

# Shekhawati Desert Ride, India – 2020

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Thursday 6-Feb-20

Accommodation is included for the night of 6 February at Hotel Vasant Continental or similar. Rooms are available from midday

Friday 7-Feb-20

Full day Sightseeing of Delhi

*Delhi :The old city, built by Shah Jehan in the 17th century, stands today as an epitome of the whole history of Indo- Islamic architecture. New Delhi, designed and constructed by the Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Herbert Baker is a mixture of east and west. The public buildings in red sandstone are in the Moghul style. It has a circular Parliament House and an imposing Central Secretariat in two blocks which stand at the approaches to Rashtrapati Bhawan, the residence of the President of India.*

*Delhi is today the political, economic and cultural capital of the World's largest democracy and has also become one of the greatest tourist centres of the World.*



*SIGHTSEEING OF OLD DELHI: Visit Jama Mosque and Raj Ghat, where the father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi was cremated.*

*SIGHTSEEING OF NEW DELHI: Visit Humayun's Tomb aptly called predecessor of the Taj Mahal. Drive past Safdarjung's Tomb, the Qutab Minar, 72 meters high and one of the perfect towers of the Persian World. Nearby, amidst the ruins of the Quwut - ul - Islam Mosque stands the Iron pillar which has stood the vagaries of the weather and not rusted over 1500 years.*

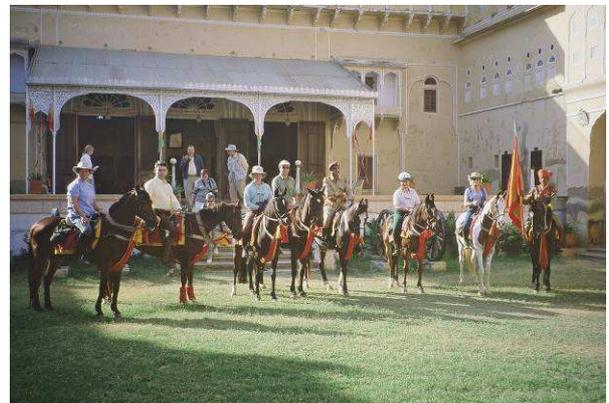
*An orientation drive through New Delhi includes the Embassy area, Government Buildings. Drive past Jantar- Mantar Astronomical observatory and through Connaught Place, New Delhi's main shopping centre.*

Overnight at Hotel Vasant Continental.

Saturday 8-Feb-20

After an early breakfast, drive to Dundlod (about 6 to 7 hours). Arrive Dundlod and transfer to Dundlod Fort where you will stay for two nights. This is not a regular hotel – but more like a home and the starting point of the rides in Shekhawati.

Overnight at Dundlod Fort for two nights.



*DUNDLOD: The Dundlod Fort in the heart of the Shekhawati was built in 1750. This majestic fort surrounded by a moat, is a mix of Mogul and Rajputana architecture. The majestic Diwan Khana (the Audience Hall) is furnished with Louis XIV furniture.*

Sunday 9-Feb-20

This morning visit the stables which has some of the best Marwari horses in the country and try out the horses riding in and around Dundlod.

In the afternoon time to relax and to visit the Dundlod town and see the Frescoes.

Overnight at Dundlod Fort.

Monday 10-Feb-20

After breakfast, ride to Churi Ajitgarh (about 20kms). The ride to Churi takes you across villages, farmlands

and some quaint farmers' dwellings. The terrain is soft and sandy and ideal for riding.



Arrive Churi and transfer to your hotel which at one time used to be a Haveli (a big mansion) with beautiful frescoes for which the entire Shekhawati is famous.



*Shekhawati is a region of which Churi Ajitgarh, Dundlod, Mandawa, Mehansar and Alsisar are parts. This region is Rajasthan's open air Art Gallery. No other region in India or perhaps, even in the world, has such a large concentration of high quality frescoes as the region of Shekhawati. In the beginning this semi-arid region had only its blank monochromatic palette to offer. No school of painting thrived till history and circumstances took up this colourless page and made it blossom with art for almost two centuries - from 1750 to 1930. Today this region is commonly called the Open Air Art Gallery of Rajasthan.*

Overnight at Vivaana Culture Hotel or similar.

Tuesday 11-Feb-20

After breakfast, ride to Mandawa (about 25kms) passing through villages and farmlands speckled with the Khejri trees.

