

MINDFUL INDIA – NORTHERN HIGHLIGHTS

February 24th – March 11th, 2019

Get ready for the experience of a lifetime!

Sunday, 24th February, 2019 - **The Adventure Begins**

Israeli contingent departs Tel Aviv. International travelers are en route from their respective points of origin.

Monday, 25th February, 2019

Namaste and welcome to India!

Arrive Mumbai where the Israeli and international contingents meet and transfer to the hotel.

Lunch (included) in hotel.

Orientation, get acquainted and organized (including money-changing).

Visit **Mani Bhavan**, the museum and library devoted to the life of Mahatma Gandhi. Learn about the teachings which inspired the civil rights movement of Martin Luther King in the US and continue to galvanize rights workers around the world.

Immerse yourself in the lush green tranquility of the **Hanging Gardens of Mumbai**, established in 1881. The garden serves as a lovely backdrop for yoga, meditation, photography and just escaping from the rush of the surrounding cityscape.

Visit the **Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST)**, built in 1887 to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria, and hence known then as Victoria Terminus. This historic railway station is a UNESCO World Heritage Site which today serves as the headquarters of the Central Railways. The station was designed by Frederick William Stevens according to the concept of Victorian Italianate Gothic Revival architecture and meant to be a similar revival of Indian Goth (classical era) architecture.

Dinner (included)

Overnight: Mumbai

Tuesday, 26th February, 2019

Morning meditation.

After breakfast, visit Gabriel Project Mumbai and learn about one of their special women's empowerment projects that teaches women vocational and

business skills while they provide nourishing meals to the slum kids of Mumbai. We'll enjoy a cooking demonstration with this special group. Lunch (included).

Afternoon – experience the grandeur of the Gateway of India, famous as a symbol, first, of the “power and majesty” of the British Empire, and now, of the city of Mumbai. Enjoy free time to wander around Colaba, filled with bustling markets, colorful art galleries, and historic monuments.

Dinner (included) at a popular Thali restaurant.

Thali refers to an Indian-style meal made up of a selection of various dishes which are served on a platter. Your personal buffet, letting you sample a variety of delectable dishes without the pressure of negotiating a local menu right off the bat. Stress reduction on your plate!

Overnight: Mumbai

Wednesday, 27th February, 2019

Morning meditation and yoga.

Transfer to the airport for flight to Amritsar.

Arrive Amritsar in the late afternoon and check in at the hotel

Dinner (included) at the hotel.

Visit the Golden Temple.

Overnight: Amritsar

Sikhism (from the word Sikh, meaning a "disciple" or "learner") is a monotheistic religion that originated in the Punjab region of the Indian subcontinent about the end of the 15th century, making it one of the youngest of the major world religions. The fundamental beliefs of Sikhism, articulated in the sacred Holy Book of the Sikhs, the Guru Granth Sahib, include faith and meditation on the name of the one creator, divine unity and equality of all humankind, engaging in selfless service, striving for social justice for the benefit and prosperity of all, and honest conduct and livelihood while living a householder's life.

Amritsar, with approximately one million residents, is one of the major cities of the Sikh religion and the site of the Sikh religion's holiest shrine, The Golden Temple. The Temple rivals the grandeur and majesty of the Taj Mahal. Unlike the Taj Mahal, however, which is actually a mausoleum honoring the beloved wife of Shah Jahan, the Golden Temple is a living edifice, welcoming thousands of people each day to pray, meditate, eat, and even find lodging within its majestic compound.

Thursday, 28th February, 2019

Morning meditation and yoga.

After breakfast: visit Jalianwala Bagh.

Jalianwala Bagh is the site of an infamous massacre of innocent Indian civilians on April 13, 1919 by troops of the British Indian Army under the command of Colonel Reginald Dyer. Hundreds of men, women and children were killed in the massacre, which sparked fierce debate and protests in India and worldwide, including in the British Parliament. Some historians consider this event to be a decisive step towards the end of British rule in India. ^[19]

Visit the Golden Temple where we will learn about Sikhism and experience, first hand, the tradition of hospitality and selfless service at the Golden Temple, The Temple compound feeds over 100,000 people per day and can provide free daily lodging for as many as 30,000. We'll volunteer in lunch preparation, followed by the unparalleled experience of eating with the locals and pilgrims. Lunch (included)

Afternoon: we'll drive to the Wagah Border to witness the theatrical daily parade ceremony on the Indian and Pakistan border. Wagah Border lies about 28 kms. from Amritsar and is the only overland opening between the two countries.

The Wagah border, often called "the Berlin Wall of Asia", is a ceremonial border on the India-Pakistan border where each evening Border Security forces of both India and Pakistan engage in a colorful and very precise parade and the changing of the guard.

Dinner (included).

After dinner: optional visit to the Golden Temple to see the Holy Book put to bed.

Overnight: Amritsar

Friday 1st March, 2019

Mindfulness and yoga practice.

After breakfast - drive from Amritsar to Garli Village, a heritage village in the Kangra Valley.

Check in to hotel.

