



Body Art and Adornment of Western India 13 Days/12 Nights

	Activities	Overnight
Day 1	Fly U.S. to Delhi.	Delhi
Day 2	Our first stop today is the serenely-landscaped Raj Ghat, the site of Mahatma Gandhi's cremation. This will be followed by a visit to the lotus-shaped Baha'i Temple, one of Delhi's most striking modern buildings. Afternoon visit to Humayun's tomb, the first Persian tomb garden in India. Next we will visit some of Delhi's most vibrant shopping bazaars, such as Lajpat Nagar and Karol Bagh, where one can find a wide range of textiles, clothing and jewelry for sale. This will be followed by a visit to a night market of mehendiwalas, artists that apply henna to women's hands and feet before a wedding or other festival.	Delhi
Day 3	Morning flight to Jodhpur. Upon arrival, we will enjoy lunch at one of Jodhpur's heritage hotels. Afternoon drive to Jaisalmer, deep in the Thar desert. This 12 th -century town, just 50 miles from the Pakistan border, was once a busy trade port on the caravan route between India and Central Asia. Arrive in Jaisalmer in time for dinner.	Jaisalmer
Day 4	Morning tour of Jaisalmer fort, built in 1156 from honey-colored sandstone. Thousands of people still reside within its walls, making it India's only living fort. Afternoon safari to the villages and desert around Jaisalmer where we will view up close many of the artfully-painted mud dwellings of the desert's farmers and camel and cattle breeders. Depending upon our route, we could cross paths with members of the Rabari, Banjara or Kalbelia tribes, all of whom are beautifully adorned. Tonight you will watch the sunset over the Thar desert.	Jaisalmer
Day 5	Morning drive from Jaisalmer to Jodhpur, arriving in time for lunch. Afternoon visit to Mehrangarh Fort, described by Rudyard Kipling as "the creation of angels, fairies and giants." The Marwar ruler Rao Jodha began construction on this sandstone fort in 1459, with subsequent additions made by later rulers up until the mid-19 th century. From the fort you have a wonderful view of the houses below, many of which are painted bright blue. Continue driving to Rohet.	Rohet

Day 6	Morning jeep safari around Rohet, where we will view local wildlife such as blackbuck antelope and herds of peacocks. We will visit a community of Bishnoi, fervent environmentalists who strive to protect every living creature. While Bishnoi men dress only in white, the women wear bright colors and spectacular jewelry, including heavy nose rings that tie around the forehead and ears to lessen the load on the nose. We will also visit a Brahmin village, with its bright blue and purple houses featuring beautiful mud and clay cabinetry. Afternoon drive to Pali, a region surrounded by henna plantations. This ancient plant is used not only for mehndi body painting, but also to dye wool, silk, leather, fingernails and hair. If time permits, we will visit a mehndi factory that produces some of the best henna products in India.	Nimaj
Day 7	Full day drive from Nimaj to Sawai Madhopur, stopping en route for a picnic lunch. Sawai Madhopur lies on the Western border of Ranthambhore National Park, which like other nature preserves in this region, was originally the hunting ground of Jaipur's maharajas. This park is home to a number of exotic animal species, such as sambar, marsh crocodiles, sloth bears, Indian Rollers, caracals, panthers, jackals, hyenas and the endangered Bengal tiger.	Sawai Madhopur
Day 8	Morning visit to the Gujjar villages around Sawai Madhopur. The Gujjars of Rajasthan are pastoral agriculturalists that construct beautiful houses out of mud and thatch. Gujjar women are noted for their striking style of dress, which features fabrics in very bright colors covered with embroidery and embellished with heavy gold and silver jewelry. This afternoon you will have the option of relaxing at your hotel or taking a short jungle trek in Ranthambhore National Park.	Sawai Madhopur
Day 9	Morning drive to Jaipur. Afternoon visit to the Hawa Mahal, or Palace of Winds. This composition of windows is five stories high, but only one room deep, and was designed to enable the veiled women of the royal harem to view the city streets below. This will be followed by a walking tour of Badi Chaupar, which is filled with shops selling everything from vegetables and flowers to pottery, spices, shoes, colorful bangles and precious gems. We will also tour Johari Bazaar, the jeweler's market of Jaipur, in which you can find beautiful examples of traditional Kundan and Meenakari jewelry.	Jaipur
Day 10	Morning visit to the Amber Fort, a citadel established in 1592 by Man Singh I on the remains of an 11 th century fort. Highlights include the three-storied Ganesh Pol gateway, the Aram Bagh pleasure garden and the Shila Devi Temple with its ornate solid silver door. We will also visit the Jas Mandir and the Sheesh Mahal, rooms that feature extensive glass and mirror inlay work. Afternoon visit to the City Palace, home to the rulers of Jaipur since the first half of the 18 th century. This will be followed by a tour of the Jantar Mantar, the best preserved astronomical observatory in India.	Jaipur
Day 11	Morning flight from Jaipur to Mumbai. Afternoon tour of historic Mumbai. Highlights include the Gateway of India, Victoria Terminus, Crawford Market, the Kala Ghoda neighborhood and the Shahid Bhagat Singh Marg neighborhood. Mumbai is a melting pot for people from all parts of India, as well as the Middle East and Europe. As we wander the crowded streets, you will see women wearing the latest Western and Indian fashions walking side-by-side with those in traditional jewelry and dress.	Mumbai

Day 12 Morning drive to Juhu Beach, passing through Malabar Hill, past Haji Ali Mosque, and through the upscale suburb of Bandra. This part of town is home to Mumbai's elite, and is a hub for dining and shopping. We will spend the day exploring this part of the city, which is filled with contemporary expressions of body art and adornment in India. We will visit boutiques for women's and men's ready-to-wear and wedding attire, upscale jewelry shops, modern tattoo and piercing studios, and even a beauty salon to learn about Indian hair care and cosmetics.

Mumbai

Day 13 Morning visit to the Elephanta cave temples. This complex was built in the 6th century A.D. and contains many superb Indian sculptures, including a magnificent three-headed bust of Shiva that is 18-feet tall. The rest of the afternoon is at your leisure to prepare for your return to the U.S. or your departure for other destinations in India.

Flight to U.S.

Suggested Extensions: Agra and the Taj Mahal (pre-trip); The Caves of Ajanta and Ellora (post-trip)

Trip Timing - For the best weather conditions, this trip can be taken anytime between October and March. In all of our tours, we concentrate our sightseeing in the morning and afternoon hours, avoiding the hot mid-day sun as much as possible.

