



ITINERARY

The following pages detail our day-to-day activities. In addition to this itinerary, you will receive a daily program that lists the planned activities for each day with specific timings.

Please remember that this is an expedition in the true sense of the word. You should expect that changes will occur along the way, timings will be adjusted, and unexpected events will affect the program. Your expedition leader will conduct briefings to keep you apprised of any scheduling changes.



Explorer Destinations

Explorer destinations will be marked with the above icon. These destinations have been chosen due to their remote beauty, historical and cultural significance, unique touring and wildlife access rather than their luxury lodging and dining. For these stops we will stay in more basic, authentic properties that are the best available for the location. Fine dining opportunities may be limited in these locales resulting in more buffet-style group meals due to service limitations. While these stops may require a more adventurous spirit, we believe you will be rewarded with deeply enriching and authentic experiences that can only be found off the beaten path.



January 21 – 22

Athens, Greece

TUESDAY, JANUARY 21

Individual Arrivals in Athens, Greece

Upon arrival at Four Seasons Astir Palace Hotel Athens, please visit the Hospitality Room. Please bring your passport. The welcome staff will collect your passport and return it to you the next morning when we depart from Athens. You will also receive your name badge, welcome packet and important updates.

Further details about check-in will be provided in the welcome letter when you check in to the hotel.

Hospitality Room Hours:

Tuesday, January 21 | 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

This evening, please gather for a welcome cocktail reception and dinner. This is your opportunity to meet your expert staff and fellow travelers. Your expedition leader will brief you on important details for tomorrow morning's departure.

OVERNIGHT: Four Seasons Astir Palace Hotel Athens

Reminders

Please do not pack your passport or important documents in your checked luggage, but rather always put them in your hand-carry that you bring on board the jet.

All Guests: Please prepare your wheeled suitcase with all the items you will need for your stops in Amritsar and Thar Desert. Your small suitcase will remain securely locked on the aircraft.



ACCOMMODATION

FOUR SEASONS ASTIR PALACE HOTEL ATHENS

Return to the golden age of the Athens Riviera at this tranquil hideaway, a favorite seaside escape for world leaders and celebrities alike. Relax and enjoy the hotel's spa, stroll the boardwalk on the Aegean Sea, or discover five-star dining at Matsuhisa Athens by Michelin-distinguished chef Nobu Matsuhisa.



January 22 – 24

📍 Amritsar, India

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22

After breakfast at our hotel, transfer to Athens International Airport for your flight to Amritsar.

Depart: Athens, Greece | 11:00 A.M.

Arrive: Amritsar, India | 10:05 P.M.

Elapsed Time: 7H 40M

Meal Service: Lunch

After clearing immigration and customs, transfer directly to your hotel for check-in. Upon arrival you may choose to enjoy light canapés and cocktails in the lounge.

OVERNIGHT: Taj Swarna, Amritsar

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23

After breakfast at the hotel, embark on your morning activity.

☐ Golden Temple Morning Tour

The Golden Temple was built in the 16th century by Guru Arjan, the fifth Sikh Guru, to create a central place of Sikh worship. Today the temple remains one of the most holy sites in Sikhism and symbolizes inclusivity and equality. Tour the temple along the beloved marble pathway and take in the breathtakingly intricate gold-plated architecture. Walk around the pool of nectar and visit the main shrine, Akal Takth, which serves as the highest seat of authority in Sikhism and has had a historical role in overseeing religious and political matters within the Sikh community. Continue on to the historic Gurudwara Baba Atal Rai—a nine-storey, octagonal tower with frescoes depicting Sikh history.

Morning at Leisure

Use this time to rest and relax or enjoy the facilities at the accommodations in your destination.

All Guests

Gather at the hotel for a lunch featuring Punjabi Street Food specialties. Afterwards, depart for your afternoon sightseeing activity.

❑ Jallianwala Bagh

Tour the Jallianwala Bagh, established in 1951 as a public garden to commemorate the victims of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, a tragic event in Indian history where British troops fired on unarmed civilians in 1919. Walk the garden's layout, which honors the tragedy's historical setting, and pause at the memorial plaque and the Martyrs' Well, which serve as a poignant site for reflection and remembrance.

Shopping Excursion

Transfer to a local store to explore a variety of local textiles, artifacts and traditional items.

Afternoon at Leisure

Use this time to rest and relax or enjoy the facilities at the accommodations in your destination.

All Guests

Dinner this evening will be at the hotel's pool terrace and will feature live entertainment. After dinner, you have the option to join night tour of the Golden Temple.

