

**ETOSE ARTISTIC INDIA TOUR**

**9<sup>th</sup>. – 23<sup>rd</sup>. February 2011**

The ETOSE "Artistic India" Tour will focus on arts, crafts and architecture in Maharashtra and Rajasthan. Visits will be made to: several world heritage monuments to see India's splendour from the past, a tribal fair (Bhaneshwar) in Rajasthan to take part in a colourful religious festival, and an art festival (Kala Ghoda) in Mumbai to be part of India's art scene. Several non-government organisations (NGO) will also be visited to see the work being undertaken in the area of arts and crafts to help alleviate economic poverty. Cities to be visited include Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Udaipur, Dhariyawad, Chittorgarh, Bundi and Jaipur.

**Itinerary**

(Draft Itinerary, subject to minor change)

**Day 1: Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> Feb '11: Arrive Mumbai**

Arrive in Mumbai and transfer to a hotel. Later this morning proceed for a sightseeing tour of Mumbai. Visit some of the main sights such as the Prince of Wales museum, Dhobi Ghat, Gateway of India, Victoria Terminus (*World Heritage Site*), Haji Ali's Tomb, Mahalaxmi Temple, the High Court, Mani Bhawan, etc. Dinner and overnight at a hotel in Mumbai.

*Mumbai: Mumbai has a golden history of hundreds of years and never fails to mesmerize its visitors amidst the heritage monuments. It has a beautiful harbour studded with hilly islands and a palm-fringed shore. Besides being the major port of India, Mumbai is also a great industrial centre. It is a cosmopolitan city, which owes its prosperity to the industry and enterprise of its population of about fifteen million. It is also a home to many artists.*

**Day 2: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> Feb '11: Mumbai**

After breakfast visit the famous Elephanta Caves (*World Heritage Site*) by boat. Return back to the mainland and proceed to a local restaurant for lunch. Afternoon free for shopping, leisure or sight-seeing. Dinner and overnight at a hotel in Mumbai.

*Elephanta Caves: Six miles across Mumbai harbour is a small island called Elephanta or 'Gharpure'. It contains a fine cluster of 6th - 8th A.D. rock-cut caves. They were carved during the Golden Age of the Guptas and inspired by the worship*

*of Shiva. The sculptures are beautifully executed and the most outstanding of these is the Maheshmurthy or Trimurthi, a 4.5 m high three headed bust hewn from a single rock, representing the triple aspects of Shiva (the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer). It is regarded as a masterpiece of Indian art.*

### **Day 3: Friday 11<sup>th</sup> Feb '11: Mumbai**

After breakfast drive to Kala Ghoda – the old art district of Mumbai – for a Bombay Heritage Walk. During this 2 hour walk you will be shown beautiful buildings and informed about Mumbai's art and architecture by someone knowledgeable about the city's past. Lunch will be at a local restaurant where you will also be briefed about Indian art and its famous artists. Afternoon will be spent visiting a few famous art galleries. In the evening enjoy the famous and lively Kala Ghoda Festival. Dinner and overnight at a hotel in Mumbai.

***Kala Ghoda Arts Festival** is an annual festival in either late January or early February which is held at the Kala Ghoda area of South Mumbai. The sub-festivals feature the visual arts, dance, music, theatre, cinema, literature, lectures, seminars and workshops, heritage walks, special events for children, and a vibrant street festival. The street area of Rampart Row is closed off to vehicular traffic for the duration of the festival, with the entire area becoming a street mela (fair), with food stalls, artisans selling their creations, artists who sketch instant portraits, street art installations and the like.*

### **Day 4: Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> Feb '11: Mumbai – Ahmedabad**

Early morning proceed to the airport to take a morning flight to Ahmedabad. Upon arrival transfer to a local hotel. After freshening up, proceed to visit an NGO to learn about the work they do to help the needy. Later proceed for some sightseeing of Ahmedabad, visiting Jama Masjid, Sidi Sayed's Mosque and Sabarmati Asharam. Dinner and overnight at a hotel in Ahmedabad.

