

Wattletree Garden Tours

India and Sri Lanka

January 2018



Highlights in India include Delhi, the tiger sanctuary at Ranthambhore, Agra, Jaipur, the holy Ganges in Varanasi & Khajuraho.

In Sri Lanka explore Bentota, Kandi, Colombo and Nuwara Eliya in real comfort.

Tour conducted by
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Our 4/5 star journey to India and Sri Lanka is full of highlights including:

Taj Mahal	Holy Ganges at Varanasi	Pink City of Jaipur	Delhi Highlights
Ranthambhore Tigers	Cuisine of India and Sri Lanka	Sri Lankan gardens	Fantastic local guides
Erotic Khajuraho carvings	Tea and Spice gardens	Historic gardens	Great Hotels

Brian Sams is a Toowoomba based horticulturist involved in running gardening workshops, consultation, leading garden based tours and presenting weekly gardening news for WIN TV and gardening talkback on Radio MMM.

Day 1 Wednesday January 10 2018 Depart Australia for Delhi, India (3 nights)

Fly via Singapore Airlines to India with meals in flight. Upon our arrival in the Indian capital New Delhi we will be transferred to our hotel for a 3 night stay. Meals: D

Hotel: Royal Plaza or similar

Day 2 Thursday January 11

Enjoy a morning sightseeing tour of Old Delhi including a visit to the largest mosque in India, Jama Masjid, a rickshaw ride in the exciting old trading square, Chandni Chowk and drive past famous Red Fort. This afternoon visit Humayun's Tomb, the tomb of Mughal Emperor Humayun and the first garden tomb of the Indian subcontinent. Later visit Qutab Minar which is a fine example of Indo-Islamic architecture and the world's tallest brick minaret. Meals: BLD

Day 3 Friday January 12 – Delhi

A day to explore the modern city of New Delhi including the gold domed Sikh temple - Gurudwara Bangla Sahib, stop at India Gate, the 'All India War Memorial' and we will take a short walk on the Raj Path (Kings Way) before a visit to the President's House, Parliament House and other Government Secretariat Buildings. Next visit the beautiful Mughal Gardens built by the Mughals in Islamic style in the President Palace Premises. Today we will have lunch at the lovely Lodhi Garden Restaurant before a stroll through Lodhi Garden. This afternoon visit the Red Fort followed by the evening sound & light show. Meals BLD

Day 4 Saturday January 13 Delhi to Jaipur (2 nights)

We leave Delhi today for our leisurely drive to the pink city of Jaipur which is home to ancient forts and palaces and is one of India's most well planned cities. On the way to Jaipur we will stop to visit the magnificent 15th century Neemrana Fort Palace where we will have lunch. This palace is cut into a hillside and has great views of the surrounding region. Upon arrival we will check in to our hotel before a visit to see a little of Jaipur including local arts and crafts and then dinner. Meals: BLD

Hotel : Country Inn and Suites or similar

Day 5 Sunday January 14 Jaipur

A day to explore the best of Jaipur. First visit the 16th century Amber Fort which is a fine mix of Hindu and Muslim architecture and ornamentation. We will take an elephant ride (subject to availability) to this hilltop fort (or walk or drive). This afternoon, visit the City Palace complex with its museums including Mughal costumes, weapons and miniature paintings. Then visit the largest stone observatory in the world, Jantar Mantar and then drive past Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds), a remarkable five story building in the main street of the old city with semi-octagonal, delicate honey-combed sandstone windows. Meals: BLD

Day 6 Monday January 15 Jaipur to Ranthambore (2 Nights)

Today we visit the Sisodiya Rani Ka Bagh, which boasts a multi level garden which is a mix of Mughal designs and Indian art style. Next we will drive to Ranthambore acclaimed as one of the best places in the world to see tigers in the wild. Meals: BLD

Hotel: Ranthambore Regency or similar

Day 7 Tuesday January 16 Ranthambore

Safari day today. We will have an early morning and afternoon safari accompanied by a trained naturalist into the national park. Rest of the day is at leisure for you to relax in the sounds and senses of the neighbouring wildlife. The Ranthambore National Park is one of the prime examples of India's conservation program, Project Tiger. Once the hunting ground of Indian princes, this national park stands atop a 600m high hill range. Dotted with beautiful ponds, streams, lakes and old ruins, it is home to a large number of tigers, often spotted and photographed by visitors to the park. Meals: BLD

Day 8 Wednesday January 17 Ranthambore to Agra (2 Nights)