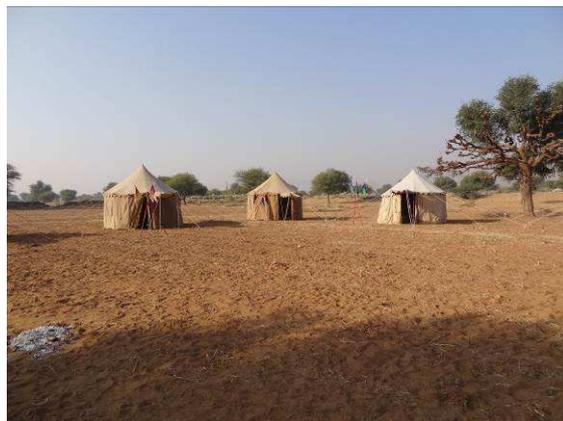


The terrain is quite flat except for the sand dunes which keep coming up now and then. Arrive Mandawa.

Overnight at Mandawa Castle or similar.

Wednesday 12-Feb-20

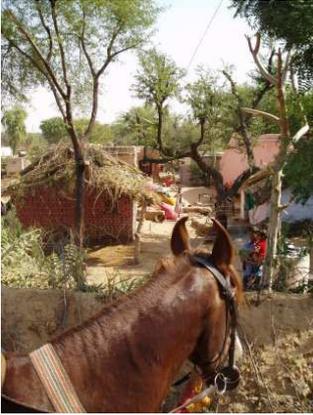
Ride to Thimoli (about 28 kms) passing through sandy countryside, farmlands and villages. There are some good chances of seeing some wildlife in the form of the Nilgai antelope (which is the biggest antelope in India) and the graceful Chinkara gazelle.



Overnight in a Tented Camp

Thursday 13-Feb-20

Ride to Mehansar (about 25kms) passing through a very beautiful landscape comprising of sand dunes, farmlands and villages.



Arrive Mehansar and ride into the Narayan Niwas Castle.

Please Note that the Narayan Niwas Castle is a private home and facilities are quite basic. Hot water is supplied in buckets. Please do not expect any luxuries here.

Overnight at Narain Niwas Castle or similar.

Friday 14-Feb-20

Ride to Gangiasar (about 25 kms). The ride again is through the desert country - which is still quite devoid of major developments. The pace of the ride is fast like on the previous days and you should get some good canters.

Most of the time the terrain is soft and sandy and there are good chances of seeing the Chinkara Gazelle and the Nilgai antelope.



Overnight in a Tented Camp

Saturday 15-Feb-20

Ride to Alsisar (about 22kms). The ride on this day again is very interesting It is full of lovely sand dunes - besides small hamlets and farmlands. Today also there are good chances of seeing the Nilgai and the Chinklara gazelle.



Arrive Alsisar - which is quite a large village and ride into the Alsisar Mahal - which has been converted into a hotel very recently and where the rooms have been tastefully renovated in order to provide all the comforts to the guests. The hotel has a lovely swimming pool and facilities for massage – a nice hotel to end the ride.

Overnight at Alsisar Mahal or similar.

Sunday 16-Feb-20

After a leisurely breakfast, bid goodbye to your horses and staff and drive to Jaipur (approximately four and a half hours drive). Arrive Jaipur and transfer to your hotel.

This afternoon sightseeing of Jaipur:



*JAIPUR: The rose-pink capital of Rajasthan, is surrounded on all sides by rugged hills, crowned with forts. Enclosed by embattled walls, the city was built early in the eighteenth century. The Maharaja's palace*

stands in the centre of the city amidst lovely gardens. Houses with latticed windows line the streets, their rose-pink colour lending enchantment to the scene and almost magical at sunset.

Jaipur is aptly called the "Pink City of India". It takes its name from the famous Maharana Sawai Jai Singh, who founded the city in 1728. A keen astronomer, he built an observatory, which still exists and is equipped with quaint masonry instruments of remarkable size.