***Ahmedabad:** Situated on the River Sabarmati, Ahmedabad is named after a Muslim Sultan - Sultan Ahmed Shah, who founded it in the year 1411 A.D. It is now one of the industrial centres of Western India, ranking high among the cities of India for its architectural remains. Its palaces, mosques and tombs are a perfect specimen of Indo - Saracenic architecture in Gujarat.*

***Jama Masjid:** Lying opposite Mahatma Gandhi Road, on the eastern side of Teen Darwaza, Jama Masjid is one of the most splendid mosques of India. Constructed in*

*the year 1423 A.D, it was established by Sultan Ahmed Shah, the founder of the Ahmedabad city. Built in yellow sand stones, this marvellous mosque has a combination of Hindu and Muslim styles of architecture. There are about 260 columns within the mosque to protect its roof. Its two minarets were completely destroyed during the earthquakes of 1819 and 1957.*

***Siddi Sayed Mosque:*** *This mosque is one of the most prominent mosques in the Ahmedabad city. Constructed in the year 1573, the mosque was established by Sidi Sayed, a slave of Sultan Ahmed Shah. It consists of ten semi circular windows, the appeal of which is accentuated by the splendid mesh covering them, which is more popularly known as 'Jali'. This monument has gained a worldwide recognition due to its splendour.*

***Sabarmati Ashram:*** *Set up in the year 1915, Sabarmati Ashram was the central point from where the struggle for India's Independence was started. Till 1930, the ashram was the home of Mahatma Gandhi. It now houses a museum (that exhibits the life of Mahatma Gandhi), library, auditorium and photo galleries.*

#### **Day 5: Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> Feb '11: Ahmedabad**

After breakfast proceed to see the world famous Calico Museum of Textiles and then travel to Adalaj. Dinner with an Indian family. Overnight at a hotel in Ahmedabad.

***Calico Museum of Textiles*** *is one of the finest museums of the world. It exhibits an enormous collection of fabrics collected from all over the country; some fabrics are traced back to the times of seventeenth century. The museum is divided into two separate sections: one for the religious clothing and the other for historic textiles. The museum also houses furniture and various kinds of crafts gathered from different parts of the country.*

***Adalaj:*** *The Adalaj step-well is a popular tourist attraction of the city and is situated 18 km. north of Ahmedabad. The well was built in 1499 A.D. by Queen Rudabai. Adalaj Vav (well) is adorned with intricate carvings and splendid sculptures. The walls of the well depict figures of flowers, birds, fish and other ornamental designs. There are a number of corridors and platforms surrounding the well. The three entrances contain steps that reach up to the stepped corridors. These corridors meet on a platform, which has an octagonal opening on the top. The missing canopy of the well tells us that it was never completed. In the past, these step wells were frequented by travellers and caravans, as stopovers, along trade routes.*

**Day 6: Monday 14<sup>th</sup> Feb '11: Ahmedabad – Udaipur**

After early breakfast drive to Udaipur. Upon arrival, check into the hotel. At sunset, enjoy a beautiful boat ride on the Lake and visit Jag Mandir (Jagdish Temple). Dinner and overnight at hotel in Udaipur.

*Udaipur is known as the City of Lakes. It is a serene and beautiful city, one of the most romantic spots in India. In dramatic contrast to the battle-scarred, desert-bound, fortress towns of the state, it presents an enchanting picture of white marble palaces, placid blue lakes, and a girdle of green hills that keep the wilderness at bay. **Jag Mandir:** Lake Pichola is home to a famous island, the Jag Mandir Island which lies on its southern edge. The construction of a palace on this island was begun by Maharana Karan Singh II of Udaipur. During the 1857 sepoy mutiny in India, Maharana Swaroop Singh provided a number of European families and refugees from Neemuch, especially women and children, a safe place to stay in this island palace. For tourists, the Jag Mandir Palace is a marvellous place to spend some beautiful moments. It is also heartening to note that the architecture of the world famous Taj Mahal draws a bit of its inspiration from the pietra dura work of this island palace. A sunrise and the sunset view is the ultimate sight to enjoy from the Jag Mandir Island.*

**Day 7: Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> Feb '11: Udaipur**

In the morning proceed for a sightseeing tour of Udaipur. Visit the City Palace, the Museum, Saheliyon ki Bari, Lok kala mandal and Maharana Pratap Smarak. Later in the afternoon return to the hotel for lunch. In the evening visit the local handicrafts area. Dinner and overnight at a hotel in Udaipur.