This morning we leave the park to head to Agra renowned as the city of the famous Taj Mahal. We will make a brief stop to visit Fatehpur Sikri, the red sandstone Mughal palatial complex. Within the complex lies a mosque built by the Mughal Emperor Akbar and dedicated to Sheikh Salim Chisti, a Muslim Sufi Saint who blessed Emperor Akbar with a son. Later we will continue our drive to Agra and check in to our hotel for a 2 night stay. Meals: BLD

Hotel: Four Points by Sheraton or similar

Day 9 Thursday January 18 Agra

A special day to enjoy the somewhat surreal views of the Taj Mahal. Appreciate this eternal symbol of love and the intricate designs and symmetries that "rhyme as a poem written in marble". Taj Mahal is an extravagant display of love, built by Shah Jahan in memory of his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal. Also, visit the splendid Agra Fort, built in red sandstone, encapsulating magnificent palaces, halls of public and private audience and beautiful gardens. Early in the evening we will have a sunset viewing of the Taj Mahal from across the river in the formal gardens of the Mehtab Bagh. Meals: BLD



Private tour : fully inclusive: small friendly groups



Day 10 Friday January 19 Agra to Jhansi via train and then to Khajuraho (1 night)

This morning we board an express train to Jhansi. Upon arrival, embark on a short drive to Orchha, a medieval riverside town known for its palaces and temples and wonderful inlay. We will explore this interesting town before continuing to Khajuraho – a UNESCO world heritage site in central India, famous for its erotic sculptured temples. Meals: BLD

Hotel: Ramada or similar

Day 11 Saturday January 20 Khajuraho to Varanasi (2 nights)

This morning visit the enchanting temples of Khajuraho with sculptures that draw their inspiration from the ancient art of Kama Sutra. Khajuraho Temples were built by the Chandela kings between 950 AD and 1050 AD. Later we will drive to the airport to catch our flight to Varanasi, the spiritual capital of India. Meals: BLD

Hotel : Ramada Plaza JHV or similar

Day 12 Sunday January 21 Varanasi

This morning we will be up early for a boat ride on the Holy River Ganges. See the 'bathing ghats' where thousands of pilgrims pay homage to the Sun God by bathing themselves in the holy water of the Ganges, and the 'burning ghats' where cremations are conducted. After breakfast, enjoy a visit to Sarnath, the place where Lord Buddha gave his first sermon. Sarnath was a renowned school of learning from 6th century BC to 12th century AD. The Ashoka pillar of Sarnath is the national emblem of India. Visit the ruins, stupa, Buddhist temple and the Sarnath Museum. This evening, experience a rickshaw ride to the ghats to enjoy the grand 'Aarti' ceremony at Dasaswamedh Ghat, conducted everyday at sunset by white-robed priests. The young priests sway in choreographed movements, worshipping the river goddess with incense, flowers and earthen lamps. Meals: BLD

Day 13 Monday January 22 Varanasi to Delhi (1 night)

Morning at leisure. Later we will be transferred to the airport to catch our flight back to Delhi. Upon arrival check in to your hotel for overnight stay. Meals: BLD

Hotel : Royal Plaza or similar

Day 14 Tuesday January 23 Delhi to Colombo to Bentota, Sri Lanka (2 Nights)

Today we will fly to Colombo, Sri Lanka and upon arrival we will make the interesting drive to the beautiful seaside town of Bentota where our hotel should be a real feature. Meals: BD

Hotel: Cinnamon Bey or similar

Day 15 Wednesday January 24 Bentota

A relaxing day today to firstly explore the Bawa's Lunuganga Gardens which are part of the Lunuganga Estate which was the country home of the renowned Sri Lankan architect Geoffrey Bawa on the shores of the Bentota River before having the rest of the day at leisure. Meals: BLD

Day 16 Thursday January 25 Bentota to Kandy (2 nights)

Today we will visit the Pinnawela Elephant Orphanage which was set up by the Sri Lankan government to rehabilitate orphaned elephants. Spend some time at the orphanage, seeing elephants being fed and bathed by the orphanage staff before continuing the lovely drive to Kandy. Meals: BLD

Hotel : Ozo Kandy or similar

Day 17 Friday January 26 Kandy

After breakfast we will take an excursion tour to Matale to visit the Spice Gardens. This afternoon visit the Temple of Tooth Relic of Buddha, located in the royal palace complex which houses the relic of the tooth of Buddha. Since ancient times, the relic has played an important role in local politics because it is believed that whoever holds the relic holds the governance of the country. Visitors are not allowed inside the inner chambers and cannot see the tooth relic. This evening enjoy a cultural dance show to see the popular Kandyan dancing and drumming of Sri Lanka. Meals: BLD

