

MINDFUL INDIA 2025

RAJASTHAN & THE NORTH

Color. Vibrancy. Spirituality.

An unforgettable journey of the senses and the spirit

February 18th – March 6th, 2025

Tuesday, 18th February, 2025 - The Adventure Begins

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

Wednesday 19th February – Delhi – Amritsar

Namaste and welcome to India!

Arrive Delhi where the Israeli and trans-Atlantic contingents meet.

Board a connecting flight to Amritsar.

Land Amritsar

Lunch (included).

Check in to our hotel.

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

Dinner (included).

Early night to relax and recover from the flights.

Overnight: Amritsar

Thursday 20th February – Amritsar

After breakfast we will visit Jallianwala Bagh, a memorial garden dedicated to an infamous massacre that took place there in April 1919, considered to be a turning point in India's struggle for independence.

Then we will visit the Golden Temple of the Sikhs, where we will get an introduction to Sikhism. Experience a key tenet of the Sikhs: hospitality. The Temple Kitchens feed over 100,000 people per day, for free. Volunteer in lunch preparation, followed by the unparalleled experience of eating with the locals and pilgrims.

Lunch (included)

Afternoon - drive to 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.

Dinner (included).

After dinner – optional visit to the Golden Temple to see the nighttime ritual of putting the Holy Book to bed.

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.

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

Overnight: Amritsar

Friday, 21st February – Amritsar – Pragpur

After breakfast – drive from Amritsar to Pragpur, India's first heritage village. Check in to our charming hotel, listed as one of India's unique heritage hotels.

Lunch (included).

Kabbalat Shabbat in the hotel.

Dinner (included)

Pragpur is a picturesque little village nestled in the lap of the snow-covered Himalayas, in the lush Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh.

Its rich history and distinctive local color - picturesque cobblestone streets, mud-plastered walls, and slate-roofed houses - led to its being named India's first "heritage hamlet". A perfect spot for a restful and restorative Shabbat.

Overnight: Pragpur

Saturday 22nd February – Pragpur

Morning – Mindfulness workshop with Dr. Dina Wyshogrod.

Late morning - enjoy a village tour and nature walk (easy level) through bucolic scenery down to the river at Balahar where we'll savor a picnic lunch (included - brought to us by the hotel staff) along the banks of the peaceful river.

Less strenuous options include exploring the cobbled streets and alleys of this

Heritage Village or simply kicking back and relaxing on the grounds of our lovely hotel.

Dinner (included) at our hotel.

Overnight: Pragpur

Sunday 23rd February – Pragpur – McLeod Ganj

After breakfast, drive to McLeod Ganj.

Late morning – visit the Norbulingka Institute.

Arrival at McLeod Ganj, home of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile.

Check in to our hotel

Lunch (included).

Late afternoon – visit the Temple of the Dalai Lama.

Dinner (included).

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

The Norbulingka Institute, a seven-acre preserve about 15 km. from McLeod Ganj, was established by the Dalai Lama in order to preserve and develop Tibetan art and craftsmanship. Norbulingka, named for the summer residence of the Dalai Lama in Lhasa, Tibet, is graced by ponds, bridges and gardens. It was constructed without chopping a single tree or its branches. It includes a library, a temple, a college, and design studios and workshops where you'll see Tibetan artisans engaged in the traditional arts of Tibet, such as thangka painting, wood carving, statue making, and appliqué, ensuring the preservation of these skills and safeguarding these beautiful art forms for posterity.

McLeod Ganj is a suburb of Dharamshala in the north Kangra valley of Himachal Pradesh. The town was founded in 1860 and served as the civil administrative point and cantonment of the British. It was named after the British governor of the province, Sir Ian McLeod.

Today McLeod Ganj 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 – and McLeod Ganj in particular – a popular destination for Indian and foreign tourists, particularly those interested in Tibetan Buddhism.

Overnight: McLeod Ganj

Monday 24th February – McLeod Ganj

After breakfast, visit the Tibetan Children's Village.

Free time for lunch (on your own) and to explore McLeod Ganj.

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

Dinner on your own.

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 in exile.

Overnight: McLeod Ganj

Tuesday 25th February – McLeod Ganj

Visit the Tibetan Refugee Museum.