*City Palace of Udaipur is one of the most remarkable constructions of the Rajput rulers of Rajasthan. Located in the heart of the city of Udaipur and towering over the Lake Pichola, the City Palace unfailingly infuses a sense of awe in the hearts of its onlookers. It is the standing testimony of Rajput passion for art and architecture despite the fact that the exterior is not as elegant as the interiors. Located inside is Surai Gokhada or the Sun balcony, Badal Mahal, Sheesh Mahal (Mahal means Palace), Bheem Vilas and the Peacock Courtyard. The Zenana Mahal, Fateh Prakash, Durbar hall and the City Palace Museum are other places of interest.*

**Day 8: Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> Feb '11: Udaipur – Dhariyawad**

This morning proceed to the charming little town of Dhariyawad. Enroute visit several poppy farms. The drive to Dhariyawad is a very scenic drive passing through ancient villages and dotted with old forts. On arrival transfer to a heritage hotel. Later in the evening proceed for an interesting walk through the village. You will see how the local tribes live and work in the village. Later, enjoy a traditional evening of folk dances. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

*At this time of the year the poppy is generally in full bloom and you can see the farmers working in the fields, making incisions in the bud of the poppy flower to extract opium. South Rajasthan is one of the places in India where poppy is grown extensively for the purpose of extracting opium.*

***Dhariyawad** was founded in the middle of the 16th century by royal prince Sahasmal (the second son of Maharana Pratap, the legendary hero of Mewar, Udaipur.) Situated on the confluences of the Jakham and Karmoi rivers, Dhariyawad is located in the south of Rajasthan and is surrounded by thick subtropical forests of the Aravali Hills. Bhils and other tribal people inhabit this area. This region is unspoilt by modern civilisation, and the best cultural heritage can be experienced here. The fort of Dhariyawad has been converted into an exclusive heritage hotel maintaining the decor and the traditional splendour of the fort.*

**Day 9: Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> Feb '11: Dhariyawad**

After breakfast proceed for a full day excursion to the famous Bhaneshwar Tribal Fair. In the evening return to Dhariyawad for dinner. Overnight at the hotel.

***Bhaneshwar Tribal Fair** is a religious festival with simple and traditional rituals. On this occasion, tribes from the neighbouring states of Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat join their brethren from Rajasthan to offer prayers to Lord Shiva. The Bhaneshwar fair is predominantly a tribal fair with more than half of the congregation consisting of Bhils. The religious site of the Shiva Temple at Bhaneshwar is extremely sacred for Hindus in general and Bhil tribe in particular. Prayers are offered at the temples of Shiva and Vishnu. The fair is held in the month of February/March each year. Fun and frolic of the fair can best be seen during the last two days of the fair - that is, a day before and on the full moon day. The tribes of Rajasthan and Gujarat are some of the most colourful in India and their costumes, jewellery, music and songs are worth documenting. One can buy utensils, tribal costumes and jewellery, pottery and tribal arms as unforgettable souvenirs.*

**Day 10: Friday 18<sup>th</sup> Feb '11: Dhariyawad**

After breakfast visit some potters to see how they work and make a living. Have a go at pottery making if you wish or take part in preparing Dhariyawadi food for lunch. In the evening proceed for a drive to see the flying squirrels. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

***Flying Squirrel:** This squirrel actually does not fly but glides up to 70 meters from tree to tree at night foraging for food and housing materials. This squirrel is nocturnal and comes out of their tree home at the exact moment of dusk. It waits patiently watching for any threats and then takes the first flight of the evening to a nearby tree to enjoy a "breakfast" of Maduka Indica leaves. This squirrel is one of the Indian jungles most glorious animals.*

**Day 11: Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> Feb '11: Dhariyawad – Chittorgarh – Bijapur**

After breakfast proceed to Bijaipur, stopping enroute to visit the very famous Chittorgarh Fort. After visiting the fort proceed for lunch and drive to Bijaipur. Overnight in Bijaipur.

