



EQUUS Journeys

HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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Pushkar Fair Trail

INDIA RAJASTHAN

Combine a visit to **the incredible Pushkar Fair**, Indias largest camel, cattle and horse fair in Rajasthan with a **trail riding holiday** through the magnificent Aravelli Range and Sambhar salt lake, Roopengarh and Danta Forts. What better way to see the sights of the fair and the reality of Indian rural life than from the back of a magnificent Marwari horse.

Trail Riding	15 days / 6 days riding -	From £0	
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ITINERARY

Highlights

- See the famous Pushkar Fair from horseback
- Join in with thousands of colourful Rajasthanis as they watch camels racing and trade their animals
- Fast paced ride on beautiful Marwari horses through varied open countryside
- Stay in a very comfortable tented camp, coupled with grandiose palaces and majestic forts
- See the pink city of Jaipur and the magnificent Amber Fort
- Visit the awe inspiring Taj Mahal and the epic Fatehpur Sik
- Experience true Indian life as you ride through small villages and towns

Day 1 — 1: EUROPE - DELHI

Jaypee Vasant Continental

Fly from Europe to Delhi, you will be met at the airport and transferred to your hotel.

Day 2 — 2: DELHI

Jaypee Vasant Continental

Full day sightseeing of Delhi where you will discover the huge contrast between the old city and the new city. Experiencing the unique culture of this bustling city, you will visit Jama Mosque and Raj Ghat, where the father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi, was cremated. Then, in New Delhi, you will go on to visit numerous sites -- drive past Safdarjung's Tomb, Humayun's, Tomb, aptly called predecessor of The Taj Mahal. You will also drive past Jantar-Mantar Astronomical observatory and through Connaught Place, New Delhi's main shopping centre. Lunch to your own account. Overnight in Delhi.

Day 3 — 3: DELHI - AJMER - PUSHKAR

Catch the early morning train (06:10) to Ajmer, and then transfer to Pushkar. The town is located on the edge of a beautiful lake, it has 500 temples and is the only place in the world with a dedicated temple to Lord Brahma, the Hindu God of creation. Pushkar is believed to be the centre of the creation of the world. The origin of Pushkar is lost in a myth. It is believed that Brahma, the creator, was in search of a place to perform a Vedic yagna (sacrifice). As he pondered, a lotus fell from his hands and water gushed from the spot. Today, the faithful bathe in the holy waters of the Pushkar lake on Kartik Poonima where there are 52 bathing ghats.

After lunch, you will visit the annual Pushkar Fair, with its mammoth 200,000 people and some 50,000 camels, cattle and horses. You are then free to go sightseeing in Pushkar town, see where people bathe in the holy waters of the Pushkar lake on Kartik Poonima, visit the temple and street market. Overnight at your hotel.

Day 4 — 4: PUSHKAR - ALSISAR

In the morning you will have chance to do more sightseeing in Pushkar. After an early lunch, you'll be driven to Alsisar (around a 6-hour drive). You will then transfer to your hotel in time for dinner.

Day 5 — 5: ALSISAR - GHANGU - Approx. 5 hours

Today is the first ride, taking you through desert country, with mostly soft and sandy ground. The area is quiet and remote, although you will see small farmers' dwellings. There is also a good chance of spotting the graceful chinkara, or Indian gazelle, and the nilgai antelope -- the largest antelope in Asia. When you reach Ghangu, there is a chance for you to enjoy a camel ride. Tonight you will sleep in tents under the stars.

Day 6 — 6: GHANGU - MEHANSAR - Approx. 5 hours

The ride will take you to Mehansar today, again through desert-like country, with the chance to have some lovely canterers. Enroute you'll stumble upon sand dunes and local farmland. When you arrive at Mehansar, you'll ride into the Narayan Niwas Castle, where you will spend the night. Please note that this is a private home and facilities are basic, with hot water is supplied in buckets. However, the hosts are known for their hospitality and will be sure to make you feel at home.

Day 7 — 7: MEHANSAR - MANDAWA - Approx. 5 hours

 DESERT RESORT MANDAWA

After a homely breakfast, you will grab your riding gear, find your horse and ride on to Mandawa, passing through a wonderful landscape that includes sandy countryside, dunes, farmland and villages. Again there are good chances of seeing some wildlife. Tonight you will stay at the Desert Resort in Mandawa.

Day 8 — 8: MANDAWA - CHURI - Approx. 5 hours

Wake up refreshed, enjoy a leisurely breakfast and then it's on to Churi, enjoying the beautiful Indian scenery and soft, sandy terrain as you go. When you arrive in Churi you'll transfer to hotel Vivaana Culture Hotel, which at one time used to be a haveli (or merchant's mansion) with beautiful frescoes, for which the entire Shekhawati is famous for.