❑ Golden Temple Night Tour

Visit the “temple at night” to witness the dramatic ceremony when the ‘Guru Granth Sahib’ is reverently closed after the final evening prayers and carried in a silver palanquin back to the adjacent building called the Akal Takht (seat of the Sikh religious order) for the night. The floors of the temple are then washed with milk and water before the doors are closed. As part of the ritual, the Holy Book is carried back to the Golden Temple at daybreak each day.

OVERNIGHT: Taj Swarna, Amritsar



ACCOMMODATION

TAJ SWARNA, AMRITSAR

Taj Swarna, Amritsar showcases the vibrant culture and rich history of the Punjab region with spacious rooms that blend contemporary style with traditional elegance. Choose from an array of dining options, enjoy the fitness center or try one of the spa's signature wellness experiences.



January 24 – 25

📍 Thar Desert, India

FRIDAY, JANUARY 24

Begin your day with breakfast at the hotel, then we will depart for the airport for our flight to the Thar Desert.

Depart: Amritsar, India | 8:30 A.M.

Arrive: Jodhpur, India | 9:55 P.M.

Elapsed Time: 1H 25M

Meal Service: Snack

Upon arrival, we will visit the impressive Mehrangarh Fort, a hilltop complex built in the mid-15th century. Take in the fort's Hall of Mirrors, Armory and Palanquin sections, then admire panoramic views of the Thar Desert and the blue city of Jodhpur from the ramparts. Afterwards, transfer downtown for lunch then to the desert camp for check-in.

Following check-in, you may participate in an optional activity.

☐ Village Safari by Jeep

Drive through the Thar Desert, stopping at a local village to visit with the Bishnoi tribe, the rural residents of the desert. During your visit, witness a traditional opium ceremony, visit a local's home, and meet the artisans who make essential supplies for the village, including blacksmiths, weavers and shoemakers.

All Guests

Embark on a sunset camel safari on individual camels or camel carts. Upon arrive at the highest dune, we will enjoy cocktails and snacks as tribal musicians play music as the sun sets on the desert horizon. Choose how you'd like to return to camp: by camel, jeep or on foot.

Note: The walk back to camp is 10 minutes on sand with gradual downward slope along the dune.

Once back at camp, gather for a gala banquet dinner under an open desert sky with campfires, tribal dances and local musicians.

OVERNIGHT: Dhora Desert Resort & Spa



ACCOMMODATION

DHORA DESERT RESORT & SPA

Dhora Desert Resort & Spa, a Signature Collection property by Eight Continents, provides an exclusive desert escape amid sweeping sand dunes in the Thar Desert. Luxury tents offer rustic elegance while maintaining simple comforts such as A/C, en-suite bathrooms with an en-suite shower and outdoor shower, private terraces and stunning dune views. Unwind in the outdoor pool, enjoy regional cuisine and visit the on-site spa, all designed to provide an unforgettable desert camp experience.



January 25 – 26

Hampi, India

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25

After breakfast, transfer to the airport where you board the private jet and depart for Hampi.

Depart: Jodhpur, India | 11:15 A.M.

Arrive: Bangalore, India | 1:45 P.M.

Elapsed Time: 2H 30M

Meal Service: Lunch

Depart: Bangalore, India | 3:00 P.M.

Arrive: Vidyanagar, India | 4:00 P.M.

Elapsed Time: 1H

Upon arrival, depart the airport and transfer to Malyavanta Raghunatha Temple to enjoy a spectacular view of the sunset. Visit the small cave temple dedicated to Shiva.

Afterwards, transfer to the hotel for check-in and a dine-around dinner at one of the hotel's restaurants.

OVERNIGHT: Evolve Back Kamalapuram Palace, Hampi

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26

After breakfast, depart for a day filled with your choice of incredible sightseeing.

Tour of Museum and Temples

Transfer to the Archaeological Museum to see the model of Hampi and the locations you'll visit before touring the sites. Next, transfer by buggies through a huge colonnaded bazaar to the Vittala Temple complex, home to the iconic Stone Chariot and mesmerizing carvings. Experience the unique musical pillars and enjoy a delightful walk to the nearby river. Afterwards, transfer by bus to the Virupaksha Temple to explore two temples, observing devotees engaged in prayer and making offerings. See the three monoliths on Hemakuta Hill: the Sasivekalu Ganesha, the Shiva Linga, and the Narasimha statue from the 14th century. Continue on to the Lakshmi Narasimha Temple to see the Shiva Linga and Narasimha idol in the temple complex.

