



JOURNEY THROUGH JEWISH HISTORY IN INCREDIBLE

INDIA

DR. ARI GREENSPAN & RABBI DR. ARI ZIVOTOFSKY

FEBRUARY 8 - 21, 2018

ITINERARY *(subject to change)*

THURSDAY: MUMBAI

Upon arrival at Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport, you will be met by our airport representative for transfer to the hotel to rest and relax after your flight.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Taj Mahal, Mumbai

FRIDAY: MUMBAI - JEWISH VILLAGE TOUR

Take a boat to visit to the Jewish villages near Alibaug in the jungle south of Mumbai. Visit the site of the arrival of the Bene Israel in India. After the tour, return to the hotel to prepare for Shabbat; Kabbalat Shabbat will be followed by kiddush and dinner.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Taj Mahal, Mumbai

SATURDAY: SHABBAT IN MUMBAI

Walk to the synagogue for Shacharit, followed by kiddush and lunch. Take an afternoon walking tour of exotic Mumbai, and then enjoy a refreshing Seudat Shlisheet.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Taj Mahal, Mumbai

SUNDAY: MUMBAI - COCHIN

Enjoy a tour of Jewish landmarks in Mumbai in addition to a comprehensive tour of the city including the Colaba Causeway, David Sassoon Library, Bank of India, Flora Fountain, Victoria Terminus, Magen David Synagogue, the Jewish compound with two schools and a Sassoon guesthouse (former residence of David Sassoon), Dhobi Ghat, and the Gandhi Museum. We will visit the Chabad House, scene of the terrorist attack of 2008. At the end of the day, we will fly on to Cochin

ACCOMMODATIONS: Hotel Vivanta by TAJ Malabar, Cochin

MONDAY: COCHIN

We explore Kochi (the colonial name is Cochin), a vibrant city situated on the southwest coast in the breathtakingly scenic state of Kerala. Its strategic importance over the centuries is underlined by its sobriquet Queen of the Arabian Sea. Informally, Cochin is also referred to as the Gateway to Kerala. We will visit Matancherry Palace, two Jewish synagogues, Paradesi and Ernakulam, the Jewish Market, a Chinese fishing net manufacturer and stop by at an evening Kathakkali Dance.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Hotel Vivanta by TAJ Malabar, Cochin

TUESDAY: COCHIN, COIMBATORE

Visit **Ayurvedic Museum**. Then travel to the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Located on the banks of the Noyyal River surrounded by the Western Ghats mountain range, it is a major hub for textiles, industries, commerce, education, information technology, healthcare and manufacturing in South India.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Vivanta by Surya – Coimbatore

WEDNESDAY: ERODE, COIMBATORE

We will visit the city of Erode. Our first stop will be at a “Jewish coconut farm” run by the not-yet Jewish community of Erode. Here, in 2011, Pastor Samuel Devasahayam of the Zion Gospel Church told his congregation that he had been practicing Judaism in secret for ten years, feeling that this was the true way to G-d. He invited his congregation to join him as observant Jews. Approximately half the congregation, or 1,500 people, joined him on his journey, and the name of the place of worship was changed to the Zion Torah Center. We will get to know this fascinating community over lunch before returning to Coimbatore.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Vivanta by Surya – Coimbatore

THURSDAY: CALCUTTA

We will transfer to the airport for our flight to Calcutta. You are invited to stroll the colorful markets around the hotel, enjoying the colorful throngs of people and the exotic sights and sounds. Afterwards, relax and enjoy the tranquility of the hotel.

ACCOMMODATIONS: The Oberoi Grand, Kolkata

FRIDAY: SIGHTSEEING AND SHABBAT IN CALCUTTA

Visit the sights of Calcutta, including the famous synagogues of Magen David, Neveh Shalom and Beth-El. There, we will meet with representatives of the board of the Calcutta Jewish community for the lonely lighting ceremony of the Ner Tamid, by one of the last Jewish inhabitants of the city. For Kabbalat Shabbat, we will join the Jewish community at one of these historic local synagogues, followed by Kiddush and a Shabbat meal featuring local, traditional kosher cuisine. Other sites to be visited in Calcutta include the Victoria Memorial, Mother Teresa Home, New Market, Howra Bridge, India Museum and Park Street, where the Sassoons and several other famous Jews lived..

ACCOMMODATIONS: The Oberoi Grand, Kolkata

SATURDAY: SHABBAT IN CALCUTTA

Tefilla in local synagogues.

ACCOMMODATIONS: The Oberoi Grand, Kolkata

SUNDAY: CALCUTTA TO JAIPUR

Visit Nahoum’s Bakery in the New Market and Victoria Memorial. After completing our sightseeing in Calcutta, we will transfer to the airport for our flight to Jaipur. We will be met at the airport upon arrival and transferred to our hotel.

ACCOMMODATIONS: TAJ Jai Mahal Palace, Jaipur

MONDAY: SIGHTSEEING IN JAIPUR

After breakfast, we will stop at the zenana mahas (harems). Within the palace complex are several museums, including an interesting textile gallery with a fine selection of textiles and costumes from the royal collection. The layout is Mughal, with open courtyards and large airy buildings, while the details are drawn from centuries of Rajput and Jain architectural styles. From the City Palace, we will continue to the extraordinary “Jantar Mantar”, the astronomical observatory built by Raja Sawai Jai Singh II in 1827. Roughly translated, the name means “The Formula of Instruments.” This is one of five observatories he built in northern India. The instruments, resembling massive futuristic structures, are actually highly sophisticated; they are still accurate today. Drive to Agra.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Agra Hotel Gateway by Taj

TUESDAY: AGRA

We will explore the Taj Mahal. This stunning mausoleum immortalized the name of Shah Jahan’s last wife, Mumtaz Mahal, “light of the palace”. Built by Indian artisans and artisans from neighboring Islamic countries, it is aptly described by the poet laureate Tagore as “a tear on the face of eternity”. Decorated with a mosaic of semiprecious stones and Persian calligraphy recreating verses from the Koran, the mausoleum is an “Urs”, an important place of pilgrimage since the empress died in childbirth. This will be followed with a visit to the Agra Fort. When the Mughal Emperor Akbar established his supremacy in Northern India, he began his first architectural venture, rebuilding the fort as a beautiful palace. Richly decorated with marble and mosaic, it was here that Shah Jahan spent the last years of his life, imprisoned by his son Aurangzeb. His private quarters have a magical view of the Taj Mahal.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Taj Vivanta, Delhi

WEDNESDAY: DELHI

The capital of India, Delhi is home to 16 million people, making it the third largest city in India. The Judah Hyam Hall synagogue later built on the property was designed by its chief architect Joshua Benjamin, who also designed the annex to the Parliament building and Delhi High Court. We will continue our drive past the Red Fort. The red sandstone battlements give the fort its Hindustani name, Lāl Qila. The fort saw the rise and the fall of Mughal power, being built by Shah Jahan at the height of his power and serving as the prison for the last emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar, who was ultimately exiled. The fort stands testimony to two great moments in Indian history: The Indian Mutiny of 1857, and its independence in 1947, when the national flag was first hoisted at the fort. We will drive past India Gate, Parliament House, Rashtrapati Bhavan, South Block (Office of the Prime Minister of India), and other landmark buildings in Lyuten’s Delhi area. We will then return to hotel for dinner, before our transfer to the airport for our return journey home.