It is worth noting that 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 place had little to offer. But it has blossomed with art for almost two centuries - from 1750 to 1930. Today it is dubbed Rajasthan's 'Open Air Art Gallery'.

Day 9 — 9: CHURI - DUNDLOD - Approx. 5 hours

 Dundlod Fort

Enjoy another ride through the Indian landscape, passing villages and farms dotted with Khejri trees -- the state tree of Rajasthan, which offers a lifeline for the region's desert ecosystem. When you arrive in Dundlod, you will transfer to Dundlod Fort where you would stay for three nights.

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.

Day 10 — 10: DUNDLOD - Approx. 5 hours

 Dundlod Fort

Today you will visit the stables, which has some of the best Marwari horses in the country, and try out the horses, riding in and around Dundlod.

Day 11 — 11: DUNDLOD - Approx. 5 hours

Dundlod Fort

You'll have another chance to ride in and around Dundlod today, as well as some downtime to relax, giving you the chance to visit the Dundlod town and see the frescoes.

Day 12 — 12: JAIPUR - No riding

Alsisar Haveli

After breakfast, bid goodbye to your horses and camp staff and drive to Jaipur (approximately a 3-4 hour drive). When you arrive in Jaipur, you'll have chance to check in to your hotel before an afternoon of sightseeing.

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 Maharaja 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. This observatory (called Jantar Mantar) is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. 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.

Top sights in Jaipur include:

The City Palace, which now houses a museum containing rare manuscripts, paintings and an armoury.

The Jantar Mantar observatory, built in the 17th century by Jai Singh, with a sundial 90ft high.

The Albert Hall Museum, situated in the Ram Niwas Garden, which was founded in 1876 with a large collection of antiques.

Hawa Mahal or 'the Palace of Winds', a landmark of Jaipur made of pink sandstone and of unique design.

Day 13 — 13: JAIPUR - AMBER FORT - No riding

Alsisar Haveli

The plan for the day is sightseeing at Amber Fort. Around 12kms from Jaipur, the city of Amber boasts an ancient imposing fort / palace, overlooking a lake at the entrance to a rocky mountain grove.

Built in the 17th century, the palace is a great example of Rajput architecture and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Overlooking the magnificent Amber fort is another popular site, the Jaigarh Fort, which is similar in structural design to Amber Fort and connected to it by subterranean passages. Your afternoon is free to rest/shop or for more sightseeing.

Day 14 — 14: JAIPUR - AGRA - No riding

Jaypee Palace

After an early breakfast, drive to Agra (around 4 hours) via Fatehpur Sikri. Built in 16th century by the Emperor Akbar, Fatehpur Sikri (the City of Victory) is now a UNESCO World Heritage site. It was the capital of the Mughal Empire for around 10 years. Its monuments and temples include the Jama Masjid, one of the largest mosques in India.

Day 15 — 15: TAJ MAHAL, AGRA FORT + DEPARTURE

Morning tour of 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 in 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.

Also visit Agra Fort, one of the most important and robustly built strongholds of the Mughals, embellished with number of richly decorated buildings with 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. This powerful fortress of red sandstone, semi-circular on plan, is surrounded by a 2.5kms long and 21.4m high fortification wall.

After lunch, drive to Delhi (3-4hrs) and transfer to the hotel for dinner. After dinner, you can make your way to the airport in time for your flight, leaving before or after midnight.

DATES & PRICES

We are currently updating our dates and prices they will be online soon. If you want details of this holiday, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Price details

No departure for this destination. Please contact our travel advisers for more information.

- International flights to Delhi are not included.

- Prices per person are based on two riders sharing a twin or double room/tent.

- All applicable transfers are included, such as Delhi airport transfers and train transfer to Ajmer.

- Groups are usually composed of a minimum of 8 riders and a maximum of 14 international riders.

- There is a single supplement payable if you end up in your own room. The supplement is c. \$1430/£1190/€1350 and will be refunded to you if a sharer is found.

- Non-riders are welcome and we will arrange a special jeep itinerary. Please contact us for details and prices.

- You can have an extra day and night (Vasant Contiental Hotel) in Delhi if you want to arrive one day before. Extra cost should be around \$110/€100/£90. Please contact us to arrange this for you.

- On certain years, other Pushkar Fair itineraries can be offered which include visits to Ranthambore or Bateshwar Fair. Please enquire for more details and prices.

- Visas are required to enter India and are your own responsibility.