Lunch on your own.

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

Overnight: McLeod Ganj

Wednesday 26th February – McLeod Ganj – Amb Station – Delhi

After breakfast drive to Amb station to board the Vande Bharat Train for a high speed, comfortable ride to Delhi.

Lunch (included)

Upon arrival, go for dinner (included) to a nearby restaurant then check in to our hotel.

Overnight: Delhi

Thursday 27th February – Delhi – Pushkar

After breakfast, drive to Pushkar.
On the way, visit the inspiring Barefoot College.

Barefoot College (www.barefootcollege.org) is an NGO run by and for villagers, empowering them to address problems of water supply, education, health and employment. It is the only college in India built and managed by the poor.

The college identifies, respects and applies traditional knowledge, village skills and village wisdom to provide basic services to solve rural problems faced by Indian families living on \$1 a day. We will also learn how they use their traditional art of puppetry to inform the surrounding villagers about their rights.
Continue drive to Pushkar.

Lunch and dinner (included)

Check in to hotel.

Overnight: Pushkar

Friday 28th February – Pushkar

After breakfast – visit Nareli Jain Temple.

Lunch (included)

After lunch – free time to explore this charming and mystic town and browse and shop in its colorful market, or relax at the hotel.

Kabbalat Shabbat in the hotel.

Dinner (included).

Pushkar, on the shore of Pushkar Lake, means ‘born of a flower’. Hindus believe that a swan sent by the gods dropped a lotus flower marking the spot where Brahma, the Hindu god of creation, would perform a grand ritual (yagna). This makes Pushkar one of the five sacred pilgrimage sites (dhams) for devout Hindus. Its primary temple is one of the few temples in the world dedicated to Brahma.

Overnight: Pushkar

Saturday 1st March – Pushkar

After breakfast: Mindfulness workshop with Dr. Dina Wyshogrod.

Lunch (included)

Afternoon: Walking tour of Pushkar, including a visit to its unique Brahma Temple. This temple is one of very few existing temples in the world dedicated to the Hindu creator-god, Brahma, and remains the most prominent among them.

We will get an insight into Hinduism.

Havdallah and dinner (included) at the hotel.

Evening – free time to enjoy this charming, exotic and mystic town and market.

Overnight: Pushkar

Sunday 2nd March – Pushkar - Jaipur

After breakfast, drive from Pushkar to Jaipur and check I to our hotel.

Enroute visit Bagru, a community famous for 350 years for its ancient art of block printing. Visit the Titanwala Museum to understand more about this incredible art form.

Lunch (included)

We are invited to our guide's home where he and his wife will treat us to a delicious, authentic vegetarian Rajasthani meal (included).

Overnight: Jaipur

Monday 3rd March – Jaipur

After breakfast, we will visit Amber (pronounced Amer) Fort. One of the largest forts in Rajasthan, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is the former capital of Kachwaha Dynasty.

Back in Jaipur, we will stop for a photo-op at Hawa Mahal (Wind Palace) and Jal Mahal (Water Palace).

Lunch (included).

After lunch, visit the world-famous royal observatory and City Palace where the King of Rajasthan lives.

Dinner (included).

Overnight: Jaipur

Tuesday 4th March – Jaipur - Delhi

Early morning – attend a special ceremony (aarti) at the 500 year old historic Govind Devji (Lord Krishna) Temple followed by a visit to the beautiful flower and vegetable market. Return to the hotel for breakfast.

After breakfast drive to Delhi.

Lunch (included)

Arrive I Delhi and check in to hotel

Evening: Visit Dilli Haat, one of Delhi’s most famous open-air markets.

Dinner (included)

Overnight: Delhi

Wednesday, 5th March - Delhi

After breakfast visit New Delhi and Old Delhi, including Qutub Minar, Rajghat, the Red Fort, the biggest spice market in India and a memorable rickshaw ride in Chandni Chowk.

Lunch (included)

Final banquet dinner (included).

Overnight: Delhi

Thursday, 6th March – Delhi – International Flights

Tour of Delhi – Humayun’s Tomb and Lodi Gardens.

Lunch (included)

Drive to Delhi International Airport for flight home.