The Golden Triangle Special

30 March – 7 April 2012

This 9 day tour will include visits to Delhi, Agra, Jaipur (The Golden Triangle), 2 national parks (Bharatpur and Ranthambore) and two local NGOs and communities (ABHAS and Barefoot Collage).

Itinerary

Day 1: Friday – 30th March '12: *Arrive in Delhi*

Welcome to India – one of the oldest civilizations in the world with a kaleidoscopic variety and rich cultural heritage! Upon arrival in the capital city Delhi, you will be collected from the airport and transferred to Hotel Silver Ferns (http://www.silverfernsindia.com/). After lunch, start with part of the city tour of Delhi (rest of the sights will be seen the next morning) driving through New and Old Delhi, and visiting India Gate, Parliament House, Jama Masjid, Red Fort, Humayun's Tomb, Raj Ghat (Gandhi Memorial) and Lotus / Birla Tempel.

***New Delhi**, the capital and the third largest city of India is a fusion of the ancient and the modern. Standing along the western end of the Gangetic Plain, Delhi unwinds a picture rich with culture, architecture and human diversity, deep in history, monuments, museums, galleries, gardens and exotic shows. Comprising of two contrasting yet harmonious parts, the Old Delhi and New Delhi, the city is a travel hub of Northern India. Almost 10 million people live here in an area of 1,500 sq. kms.*
***Qutub Minar**: is an excellent example of Afghan Architecture. The Minar is a 72.5m high victory tower with a diameter of 14.32m at the base and 2.75m at the top. The construction of the tower began end of 12th century by Qutub ud Din Aibak and was later completed by his successor. It is made of red und buff sandstone and is the highest tower in India. It has been given World Heritage Site status. A 7m-high iron pillar stands in the courtyard of the mosque.*
***Red Fort (Lal Qila)**: Using his administrative skills, wealth, knowledge of architecture and aesthetic sense, Shah Jahan, the builder of Taj Mahal in Agra, laid out a new fort to suit his needs. Its Lahore Gate opened into the main street of a carefully planned adjoining city that thrives almost unchanged*

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four centuries later, and which contains the Jama Masjid. The construction lasted from 1639 to 1648.
***Jama Masjid**: is the largest Mosque in India and stands across the road from the Red Fort. It was built in 1656 by Shahjahan. About 20,000 people can pray here at a time.*
***Raj Ghat**: This is the place where the father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi was cremated.*
***Humayun's Tomb**: Built by Humayun's widow, Queen Bega Begum in 1565, it is supposed to be the prototype of the Taj Mahal at Agra. This is the most magnificent of Delhi's tombs. She employed a Persian architect to design the first great Mogul garden tomb. He created something new using local sandstone, marble and stonemasons.*

Day 2: Saturday – 31st March '12*: Delhi*

After breakfast visit the remaining sights in Delhi. Enjoy a home-cooked lunch at a home of a middle-class Indian family and see how live. Later, visit ABHAS (http://www.abhasindia.org, located in a slum which has grown inside the walls of an old fort), an NGO, which works towards eliminating gender diversity and helps give children (who go rag-picking) a better future. Spend the afternoon with these women and children and learn about India's socio-cultural diversity through their eyes. Dinner and overnight at Hotel Silver Ferns.

Day 3: Sunday – 01st April '12: *Delhi – Agra – Bharatpur*

Very early this morning (leave the hotel at 04:45 am) proceed to the train station to take the train to Agra. Breakfast will be served on the train. *(Train-Bhopal Shatabdi; Timings: Dep. 06.15 AM Arr. 08.12 AM).* Upon arrival meet the guide for a sightseeing tour of the world famous Taj Mahal and Agra Fort. After lunch in Agra proceed to Bharatpur and check-into Hotel Udai Villas http://www.udaivilaspalace.com/). Dinner at the hotel.

***Taj Mahal**: The most photographed monument in the world, the Taj stands in its splendour of white marble, an imposing citadel on the banks of river Yamuna. Built in 17th century by Shah Jahan, the fifth Mughal emperor, in the memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal, the Taj Mahal is an ode to the emperor's eternal love for his wife. It took over 20,000 skilled workers from across the*

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country, working day and night for 22 years for this architectural wonder to be created.
***Agra Fort**: Built in red sandstone, it is the one of the famous sights of Agra other than Taj Mahal. The semi circular fort was started by Akbar in 1565, and completed in 1574.*

Day 4: Monday – 02nd April '12: *Bharatpur – Fatehpur Sikri*

After an early breakfast, travel to the famous Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary close-by for a 2-3 hour walk and enjoy the beautiful vegetation in the park and the migratory birds. After lunch at the hotel, relax for a while before driving to Fatehpur Sikri in the evening to see the beautiful sandstone buildings at sunset. Dinner and overnight at Hotel Udai Villas.