- Weight limit: 14 stones (89 kgs) (196 lbs)

Please Note

The itinerary may be modified at anytime for security reasons, meteorological or events beyond our control such as blocked roads, rivers in flood, drought, strikes and local holidays. Equus Journeys, our local partners and their local guides will always strive to find the best solution and will alter the itinerary as needed.

The names of the hotels and accommodation are given for information only and depending on availability, they may be modified without notice and replaced by another of a similar standard.

Price includes

SUPPORT TEAM

Whilst riding: 1 Rajpout english speaking horse guide

Visits (no riding) : 1 english or french speaking guide

LOGISTIC

1 support vehicle for logistics

1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle per rider

1 team in charge of the horses

INLAND TRANSPORTS

Airport transfers from Delhi

All land transfers in an air conditioned van

ACCOMMODATION

2 person tents with beds, comfortable mattress and bedding supplied

Double room in hotel or palace in the countryside with private bathroom

MEALS

Full board during the ride, half-board in Delhi, Jaipur and Agra

1 bottle of mineral water per day during the ride

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

First aid kit
Saddle bags

EXTRA

all monument entrance fees, Elephant ride at Amber Fort in Jaipur

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Lunches in Dehli, Jaipur and Agra
Beverage and personal extra

TRANSPORTS

International flights bookable on request
Visa fees

INSURANCE

Cancellation and travel insurances are not included. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend to take out an insurance policy as soon as your travel is booked in case of cancellation.

EXTRA

Tips to local team
Camera fees, laundry and personal extras

Optional

ACCOMMODATION

Single room supplement

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

An excellent selection of home bred, responsive and energetic Marwari horses from the stables of your guide Bonnie Singh of Dundlod Fort. Used throughout history as cavalry horses, the Marwari is comfortable, forward going and wonderfully spirited. Their extraordinary beauty, arched ears and fiery look adds to their charm.

Guide & local team

The Marwari horses come from the stables of expert horseman Kanwar Raghuvendra Singh at Dundlod Castle. Known as Bonnie, he is a warm and considerate host and has set up the largest Marwari stud farm in India and has established a breed improvement programme. Bonnie is assisted by an army of helpers who support him both on horseback and on the ground.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be a competent rider, capable and in control at all paces in open spaces. You must be able to rise to the trot and canter in a forward seat.

Weight limit: 14 stones (89 kgs) (196 lbs)

PACE

There are long periods of walking, some fast and regular trots and numerous gallops when the terrain allows it.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

A team of grooms will feed, care for and saddle your horses. You can help with untacking if you wish, but this is not expected.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

You need to be physically fit for long hours in the saddle and at fast paces. Having previous experience of a trail ride of several days would be an advantage but it is not compulsory. Guests who do not ride regularly are requested to get fit prior to the ride. It is of particular importance to ensure you are comfortable and balanced when riding at speed across rough and open spaces.

Visiting a new country offers the opportunity to meet other cultures with different mentalities, therefore it is important to accept these differences and respect the local way of life.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

The tack is English style Indian Army saddlery. It is not particularly comfortable especially after a long days riding - we therefore recommend a seat saver be taken with you and the grooms will happily put it in place. The team can also provide seat savers if you do not have your own (limited number available).

We recommend our riders to wear a helmet to the correct standard and you should bring your own to ensure a proper fit.

TRAVEL INFO

COMFORT

During the ride, you will mainly stay in a safari style camp with large spacious tents. Each tent has two made up beds with comfortable mattresses. Separate toilets and showers are set up, with hot water available in the morning and evening. Hotel nights will be in twin bedded rooms with a private bathroom.

Enjoy sumptuous meals, freshly cooked and delicately spiced throughout.

MEALS

Hotel nights:- A buffet breakfast will be available and a choice of evening meals. Limited spirits, wines, beers and soft drinks will be available.

Camping help yourself breakfast of toast, cereals, fruit and eggs if you wish. You have a hot lunch and then another hot meal in the evening around the camp fire. The food is varied and tasty Indian cuisine. Contrary to popular belief, all Hindus are not vegetarians and strict vegetarianism is limited to the south. However, you are unlikely to be served beef steak as the cow is sacred. You can expect to eat either goat or chicken.

Water: Take care and do not drink water unless it out of a bottle. It is better to buy mineral water when staying in the towns. The water you will be offered along the trail will be treated.

Limited spirits, wines, beers and soft drinks will be available.