Lunch (included)

Prepare for Shabbat.

Kabbalat Shabbat

Dinner (included)

Overnight: Garli

Saturday 2nd March, 2019

Morning –Mindfulness workshop and yoga practice.

Lunch (included) at the hotel

In the afternoon, enjoy a village / nature walk through Garli, or simply kick back and relax on the grounds of our lovely hotel.

Dinner (included) at our hotel.

Overnight: Garli

Sunday 3rd March, 2019

Morning meditation and yoga practice

Breakfast

Drive to McLeod Ganj, the adoptive home of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile.

Check in to hotel.

Lunch (included)

Late afternoon – visit Dalai Lama Temple.

Dinner included.

After dinner – watch movie about the Dalai Lama and how he was chosen to be the religious leader of Tibetan Buddhism.

Overnight: McLeod Ganj

McLeod Ganj is a suburb of Dharamshala in the north Kangra valley of the province of Himachal Pradesh. Situated on the Dhauladhar Mountain Range, it is known as "Little Lhasa" due to its large population of Tibetan refugees who followed the Dalai Lama when he escaped from Tibet in 1959. His presence and the Tibetan population have made Dharamshala a popular destination for Indian and foreign tourists, including students studying Tibetan Buddhism. The town of McLeod Ganj was founded in 1860 and served as the civil administrative point and cantonment of the British. The name McLeod Ganj is derived from the name of the British governor of the province, Sir Ian McLeod.

Monday, 4th March, 2019

Morning meditation and yoga practice.

Visit the Tibetan Children's Village.

Some free time for lunch (on your own) and exploring McLeod Ganj.

Afternoon - walk from Naddi village to Dharamkot (both suburbs of Dharamshala), enjoying breathtaking mountain views.

Dinner on your own.

Overnight: McLeod Ganj

The Tibetan Children's Village is home to almost 2,000 children of all ages who were either orphaned as a result of the Tibetan exile or who left their parents in Tibet seeking shelter in India. The school curriculum includes all general

subjects plus Tibetan language, history, culture, and training in Buddhism. You'll learn how aspects of the program, including their summer camp program, were inspired by the experience of the Jewish people in keeping an age-old tradition and religion alive and vibrant even in exile.

Tuesday, 5th March, 2019

Morning meditation and yoga practice.

Visit the Tibetan Refugee Museum.

Lecture: "Intro to Buddhism"

Lunch on your own.

Afternoon/evening: we have been invited to a local village for home hospitality including a delicious dinner (included) and a program of Kangra folk dance and music performed by the school and college students.

Overnight: McLeod Ganj.

Wednesday, 6th March, 2019

Mindfulness workshop and yoga practice.

Options: Walk to Bagsu Falls / Free time

Lunch and Dinner on your own. As there is a large Tibetan population in this town, there are many delightful restaurants offering Chinese/Tibetan food, as well as Indian cuisine.

Overnight: McLeod Ganj

Thursday 7th March, 2019

Drive McLeod Ganj to Shimla

Lunch included.

Arrive in Shimla late afternoon and check in to hotel.

Dinner on your own.

Overnight: Shimla

Perched on a 12-kilometer ridge with steeply forested hillsides falling away in all directions and a cool mountain climate, Shimla was a natural choice as the summer capital of British India. It is presently the state capital of Himachal Pradesh, with a population of around 160,000 (Shimla town only). The Shimla Agreement between India and Pakistan was signed here on 2 July 1972, following the Bangladesh Liberation war in 1971 that led to the independence of Bangladesh (earlier known as East Pakistan).

Shimla is famous for its natural beauty, architectural buildings, wooden crafts, and its apples.

Friday 8th March, 2019

Morning meditation.

Tour of Shimla town. Visit the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies. Stroll along Mall Road, the central long winding main street, enjoying the views, browsing and shopping opportunities, and the scenic cardio workout.

*The **Indian Institute of Advanced Study (IIAS)** is a research institute established in 1964, offering fellowships in the humanities, social sciences, and natural and life sciences. Located on Observatory Hill, one of Shimla's seven hills, the imposing building housing the IIAS originally served as a home for many of the British viceroys of India and was called Viceregal Lodge. After India achieved independence, the building served as a summer retreat for the president of India before it was turned into a center of higher learning.*

Lunch on your own.

Return to hotel around 3.30 pm to prepare for Shabbat.

Kabbalat Shabbat.

Dinner (included)

Overnight: Shimla

Saturday 9th March, 2019

Start the day with a "mini retreat" with Dr. Dina Wyshogrod, enhancing your meditation skills.

Yoga practice.

Lunch (included).

Nature walk/rest

Final dinner (included)

Overnight: Shimla

Sunday 10th March, 2019

Meditation and yoga practice

After breakfast - drive from Shimla to Chandigarh airport

Fly Chandigarh to Mumbai.

Lunch and Dinner included.

Overnight: Mumbai

Monday, 11th March, 2019

After breakfast, transfer to the International Airport for flight home. Israeli contingent – this is a day flight that lands in Tel Aviv in the late afternoon.