Tour of the Royal Ruins

Transfer to the Archaeological Museum to see the model of Hampi and the locations you'll visit before touring the sites. Next, transfer to the Hazara Rama Temple at the Royal Enclosure to witness the Ramayana tale, narrated and depicted on the temple walls. Explore various sites including the step well tank, the Mahanavami Dibba platform, and the Queens' Bath. You will also get a chance to see the Elephant Stables, the Zenana enclosure featuring the Lotus Mahal and the Queen's Summer Palace, showcasing Mughal architectural influence.

All Guests

Return to the hotel for lunch, then depart for afternoon sightseeing.

Tour of the Royal Ruins

Transfer to the Archaeological Museum to see the model of Hampi and the locations you'll visit before touring the sites. Next, transfer to the Hazara Rama Temple at the Royal Enclosure to witness the Ramayana tale, narrated and depicted on the temple walls. Explore various sites including the step well tank, the Mahanavami Dibba platform, and the Queens' Bath. You will also get a chance to see the Elephant Stables, the Zenana enclosure featuring the Lotus Mahal and the Queen's Summer Palace, showcasing Mughal architectural influence.

Anegundi Ancient Town

Immerse yourself in the historical richness of Anegundi, adorned with the 12th-century Ranganatha Temple, the venerable Gagan Mahal palace, and an ancient Jain temple. Marvel at the age-old walls and fortifications that enhance the town's charm.

Afternoon at Leisure

Use this time to rest and relax or enjoy the facilities at the accommodations in your destination.

All Guests

This evening, gather at the hotel pool for a Bharatnatyam dance performance followed by dinner at your choice of hotel restaurant.

OVERNIGHT: Evolve Back Kamalapura Palace, Hampi



ACCOMMODATION

EVOLVE BACK KAMALAPURA PALACE, HAMPI

Inspired by the architecture of the Vijayanagara Kingdom, this elegant property boasts stone-paved boulevards, arched hallways and luxurious suites. After a day of exploring the UNESCO World Heritage site—located just two miles from the hotel—take a dip in the infinity pool, relax with a traditional Ayurvedic therapy at the spa or dine at one of two on-property restaurants.



January 27 – 29

Maldives

MONDAY, JANUARY 27

After breakfast at the hotel, transfer to airport where we will catch our flight to Bangalore en route to Maldives.

Depart: Vidyanagar, India | 8:00 A.M.

Arrive: Bangalore, India | 9:00 A.M.

Elapsed Time: 1H

Depart: Bangalore, India | 11:30 A.M.

Arrive: Malé, Maldives | 1:00 P.M.

Elapsed Time: 2H

Meal Service: Lunch

From the airport, we will transfer to our hotel via speedboat. After check-in, settle in to your room and enjoy time at leisure. Dinner tonight will be à la carte at the resort. After dinner, you may opt to participate in a nighttime snorkeling activity.

☐ Night Snorkeling

Join naturalists on an adventure into the ocean at night. Begin with an introduction to the most common nocturnal animals with an interactive presentation. Then, using waterproof flashlights, immerse yourself in the reef after dark when a whole new cast of creatures emerge. If you have explored beneath the waves during the day, you have only seen half of the coral city's inhabitants.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28

Spend your first full day in Maldives enjoying the variety of pre-chosen activities provided by the resort. From water sports to relaxing spa treatments, however you spend your time, you'll emerge refreshed and revitalized.

During your stay, you will have \$500 to use for watersport activities and spa treatments.

☐ Snorkeling

Experience an exhilarating underwater experience, snorkelling with friendly whitetip sharks, blacktip sharks and the occasional nurse sharks in the blue wilderness.

☐ Jet Ski (Additional Cost)

Escape to the blues on a jet ski to appreciate the stunning seascapes of the Maldives. Keep your eyes peeled for pods of dolphins that have been seen near the island.

Resort Activities

Alternatively, a variety of water sports and activities are available at the resort throughout the day, including kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding, windsurfing and catamaran sailing.

All guests

Return to the hotel for lunch at one of the resort's restaurants. Afterwards, depart on your choice of afternoon activity.

☐ **Sub Aqua Sea Bob**

With an experienced guide, pilot an underwater submarine and learn and understand better how local marine species interact underwater.