CLIMATE

Rajasthan has a hot dry climate. The monsoon is from June to September during which it is particularly hot. Rain outside the monsoon months is unlikely. The rides are scheduled for the cooler months and at this time the maximum temperature would be around 24°C during the day. Please be mindful that evenings can be cool (c. 5°C) and you should bring a warm sweater and be prepared for a chilly morning just in case there is a snow fall in the Himalayas as the temperature does drop suddenly at times. When camping, the nights can be cold and are felt much more and you are advised to bring warm clothes for sleeping.

TIPS

Tipping is popular in India and it is customary to tip not only your team (guide, cook etc) but also staff in hotels and restaurants.

After the ride, guests usually collect the money in an envelope and hand it over to either your guide Bonnie or Sunayana (his assistant) with the instructions to divide it among the whole team – grooms, camp cook and staff, jeep drivers etc... Budget for c. £40-50 per person in total.

At the hotels, tipping is absolutely discretionary. The bell boys at the hotel handling the baggage do expect a small tip. If you are happy with their services, they may give them around Rupees 50 to 100 – but again, it is absolutely discretionary.

Be careful not to tip too much - being overly generous can affect the general standard of living and destabilise the local economy. If children earn more money than their fathers by begging or asking for money for photos then this can create major distortions within the family.

PACKING LIST

Please pack in accordance with local religious and traditional cultures - it is important to keep your shoulders and knees covered when meeting local

populations. Please do not wear shorts or strappy tops in towns and villages. You will also require some smart casual clothes for your hotel nights.

Head

- Equus Journeys strongly recommend that you wear a riding helmet and that you take your own to ensure a correct fit. There are many lightweight options available nowadays
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- Woolly hat
- Buff or Bandana to protect against sand, sun and dust

Upper body

- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun and are an extra layer
- T-shirts
- Lightweight fleece or jumper
- A light waterproof jacket

Legs

- Lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jodhpurs - we recommend riding in them at home before taking them on holiday to ensure they don't rub
- Casual trousers for the evenings.
- Swimsuit to enjoy the swimming pool of the hotels

Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps. We don't recommend taking your favourite long leather boots in case they get damaged
- Trainers or equivalent light shoes for the evenings
- Socks
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun

Other useful items

- Towels - camping ones will both dry and pack more easily
- Small backpack 25-30 liters
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Headtorch or small torch for moving around camp at night - bring spare batteries and bulbs
- Water bottle (2 litres or 2 x 1 litre)
- Swiss army knife
- Wet Wipes or equivalent (for when washing facilities aren't available)
- Toilet paper and a lighter to burn it with
- Small plastic bags for rubbish
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)

In your hold luggage

- Any liquids, such as shampoo, moisturiser, deodorant unless they are less than 100ml and all bottles can fit in a small, clear, plastic ziplock bag. We recommend biodegradable washing products where possible.
- Swiss army knife (or equivalent)

In your hand luggage

- Any valuables, such as your camera, ipod, ipad etc.
- Travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes is highly recommended - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!

Medical kit

- Any medication you regularly take
- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor
- Insect repellent, preferably containing deet
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Eye drops
- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhoea medication
- Re-hydration sachets
- Water purification tablets

- Antiseptic wipes
- Handwash gel

Miscellaneous

- We recommend taking a copy of your passport and insurance documents with you in case you lose your originals
- Please take your rubbish home with you. There are no recycling facilities in Rajasthan, so take your used batteries, aerosols etc back home and dispose of them appropriately. Try to leave excess packaging material at home before travelling
- If you prefer travelling in a "light way" please choose a biodegradable soap or washing powder/liquid.
- Please don't take a hard sided suitcase. Your luggage should be soft sided with a capacity of about 80 litres. We recommend taking a backpack or similar.
- Backpacks cannot be worn whilst riding.
- We recommend a small bumbag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day (camera, sunscreen, lipbalm etc) and whilst riding.
- We recommend travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes in your hand luggage - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

1. **Travel light.** It's a little known fact, but the lighter you pack, the better for the environment as heavy bags will produce higher emissions (when flying a plane or driving a car!).
2. **Reduce plastic waste.** Take your favorite reusable bottle with you. Avoid single-use bags, cups, or straws.
3. **Preserve nature.** Always take your rubbish with you during the ride and recycle them. Leave all the flowers or plants as you found them, and never get too close when observing wildlife. Make sure to use eco-friendly products such as body wash or laundry detergent (if camping) to protect both your skin and the environment.
4. **Choose your experiences carefully.** Respect animal life by not participating in any activities that abuse wild animals (shows, elephant rides, etc.).
5. **Support local populations.** Buy local handicrafts, be respectful of customs, and learn about the culture of local communities.
6. **Share!** Raise awareness among your family and friends about sustainable tourism.

For more information please [see this page](#) .