river, drawing countless devotees and curious travellers alike. The Ganga Aarti is deeply embedded in the cultural fabric of Varanasi. It is a tradition that has been carried on for centuries, passed down from one generation to another. The ceremony is conducted by a group of highly skilled priests known as “pandits.” They perform a synchronized sequence of rituals accompanied by chanting of Vedic hymns, ringing of bells, and rhythmic movements of oil lamps. Witnessing the Ganga Aarti is a deeply spiritual experience that leaves a lasting impression on the soul.







# HERITAGE STROLL

A walk through the ancient market and the temples of Vithalapura – a Hampi suburb known for the famous Vijaya Vithala temple that houses the renowned stone chariot and musical pillared mantapa. Hampi had many suburbs (puras). They were self-sufficient settlements centered around a temple and a main market. This walk will take you on a journey through the Vithalapura Bazaar that leads to the famous Vijaya Vithala temple – once a pilgrim center for the devotees and saints of Lord Vishnu. Though considered a pinnacle of temple architecture, this temple complex remains a historical enigma as we don't know when the original shrine was built. This is the same temple renowned for its musical stone pillars and the famous stone chariot.







## WILD ENCOUNTERS

Forts are integral to Rajasthan's landscape and a crumbling bastion forms the very nucleus of this national park. Covering some 1334 sq km of deciduous forests and grasslands, the park was the former hunting grounds of the Jaipur Maharaja, who built Sawai Madhopur, the park's main entrance town. Tigers and leopard are the highlights here, but you're more likely to spot water buffalo, wild boars, striped hyenas, langurs, wild dogs, mongoose, and several species of deer. Tours are by open-top jeep and the three lakes that mirror the wilderness add a dash of magic to the tour. The ruins of this 1000-year-old site are scattered in the forests and are often used as hideouts for the big cats. On safari look out for the striking Jogi Mahal, a former hunting lodge, built in red sandstone as well as crumbling arches, pillars, domes, and broken steps, near the lakes, Raj Bagh Talao and Padam Talao







# USEFUL INFORMATION

## **What language is spoken in India?**

Hindi is the most widely spoken language in India, however, English is widely spoken and written. Additionally, there are more than 100 other regional languages and dialects, including Punjabi, Bengali, Gujarati, and Oriya, which are widely used in the north, and Tamil and Telugu, which are common in the south. Other regional languages are Marathi, Kannada, and Malayalam.

## **What's the currency of India?**

The official currency of India is the Indian Rupee (INR). Major currencies such as US dollars, British pounds and Euros are easy to change throughout India. You must present your passport whenever you change currency or travelers checks.

## **How much to tip in India?**

Tipping for good service is expected in India and your specialist will provide more details. In some homestays and hotels, particularly in Kerala, you'll find a communal tip box, usually in reception. Please give your tip to your host to distribute fairly if a tip box isn't provided.

## **What food and drink should you try in India?**

Like its cultures and languages, India's cuisines are highly regional and what you eat and drink will vary depending on where you visit. However, there are a few things you'll find no matter where you go. For instance, thali are traditional meals made of different curries and dal with traditional accompaniments — all served in small bowls and arranged artistically on a large tray. The exact contents vary by region. You'll also find an abundance of street foods everywhere from big cities to rural roads with nothing else around, which you can explore on a guided tour. Another common sight — chaiwallahs selling spiced milk tea on seemingly every corner.

## **Clothes and etiquette**

As a rule of thumb, visitors to the larger cities like Delhi, Mumbai, or Bangalore will find that a mix of Indian and Western clothing is acceptable and is worn by many young Indians. However, in many popular tourist destinations such as Rajasthan, modesty in dress is recommended.





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