☐ **Scuba Diving (Additional Cost)**

Board a private boat and glide across the crystal-clear waters to a private site for afternoon diving that is rich with marine life and diverse seascapes. *Note: Guests must be certified. Additionally, Maldivian Law states that guests who have not dived in last 90 days or have fewer than 30 logged dives must complete a morning orientation.*

Resort Activities

Alternatively, a variety of water sports and activities are available at the resort throughout the day, including kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding, windsurfing and catamaran sailing.

Spa Treatment (Additional Cost)

Partake in a relaxing treatment at the hotel's on-site spa.

☐ **Private Dhoni Sunset Dolphin Cruise**

As the day comes to a close, take in the beauty of the Maldives on a private *dhoni* boat as you sip champagne and enjoy canapés.

All guests

Conclude your day with dinner at one of the hotel's restaurants.

OVERNIGHT: The Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Islands

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29

Choose how you want to spend our final day in Maldives.

☐ **Turtle Snorkel**

Sea turtles have been around for more than 150 million years and a variety of these gentle creatures live in the resort's surrounding reefs. Join this activity to swim with one of the oldest living creatures in the world in their natural habitat. Appreciate up close and personal moments with these fascinating sea animals.

☐ **Sub Aqua Sea Bob**

With an experienced guide, pilot an underwater submarine and learn and understand better how local marine species interact underwater.

Spa Treatment (Additional Cost)

Partake in a relaxing treatment at the hotel's on-site spa.

Resort Activities

Alternatively, a variety of water sports and activities are available at the resort throughout the day, including kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding, windsurfing and catamaran sailing.

All guests

Return to the hotel for lunch at one of the resort's restaurants. Afterwards, depart on your choice of afternoon activity.

☐ **Coral Garden Snorkeling**

Accompanied by marine biologists, embark on a spine-tingling snorkel safari in search of the shark and rays that call the Maldives home.

☐ **Sub Aqua Sea Bob**

With an experienced guide, pilot an underwater submarine and learn and understand better how local marine species interact underwater.

Spa Treatment (Additional Cost)

Partake in a relaxing treatment at the hotel's on-site spa.

Resort Activities

Alternatively, a variety of water sports and activities are available at the resort throughout the day, including kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding, windsurfing and catamaran sailing.

All guests

Enjoy a beach dinner with cocktails and entertainment.

OVERNIGHT: The Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Islands



ACCOMMODATION

THE RITZ-CARLTON MALDIVES, FARI ISLANDS

An unforgettable island retreat, The Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Islands features overwater villas with stunning views of the crystal-clear waters. Overwater villas feature a plunge pool, sundeck and a personal dock with a net for lounging. Pamper yourself with a soothing spa treatment, dine at any of the properties' seven restaurants and bars or simply relax on the pristine white sands of the beach.



January 30 – February 1

Dambulla, Sri Lanka

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30

After breakfast, transfer to airport via speedboat for our flight to Sri Lanka.

Depart: Malé, Maldives | 11:00 A.M.

Arrive: Colombo, Sri Lanka | 1:05 P.M.

Elapsed Time: 1H 35M

Meal Service: Lunch

After clearing Sri Lankan immigration and customs, we will transfer to the hotel—one group will travel by plane, another group will travel by Eurocopter. Upon arrival, enjoy a festive welcome, check in to your room and get settled with some time at leisure on the property.

Dinner this evening will be at one of the hotel restaurants.

OVERNIGHT: Jetwing Vil Uyana

FRIDAY, JANUARY 31

This morning, you may choose to rise early for coffee and pastries followed by an outing on the hotel property.

Birding

Meet in the hotel lobby at 6:00 a.m. to grab coffee or tea and a pastry before departing to a section of the property to spend an hour spotting stork-billed kingfishers, Asian openbills, black darters (dragonflies), crimson rose butterflies, brahminy kites and perhaps even a crocodile.

All Guests

After breakfast at the hotel, transfer to Dambulla, a UNESCO World Heritage site famous for its richly painted cave temples and vast isolated rock mass. It was at Dambulla that King Valagam Bahu took refuge from invasions in the 1st century BC, later turning the caves into a rock temple. Some of its frescoes are over 2,000 years old. Marvel at the colossal figure of the recumbent Buddha, carved out of the living rock. Admire the caves, which have a mixture of religious and secular paintings as well as sculptures with ceiling frescoes depicting scenes from Buddha's life and Sinhalese history.

Return to the hotel for lunch at one of the restaurants, then depart to your pre-chosen afternoon activity.

