



# India Royal Rajasthan & Pushkar Camel Fair

15 Days

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*The Adventure Company* | EST. 1969

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# India Royal Rajasthan & Pushkar Camel Fair

Fancy yourself a regal maharaja? Our Rajasthan itinerary accommodates you in former palaces and deluxe desert tents while revealing the diverse cultures of this vibrant region. Travel through iconic cities from Delhi to Udaipur, and take in the elaborate architecture of the ancient palaces, temples, mansions, and fortifications of this great cradle of civilization. Activities are unforgettable: tour city sights, witness a rural Thar Desert festival, visit medieval markets, meet local people, and take a 4X4 safari through windswept dunes. To visit Rajasthan MT Sobek style is quite possibly a life-changing experience!

## Details

Arrive:	New Delhi, India
Depart:	New Delhi, India
Duration:	15 Days
Group Size:	5-15 Guests
Minimum Age:	12 Years Old
Activity Level:	

## Testimonials

*"I've taken six MT Sobek trips and they have all exceeded my expectations. The staff, the food, the logistics and the communications have always been exceptional. Thank you for being my "go to" adventure travel company!"*

Margaret I.

*"The Pushkar Camel Festival is a unique way to experience local life in the area of Rajasthan, India. It was enthralling to watch the groups of camels, all cleaned up to impress buyers, and the groups of buyers and sellers huddled together negotiating a deal. In addition, there were numerous Indian families at the festival enjoying the many forms of entertainment offered there."*

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## Why Take This Trip With Us?

### REASON #01

Our MT Sobek Rajasthan trip includes stunning Jaisalmer and the Thar Desert for an unbeatable itinerary

### REASON #02

Our expert team of local guides have over 25 years' experience leading adventure travelers through India.

### REASON #03

This is one of the few itineraries that includes the Pushkar Festival, adding a fascinating insight into local culture.

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## What to Expect



### ACTIVITIES

Relaxed cultural touring by private van to explore cities, palaces, and temples. Desert experience includes a thrilling jeep ride and camel fair.



### LODGING

Relax in splendor at former maharaja palaces and five-star hotels, and enjoy desert camping at the luxurious Aagman Camp.



### CLIMATE

Daytime temperatures range between 70F and 95F while nighttime temperatures will be as low as the 50s. The weather should be dry and clear.

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## Meet Our Guides

Our expert guides and trip leaders are truly the key to our trips' success. Many are locals who live in-country year-round; others have made it their second home—all are passionate, enthusiastic and endlessly knowledgeable. Meet two of the guides that might be on your trip.

A trained mountaineer with a travel bug, Ashim started his career in travel more than 20 years ago. After earning a degree in Japanese language, he was soon organizing tours and leading groups of Japanese, British and Americans all over the Indian subcontinent—from classic destinations to off-the-beaten-track corners. As someone who has seen most of the country, he is in a great position to explain the various contrasts one finds in their journey through India. Ashim looks forward to welcoming you on MT Sobek's India adventures.

**Ashim Ahuja**

A travel guide for over 30 years, Yatish is one of the most knowledgeable Indiaphiles we know. He was born and raised in Pauri, Garhwal, in the foothills of the Himalayas and studied Indian history and tourism at Garhwal University. Since 1983, Yatish has led innumerable cultural, historical, and wildlife tours—as well as safaris and treks throughout the Himalayas and the Indian subcontinent. He has also been engaged in regional research for books and documentary films. Yatish looks forward to sharing India with you on MT Sobek's adventures in Rajasthan.

**Yatish Bahugana**

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# Itinerary

## DAY 1

### ARRIVE IN NEW DELHI

Welcome to India! Arrive at Indira Gandhi International Airport in vibrant New Delhi, meet an MT Sobek representative outside of customs, and transfer to the luxury Taj Mahal (Taj Man Singh) Hotel for our welcome dinner, followed by a good night's sleep.

**Meals:** D

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## DAY 2

### SCENIC DRIVE TO JAIPUR

Take a scenic drive to Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan affectionately known as the "Pink City" for its fine architecture fashioned out of pink sandstone. In the 19th century, Maharajah Ram Singh had all non-pink buildings painted pink — the color of hospitality — to welcome Britain's Prince of Wales. Upon arrival, check into your hotel, your home for the next two nights. This afternoon, visit the old, colorful markets of Jaipur, where you can purchase anything from fine gems and woodcarvings to ornamental knives, beautiful Rajasthani textiles, and trinkets.

**Activity:** Half day city touring

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 3

### EXPLORE THE PINK CITY OF JAIPUR

Enjoy a half-day excursion to Amber Fort, stopping at the elaborate Hawa Mahal, the "Palace of the Winds," en route. Ride up to Amber Fort, arriving at the perched fort above the city for views of the surrounding Aravalli Hills. After lunch, explore Jaipur's City Palace, which occupies the center of Jaipur and houses the Royal residence and museums. Continue to Jantar Mantar, built from 1728 to 1734, where the stone and marble instruments accurately measure the harmony of the heavens.