***The Keoladeo Ghana National Park** formerly known as the Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary in Rajasthan is a famous avifauna sanctuary that sees thousands of rare and highly endangered birds such as the Siberian Crane come here during the winter season. Over 230 species of birds are known to have made the National Park their home. It has been declared a World Heritage Site.*
***Fatehpur Sikri**: 40 km from Agra, a city completely made of red sandstone. Built by Akbar and dedicated to a saint, Fatehpur Sikri was conceived in 1571. Worth visiting are the Jama Masjid, Salim Chisti's tomb, the Diwan-e-Aam, the Diwan-e-Khas and the Queen's palaces within the city. Sikri was the first planned city of the Mughals. The architecture of Fatehpur Sikri has a definite all-India character. It is prolific and versatile Indo-Muslim composite style, which is a fusion of the composite cultures of indigenous and foreign origins.*

Day 5: Tuesday – 03rd April '12: *Bharatpur – Ranthambore*

After a late breakfast, you will be transferred to the train station for a train to Ranthambore *(The Golden Temple Mail, Dep. 10.41 A.M, Arr. 13:03 P.M.).* Transfer to Hotel Tiger Machan (http://www.tigermachan.com) and after a late lunch enjoy a safari through the park in an open truck! If you are lucky, you may see a tiger or two, apart from many other animals and birds. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

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Ranthambore National Park *is one of the biggest and most renowned national parks in Northern India. The park is located in the Sawai Madhopur district of south-eastern Rajasthan. Being considered as one of the famous and former hunting grounds of the Maharajas of Jaipur, today the Ranthambore National Park is a major wildlife tourist attraction spot that has pulled the attention of many wildlife photographers and wildlife lovers in this destination. The park is mainly famous for its tigers and is one of the best locations in India to see the majestic predators in its natural habitat. Ranthambore is also counted as the famous heritage site because of the pictorial ruins that dot the wildlife park.*

Day 6: Wednesday – 04th April '12: *Ranthambore - Jaipur*

Those who are not tired can wake up early this morning to enjoy an exciting morning safari thought the park. After breakfast proceed to Jaipur - the Pink City of India – and transfer to Hotel Diggi Palace (http://www.hoteldiggipalace.com/). After a late lunch at the hotel, proceed to the Hawa Mahal and Jantar Mantar.

Jaipur *is the first planned city of India, located in the desert lands of Rajasthan. The city that once had been the capital of royalty, now serves as the capital city of Rajasthan. The very structure of Jaipur resembles the taste of the Rajputs and the Royal family; it is painted in pink. Jai Singh, the Rajput ruler, was a lover of art and science and in 1727 lay out a model palace-city, Jaipur.*
Hawa Mahal: *Hawa Mahal is a major landmark and a famous tourist attraction of Jaipur. The Palace offers a beautiful sight to behold. The splendid Rajputana architecture of Hawa Mahal, still speaks the glory of the royal family. However, one can also find a glimpse of Mughal architecture.*
Jantar Mantar: *Jantar Mantar at Jaipur is the largest stone observatory in the World and this feature makes it a special destination for a traveller. Jantar Mantar of Jaipur is one of the five astronomical observatories built by Maharaja Jai Singh, the founder of Jaipur.*

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Day 7: Thursday – 05th April '12: *Jaipur*

After breakfast visit the famous Amber Fort and experience an elephant ride. Later visit the City Palace before joining a local family for some traditional food at their house. Afternoon is free for shopping, relaxing or more sightseeing. Enjoy dinner at the hotel with some traditional Rajasthani dance. Overnight at Hotel Diggi Palace.

Amber Fort *is located in Amber (Jaipur), which used to be the capital of the Kachhwaha clan, till Jaipur was made the official capital in 1727. The Amber Fort looks stunning, all-built in white marble and red sandstone. To add to its charm, Maotha Lake makes its foreground. The intricate carvings on the walls and ceilings simply astonish the visitors. The minute mirror work adds to the grand appearance and royalty of the halls. The Amber Fort undoubtedly captivates the tourists with its artistic quality of delicate work. The mighty walls guarantee the protection of the Fort against the invasion of enemies.*
City Palace: *The City Palace forms one of the most famous tourist attractions and is a major landmark in Jaipur. The beautiful palace was built by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh during his reign. Among the various forts and palaces of Jaipur, City Palace stands apart, with its outstanding art and architecture. City Palace complex covers a huge area, which is divided into a series of gardens, courtyards and buildings. Initially, Raja Jai Singh built the outer wall occupying a huge area. The additional grand buildings were constructed later by the succeeding rulers.*

Day 8: Friday – 06th April '12: *Jaipur*

After an early breakfast travel to Tilonia to visit the Barefoot College, an NGO (http://www.barefootcollege.org/). Spend a day with women from the college and learn about problems which confront women in rural areas and how this NGO has been providing basic services and solutions to these problems. Enjoy a local meal at the collage. Return to Jaipur in the evening. Dinner and overnight at Hotel Diggi Palace.

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Day 9: Saturday – 07th April '12: *Jaipur – Delhi (By bus - Approx. 5 hrs)*

After breakfast proceed to Delhi international airport for your flight home. If time permits, a last-minute shopping trip can be arranged.

A Google Map of the trip can be seen at the following link:

http://maps.google.de/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=de&msa=0&msid=202387541084442274745.0004822746d1832c499d8&ll=27.809928,77.244873&spn=4.051369,10.579834&z=7

Cost

The price for the tour, **from / to Delhi**, costs €1,500 (double room occupancy) and €1,700 (for single room occupancy). The price includes:

- Hotels (3 – 4*)
- All local transport (by car / minibus, train)
- 3 meals a day
- All non-alcoholic drinks at meal times
- Tips, service charges, etc.
- Fees of local tour guides (language will be German, English or Japanese depending on the nationalities of group), etc.
- Entrance fees to all attractions
- Contribution to social projects visited

The price does not include:

- **International flights**
- Travel/Health insurance
- Visa fees
- Other private expenses, such as telephone, laundry, alcohol, massages, etc.

Please note ETOSE is not responsible for:

- Any changes which may have to be made to the program due to strikes, flight delays, weather conditions, natural disasters, etc.
- Any damage to luggage, suitcases, etc.

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