***Chittorgarh Fort** is a living testimony to the bravery of the great Rajput rulers who laid down their life fighting a superior enemy instead of leading a life of submission. The fort is located on a hill that dominates the modern township of Chittor. It is a fine example of the Rajput style of architecture. Standing tall in one of the oldest cities in Rajasthan, the Chittorgarh Fort is perched on a 152-m-high rocky hill. It epitomises the doomed romantic ideal of Rajput chivalry. Named after Chitrangad Mauraya, the fort is a fine example of the Rajput style of architecture. The Sisodia ruler Ajay Pal (1174-1177 AD) improvised the fort wall built by the Gahlot king in the ninth century AD. The immense stretch of the walls and the ruined palaces relate the saga of innumerable sieges and heroism. The main places of interest within the precincts of the fort are the two towers known as the 'Kirti Stambh' (Tower of Fame) and the 'Vijay Stambh' (Tower of Victory). Besides these, there are several temples, reservoirs, and palaces originating between the 9th and 17th centuries AD. There is also a big complex of Jain temples within the fort.*

**Day 12: Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> Feb '11: Bijapur – Bundi**

After breakfast proceed to Bundi and check into the hotel. Spend the day at your leisure. All meals and overnight at the hotel.

***Bundi** is not hounded by tourists in the same manner as some of the more famous Rajasthan cities. This is the reason why many people in search of a peaceful yet exciting vacation opt for Bundi, a medieval town. Encircled by wooded hills, Bundi's fantastic palaces and narrow winding streets are reflected in the translucent waters of the Nawal Sagar Lake – shimmering, mirage like, unchanged by time. There are more than 50 step wells with intricate carvings and sculptures.*

**Day 13: Monday 21<sup>st</sup> Feb '11: Bundi – Jaipur**

Travel to the Pink City of India – Jaipur – after breakfast. On arrival, check into the hotel and freshen up. After lunch proceed for a city tour of Jaipur. During the city tour visit the Hawa Mahal, Jantar Mantar and City Palace. After sightseeing, if time permits, proceed for shopping. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

***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. The city, painted in pink, grasps the appreciation of every visitor. **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. The 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.*

***Hawa Mahal** is a major landmark and a famous tourist attraction of Jaipur. The splendid Rajputana and Mughal architecture of Hawa Mahal still speaks the glory of the royal family.*

***Jantar Mantar** in Jaipur is the largest stone observatory in the World and this feature makes it a special destination for a traveller. It is one of the five astronomical observatories built by Maharaja Jai Singh, the founder of Jaipur.*

**Day 14: Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb '11: Jaipur**

After breakfast proceed to visit the famous Amber Fort and enjoy an elephant ride. Enjoy shopping in this beautiful historic city. See miniature paintings, stone cutting and polishing, pottery and handicraft being made. Dinner and overnight in the hotel.

## ETOSE - PEOPLE AND PLACES

***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..*

***Shopping:** Handicrafts of Jaipur are well-known throughout the world for their distinctive quality and exclusive variety. Jaipur is also recognized as the crafts capital of India.*

### **Day 15: Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb '11: Jaipur – Delhi**

After lunch proceed to Delhi to take your flight back home from the international airport.

### **Cost**

The price for the 2-week tour is approximately €2,200 for single occupancy and €2,000 for twin-sharing; price for a one week tour are available on request. The price includes:

- All accommodation (middle class hotels)
- All local transport
- 3 warm meals a day
- All non-alcoholic drinks at meal times
- Tips, service charges, etc.
- Tours, local guides, etc.
- Entrance fees to all attractions
- A small contribution towards a social project

### **The price does not include:**

- International flights
- Travel/Health insurance
- Visa fees
- Massages or the use of Spas
- Alcoholic drinks
- Laundry service
- Telephone charges

### **Please note ETOSE is not responsible for:**



## ETOSE - PEOPLE AND PLACES

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

*ETOSE tours are for people who are: flexible, fun-loving, laid-back, cooperative, open to contact with others, keen on learning new things, willing to help, etc. Please keep this in mind so that the trip is fun for yourself and others in the group.*