**Activity:** Full day city touring & cooking class

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 4

### JOURNEY TO THE HOLY CITY OF PUSHKAR

Today begins with an optional visit to Ladli Vocational School which provides general education, training in traditional arts, and meals to area children. Meet with staff, engage with students, and help serve lunch, if you wish. Alternatively, guests can enjoy a leisurely morning at the hotel. Our destination today is Pushkar, a holy city said to be the seat of Brahma, set on the glassy shores of Lake Pushkar. Over the next two days, soak in the amazing annual spectacle of the Pushkar Fair and its thousands of camels, horses, and cattle brought in from

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miles around. Experience the festival's vibrant colors and energy as you observe bartering tribesmen, women wrapped in exquisite jewelry, and children dressed in their best traditional attire. It's a photographer's dream.

**Activity:** Half day Pushkar Fair

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 5

### WANDER THE COLORFUL PUSHKAR FAIR

The Pushkar Camel Fair is one of the last great traditional melas in India, and you have the entire day to wander around. Your visit is timed to ensure that you witness the best camel-trading moments, and you'll see owners using all of their persuasive skills to sell their camels at the most competitive prices. Both amateur and professional photographers will delight in capturing these skilled tradespeople in action!

**Activity:** Full day Pushkar Fair

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 6

### DRIVE TO THE BLUE CITY OF JODHPUR

Head to Jodhpur today, known as "the Gateway to the Thar Desert" and "the Blue City" for the color of the buildings that surround its historical fort. After arrival, embark on a city tour, visiting the three-mile-long Mehrangarh Fort (Majestic Fort), one of India's most impressive, formidable structures. Its magnificent palaces have marvelously carved panels and latticed windows. The Fort Museum houses an exquisite collection of palanquins, howdahs (elephant saddles), costumes, and more. Later, walk through the "Blue City" of Jodhpur and see its medieval market.

**Activity:** Half day city touring

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 7

### CONTINUE TO THE GOLDEN CITY OF JAISALMER

After breakfast, transfer to Jaisalmer, founded in 1156 by Bhatti Rajput ruler Rawal Jaisal. Often described as the Golden City, the commanding fort rises spectacularly from the heart of the Thar Desert like a golden mirage. The fort, etched in yellow sandstone, dominates the amber-hued city with its entire awesome splendor. There is no place like Jaisalmer! After checking into your hotel, enjoy a late afternoon drive out to Bada Bagh, where the royal family members were cremated. Afterward watch the sun set on Jaisalmer Fort.

**Activity:** Half day city touring

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 8

### EXPLORE OLD JAISALMER

Wander around the old town of Jaisalmer and Jaisalmer Fort, built in 1156. Perched on a 250-foot hill, the golden-hued fort stands like a sentinel in the barren desert landscape. It is the only "living fort" in India and within its ramparts lies an enchanting maze of narrow lanes dotted with lovely havelis (mansions), palaces, and 12th-century Jain temples. Also see Patwon Ki Haveli, the most elaborate and magnificent of all the Jaisalmer havelis, with unsurpassed stone carvings. The afternoon is free to wander around the city's lanes and alleys.

**Activity:** Full day city touring

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 9

### TRAVEL FROM JAISALMER TO GAJNER

After breakfast, drive to Gajner, stopping at Keechan village on the way. Keechan is home to migratory demoiselle cranes that feed on grains donated by the villagers. In the afternoon, check out the fort of Bikaner — which, unlike its counterparts in the region, does not sit on a hill. Check into your amazing lakeside hunting lodge owned by Maharaja of Bikaner.

**Activity:** Half day city touring

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 10

### SEE KOLAYAT LAKE & CAMP IN THE THAR DESERT

This morning take an early drive to watch ritual bathing at the ghats around Kolayat's lake. Kolayat is an important center of Hindu pilgrimage where thousands of holy people and local rural villagers gather to bathe. This day of the trip is the Day of Kartik Purnima, or the full moon — the holiest time for an auspicious dip in the water. In the afternoon, drive onward to Dechu in the Thar Desert. Situated on top of a sand dune, this is a great place to explore the desert life.

**Activity:** Half day Kolayat Fair & camel ride

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 11

### JEEP SAFARI IN THE DESERT

Embark on a 4X4 jeep safari in the Thar Desert! Driving over rural camel cart tracks and sand dunes, visit the adobe houses of various tribes who live here and learn about how they've adapted to harsh desert conditions.

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You'll also have a good chance of spotting Indian gazelle, Blue bull, and desert and Indian fox in the wilderness. In the afternoon, take a drive to Rohet and check into your palatial hotel.