☐ **Sigiriya**

Transfer to Sigiriya, a UNESCO World Heritage site that was a bastion of King Kasyapa. Climb to the base of Lion Mountain, a massive granite monolith upon which sits the remains of an elaborate fortified palace built in the fifth century. Marvel at the many impressive facets of this unique complex, including the geometrically laid water gardens, frescoes of beautiful maidens and the mirror wall.

☐ **Minneriya National Park**

Transfer to Minneriya National Park, famous for paddy fields, aquatic birds, purple-faced leaf monkeys and home to the world's largest known gathering of Asian elephants. Board Jeeps to explore the 34-square-mile park and view some of the many animals that call this sanctuary home. Within the park is also one of the largest ancient irrigation reservoirs in the country, the Minneriya Tank. Built by King Mahasena in the 3rd century A.D., the reservoir is a remarkable feat of ancient engineering, boasting a massive embankment and holding 20 billion imperial gallons within its seven square miles.

☐ **Shopping Excursion**

Transfer to Premadasa, a shopping area, to enjoy an afternoon browsing local gems, jewelry, handicrafts, silk, tea and other mementos to commemorate your time in Sri Lanka.

☐ **Anuradhapura**

Explore the well-preserved ruins and monasteries of Anuradhapura, a major pilgrimage destination and UNESCO World Heritage site which includes a 2,000-year-old sacred Bodhi tree under which Buddhist pilgrims gather.

All Guests

This evening, travel to a nearby restaurant to enjoy a Sri Lankan banquet with dances and music from across the island.

OVERNIGHT: Jetwing Vil Uyana

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1

This morning, you may choose to rise early for coffee and pastries followed by an outing on the hotel property.

Birding

Meet in the hotel lobby at 6:00 a.m. to grab coffee or tea and a pastry before departing to a section of the property to spend an hour spotting stork-billed kingfishers, Asian openbills, black darters (dragonflies), crimson rose butterflies, brahminy kites and perhaps even a crocodile.

All Guests

After breakfast at the hotel, depart to your pre-chosen morning activity.

☐ **Polonnaruwa**

Transfer 90 minutes to Polonnaruwa, the island's former medieval capital. Wander the vast UNESCO World Heritage site, which includes museum, the Royal Palace complex, and Buddhist statues and monuments. After a tour of the archaeological site, visit a rice mill to learn how paddy is processed, cleaned, packed and transported to different parts of the country.

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Explore the well-preserved ruins and monasteries of Anuradhapura, a major pilgrimage destination and UNESCO World Heritage site which includes a 2,000-year-old sacred Bodhi tree under which Buddhist pilgrims gather.

Return to the hotel for lunch in the gardens. Afterwards, depart for your pre-chosen afternoon activity.

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All Guests

Enjoy time at leisure following your afternoon activity. Then gather at one of the hotel restaurants for an elegant, tropical-style farewell dinner.

OVERNIGHT: Jetwing Vil Uyana



ACCOMMODATION

JETWING VIL UYANA

Set amid lush paddy fields in Sri Lanka's cultural triangle, Jetwing Vil Uyana is a luxurious eco-resort that combines rural simplicity with modern comforts. Relax in unique dwellings designed to blend in with the natural surroundings of the hotel's private nature reserve.



February 2 – 3

Athens, Greece

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2

After breakfast, fly either by small plane or Eurocopter to Airport Garden Hotel. From there you will transfer to the airport for our flight to Oman en route to Greece.

Depart: Colombo, Sri Lanka | 12:00 P.M.

Arrive: Muscat, Oman | 2:55 P.M. (tech stop)

Elapsed Time: 4H 05M

Meal Service: Lunch

Depart: Muscat, Oman | 3:35 P.M.

Arrive: Athens, Greece | 7:45 P.M.

Elapsed Time: 6H 15M

Meal Service: Lunch

Upon arrival, clear immigration and customs before transferring to the hotel for check-in and a casual group dinner with new friends and memories.

OVERNIGHT: Four Seasons Astir Palace Hotel Athens

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3

This morning, breakfast is available in the hotel before departing for your commercial flights homeward. You will be provided a private transfer to the airport for your departure.

Welcome Home!



ACCOMMODATION

FOUR SEASONS ASTIR PALACE HOTEL ATHENS

Return to the golden age of the Athens Riviera at this tranquil hideaway, a favorite seaside escape for world leaders and celebrities alike. Relax and enjoy the hotel's spa, stroll the boardwalk on the Aegean Sea, or discover five-star dining at Matsuhisa Athens by Michelin-distinguished chef Nobu Matsuhisa.