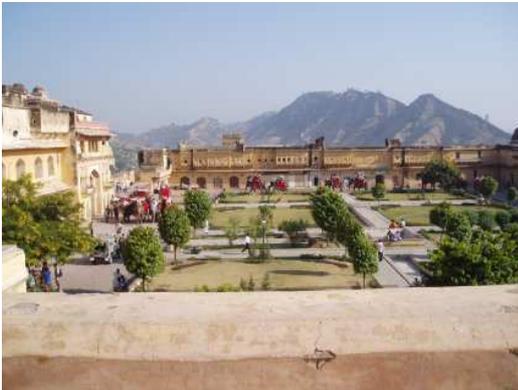
Jaipur is noted for its craftsmen skilled in the art of cutting precious stones and famed for its garnets and rubies. It is equally well known for brass inlay work, lacquer work and the printings of muslin.

**CITY SIGHTSEEING:** The City Palace which now houses a museum containing rare manuscripts, painting and an armoury; the Jantar Mantar observatory- built in the 17th century by Jai Singh- with a sundial 90ft. high (now a UNESCO World Heritage Site); the Museum amidst the Ram Niwas Palace Gardens founded in 1876 with a large collection of antiques; the palace of Winds, a landmark of Jaipur made of pink sandstone and of unique design.

Overnight at Jaipur for two nights.

Monday 17-Feb-20

This morning you have a visit to the Amber Fort.



**AMBER FORT:** 12 Kms from Jaipur lies the city of Amber with an ancient imposing fort/Palace overlooking the lake at the entrance to a rocky mountain grove. Built in the 17th century, the palace is a distinguished specimen of Rajput architecture. The Jai Mandir (hall of victory) is so delicately ornamented with fine inlay work that it glows. The fort of Jaigarh, crowning the summit of a peak is of amazing beauty and grandeur. This fort is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

In the afternoon sightseeing and /or at leisure.

Overnight at Jaipur.

Tuesday 18-Feb-20

After an early breakfast, drive to Agra (about 4 hours drive). Arrive Agra and transfer to your hotel.

In the afternoon you visit Agra Fort.

**AGRA FORT:** The Agra Fort ( a UNESCO World Heritage site ) is one of the most important and robustly built stronghold of the Mughals, embellished with number of richly decorated buildings encompassing the imposing Mughal style of art and architecture. It was constructed by the third Mughal emperor Akbar on the remains of an ancient site known as Badalgarh between 1565 and 1573. He ordered to renovate the fort with red sandstone and some 4000 builders daily worked on it and it was completed in 8 years (1565-1573).



This powerful fortress of red sandstone, semi-circular on plan, is surrounded by a 2.5 kms. long and 21.4 m high fortification wall. Double ramparts have been provided here with broad massive circular bastions at regular intervals. There are four gates on its four sides, one of the gates was called "Khizri-gate" (the water gate) which opens to the river front, where ghats (quays) were provided. The fort has survived through the onslaught of time, nature and men. Spreading over an area of about 94 acres of land, it comprises many fairy-tale palaces, such as the Jehangir Palace and the Khas Mahal, built by Shah Jehan (the builder of Taj Mahal), audience halls, such as the Diwan-i-Khas; and two very beautiful mosques.

Overnight at Hotel Jaypee Palace or similar.

Wednesday 19-Feb-20

This morning you visit the beautiful Taj Mahal.



*AGRA: 204 Kms from Delhi, lying on the river Yamuna, Agra is famous the World over as the "City of the Taj".*

*THE TAJ MAHAL, one of the wonders of the world and a UNESCO World Heritage site built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jehan in memory of his beloved consort Mumtaz Mahal, is a beautiful mausoleum is pure white marble and an architectural marvel.*

*Built in 1631-48 in Agra, seat of the Mughal Empire, the monument sums up many of the formal themes that have played through Islamic architecture. Its refined elegance is a conspicuous contrast both to the Hindu architecture of pre-Islamic India, with its thick walls, corbelled arches, and heavy lintels, and to the Indo-Islamic styles, in which Hindu elements are combined with an eclectic assortment of motifs from Persian and Turkish sources.*

After lunch, drive to Delhi (about four hours) and transfer to Hotel Vasant Continental or similar for dinner.

After dinner, transfer to the International Airport in time for flight leaving for abroad late evening (after midnight) or early morning on 20 February.

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For more information contact in the saddle. Tel: 01299 272 997, Fax: 01299 272 935, Email: [rides@inthesaddle.com](mailto:rides@inthesaddle.com), Internet: [www.inthesaddle.com](http://www.inthesaddle.com)