**Activity:** Full day desert safari

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 12 EXPLORE RANAKPUR'S TEMPLE & HEAD TO UDAIPUR

After breakfast, drive to Udaipur, leaving behind arid western Rajasthan and heading toward the hilly regions of the south. En route visit Ranakpur, home to Jain temples dating back to the 14th century and some of Rajasthan's best marble carvings. After lunch in a shady glen, drive onward to arrive in Udaipur. Known as the City of Lakes, the romantic city and its gardens, temples, palaces, and, aptly, lakes lie in the Girwa Valley amidst the Aravalli Hills of south Rajasthan.

**Activity:** Half day city touring

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 13 STROLL THE ROMANTIC CITY OF UDAIPUR

Udaipur's old city is a traditionally planned, fortified walled city with a maze of narrow winding lanes flanked by elaborately decorated doorways, stained-glass windows, and jali screens. Its massive havelis have large inner courtyards and shops. Visit the City Palace, built in 1570, including several palaces that blend Rajput and Mughal styles as well as temples and gardens. Half of it is still occupied by the royal family, and part has been converted into a museum. In the afternoon, enjoy a public boat ride on Pichola Lake.

**Activity:** Half day city touring & sunset boat ride

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 14 EXPLORE OLD DELHI

After breakfast, transfer to the airport to catch your flight to Delhi. This afternoon, meander through Old Delhi with its narrow dirt roads, myriad people, and colorful bazaars that keep Delhi's traditional workmanship alive. Visit Raj Ghat, the cremation grounds of Mahatma Gandhi, and then head to Red Fort. Here we trade our motor vehicles for bicycle rickshaws, which take you into the heart of Chandini Chowk, or "the Silver Square" — so named for its silver merchants. Negotiating alleyways, end up at Jama Masjid, the largest Muslim mosque in India. Tonight we enjoy a festive farewell dinner!

**Activity:** Half day city touring

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 15

### DEPART FROM DELHI

In the early morning, bid farewell to the group as you transfer to the airport for your homeward-bound or onward flight.

**Meals:** B

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## Dates

Nov 18 - Dec 2, 2023

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## Inclusions & Exclusions

### PRICE INCLUDES

- Expertise and services of our experienced adventure guides
- All accommodations as noted in the itinerary
- All breakfasts, almost all lunches and dinners as noted in the itinerary
- Snacks and water between meals
- Additional regional guides and experts on many trips
- Comprehensive Trip Planner with detailed pre-trip information
- Private guided tours at historic sites, museums, wineries and other select attractions as noted in the itinerary
- Special events and other select attractions as mentioned in the itinerary
- All gratuities at hotels and restaurants
- Equipment and experienced guides for activities as described in the itinerary
- Park and other entry fees (unless otherwise noted)
- Fares for trains, ferries and other modes of travel as listed in the itinerary
- Select transfers as mentioned in the itinerary
- Baggage transfers and portorage

### PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- International airfare, airport taxes, and excess baggage fees
- Alcoholic beverages (MT Sobek provides wine at select events)
- Gratuities for MT Sobek guides and guide-drivers
- Travel Protection Program
- Personal expenses

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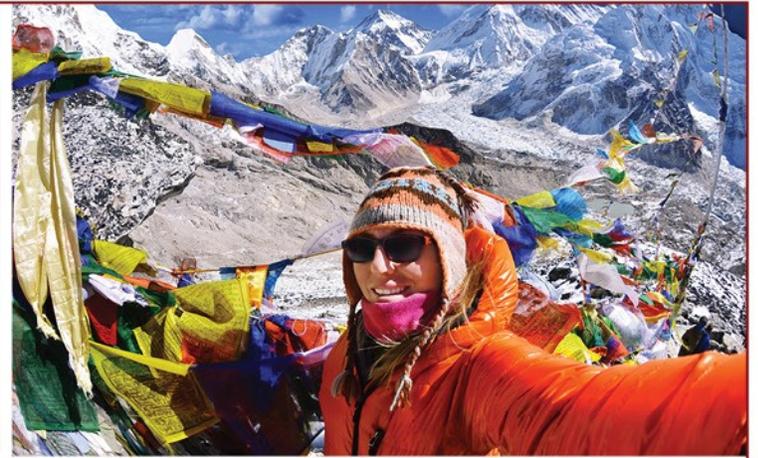
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## ➤ **The World of MT Sobek**

At Mountain Travel Sobek, we believe life is an adventure and adventure is life.

As the originators, innovators and leaders in adventure travel for more than five decades, we passionately create, craft and share indelible, transformative journeys to the world's most memorable places. Our more than 200 unique and once-in-a-lifetime trips are designed to inspire and exhilarate, enliven and excite--opening eyes and minds through profoundly personal connections with nature and culture.

Our small group and custom adventures span the globe, and the spectrum—of interests, environments and activities—every one expertly planned and knowledgeably and passionately guided. And our commitment to making every experience a remarkable one has earned us preferred travel outfitter status for National Geographic Active Expeditions, Active New York Times Journeys, and Smithsonian Active Journeys.

We are *the* adventure company.

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### **Awards**



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