Day 18 Saturday January 27 Kandy to Nuwara Eliya (2 Nights)

Today we take the scenic drive to Nuwara Eliya, the 'Little England' of Sri Lanka, set against beautiful backdrops of mountains, valleys, waterfalls and tea plantations. This afternoon, enjoy an experience of tea plucking in traditional Sri Lankan attire. After plucking we will learn more about this most famous of Sri Lankan produce in the mini tea factory including the drying process and how different flavours are created. Tasting will of course follow. Meals: BLD

Hotel: Araliya Green Hotel or similar

Day 19 Sunday January 28 Nuwara Eliya

Today visit Hakgala Botanical Garden which is the second largest garden in Sri Lanka and one of the highest botanical gardens in the world. Later continue to visit the Victoria Park which is named to commemorate the 60th Jubilee Coronation of Queen Victoria in 1897. This afternoon we will visit Strawberry farms and Nuwara Eliya Golf Course. Meals: BLD

Day 20 Monday January 29 Nuwara Eliya to Colombo (2 nights)

After leisurely breakfast, embark on our drive to Colombo with the rest of the day at leisure. Meals: BLD

Hotel : Cinnamon Red or similar

Day 21 Tuesday January 30 Colombo

Enjoy a full free day in Sri Lanka's commercial capital city of Colombo. An interesting range of optional tours will be available for those keen to get out and explore this interesting city including city tours, river cruises and national park expeditions. We will meet for a farewell dinner this evening. Meals: B D

Day 22 Wednesday January 31 Colombo – Australia

After breakfast we will transfer to the airport for our homeward bound flights. Meals: B and meals in flight.



Quality matters!

- ⇒ We will be travelling with an experienced tour company and guide.
- ⇒ A great guide means that everything will be taken care of so you can relax and enjoy all that India and Sri Lanka has to offer.
- ⇒ The food will be safe, diverse and interesting with a full range of tastes being catered for from spicy to simple.
- ⇒ The hotels are all 4/5 star and will add to the experience.
- ⇒ If you have thought of travelling to India and/or Sri Lanka with like minded travelers now might be the time!



Pricing details—tour Code Wat1525

Full tour price (fully inclusive see below for details)	\$9795
Deposit pp (deductible from tour prices above) Travel insurance will need to be purchased at time of deposit	\$500
Single supplement - if you wish to twin share please let us know and we will try to put you in contact with others who are keen to share.	\$1850

Important dates

Deposit – as soon as possible to secure place on tour

Final payment 70 days before departure - 1/11/17.

The tour prices include:

- 4/5 star quality hotels in good locations
- International flight with Singapore Airlines and Internal air fares
- Internal rail travel and exclusive coach travel
- All tipping for national guides, drivers and portering
- Entry to all sightseeing and gardens as detailed in itinerary
- Quality meals listed in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- English speaking guide for all tour in Sri Lanka and India.
- Australian garden guide – Brian Sams
- Taxes where appropriate (but subject to change based on prevailing rates)
- Airport transfers (for whole group only in India and Sri Lanka)
- Sri Lankan and Indian visas

The tour price excludes:

- All items not stated as included
- Travel insurance is recommended for all travelers, please call if you need help to arrange.



General notes:

- tour prices subject to change dependent on currency fluctuations, taxes and fuel surcharges applicable by carrier
- gardens and attractions may be subject to change due to operational considerations.
- prices based on cash, direct debit or cheque payment. Use of credit cards will incur additional fees
- optional stopover details and flight details other than those listed may be arranged—please talk to Brian Sams to discuss.
- Please complete booking form at time of deposit with full names as per passport. Changes after booking may incur a re-booking fee
- If the booking is cancelled up to 60 days prior to departure cancellation charge AU\$350 per person will be levied, between 46 - 59 days prior to departure 25%, between 36 - 45 days prior to departure 50%, between 10 - 35 days prior to departure 70% off total payment per person and if booking cancelled 9 days or under prior to departure, no refund will be made. No refund applies once journey has commenced. Any refunds will attract cancellation penalties inclusive of GST and take approximately 12 weeks.
- For full terms and conditions please refer to China Travel Service or visit <http://www.chinatravel.com.au/about/legal>



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