

This itinerary is designed to follow on from our 2019 'Indian Magic tour

Monday 4 March 2019

The last day of the Magic tour. Take a cab down to Coimbatore airport and catch the 1430 flight to Bangalore which connects with the 1755 flight to Colombo, where you arrive at 1930. Overnight in Colombo.

Tuesday 5th March

Catch the 1030 train from Colombo Fort for the journey up to Kandy, arriving at 1242, with the afternoon free for sightseeing. Overnight in Kandy.

Wednesday 6th March

More free time in Kandy, then catch the 1400 train for the half hour journey to Kadgannawa where there is a small but interesting railway museum. Continue on the 1607 train to Colombo, where you are due to arrive at 1850. Overnight in Colombo.

Thursday 7th March

A day trip by rail to the seaside town of Galle. The train leaves Colombo at 0835, arriving at Galle at 1049, then there is time for a leisurely stroll around the town walls, much of which borders the Indian Ocean. There trains back at 1445 and 1535, getting back to Colombo at 1714 and 1805 respectively. Overnight in Colombo.

Friday 8th March

Your flight leaves Colombo at 1405, arriving in Tiruchirapalli (Trichy) at 1505. There should be time to visit either the Rock Temple or the Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple in the north of the city. Overnight in Trichy.

Saturday 9th March

Take the 0825 train to Madurai, due in at 1040. General sightseeing including the Meenakshi Temple. Overnight at Madurai.

Sunday 10th March

Take a car from Madurai 1t 1030 for the journey to Periyar, where arrival will probably be around 1530. Overnight at Periyar

Monday 11th March

A day at Periyar Wildlife Reserve, with morning and afternoon boat safaris to see elephants, deer, many sorts of bird (and there are tigers, but you would be very lucky to see one!). Overnight at Periyar.

Tuesday 12th March

Continue by car, leaving at about 0900 for Kochi (Cochin), where you should arrive at about 1500. There should be time for a look at the Chinese fishing nets. Overnight at Cochin

Wednesday 13th March

Take the 1000 train for the short journey to Alleppey, where you are due to arrive at 1120. There are two options here: either rent a houseboat for the night, and send it on Lake Vembanad, or take one of the ferries through the 'backwaters' to Kottayam and back.

Thursday 14th March

Friday 15th March

Saturday 16th March

Sunday 17th March

Free days to enjoy Kerala: we can arrange accommodation in the town of Alleppey, or a beach resort if you prefer.

Monday 18th March

The start of the journey north. The train leaves Alleppey at 1250 and winds up the coast to Mangalore, where arrival is due at 2300. Overnight in Mangalore

Tuesday 19th March

A free day in Mangalore to explore the docks and this south Indian seaside market city.

Wednesday 20th March

An early start to catch the 0520 Rajdhani Express at 0520 up the Konkan line along the coast to Madgaon (Goa) where arrival is due at 1055. Spend the afternoon on the beach at nearby Colva. Overnight at Colva

Thursday 21st March

A free day in Colva to enjoy the beach, the food and the drink, or take a day trip inland up the Ghats over the impressive Dudh Sagar waterfall to Castle Rock. Overnight at Colva.

Friday 22nd March

We continue north on the Rajdhani Express, leaving Madgaon at 1105, and due to arrive in Mumbai's suburbs (Panvel) at 2040. A local train will take you into central Mumbai (CST station) in just over an hour. Overnight in Mumbai (Bombay).

Saturday 23rd March

A free day in Mumbai – there is plenty to do, but don't miss a coffee in the Taj Mahal hotel's Sea Lounge (with harbour views) and a look at CST (Victoria Terminus), a station even more architecturally impressive than London's St Pancras. Overnight in Mumbai.

Sunday 24th March

You can have a day on the narrow gauge railway between Neral and Matheran. The service offered on the line may well improve before your visit, but, based on the current service, we suggest taking the 0840 Koyana Express from CST to Neral, from where you take a taxi up to Aman Lodge. There's a narrow-gauge train from there to Matheran, a traffic free town. There should be about three hours to explore this fascinating place, before catching the train back down to Neral, where you change into a suburban train back to Mumbai. Overnight in Mumbai.

Monday 25th March

Most of the day is free in Mumbai, but then catch the 1500 train from Mumbai Dadar to Bilimora, a small town in Gujarat, where you are due to arrive at 1806. Overnight in Bilimora.

Tuesday 26th March

There's a lovely narrow-gauge train from here at 1020 for a ride through the countryside to Wagtail (due 1320). At 1430, the train returns to Bilimora, due to arrive at 1735. Overnight at Bilimora.

Wednesday 27th March

Catch the 0935 train up to Vadodara (Baroda), due at 1231. In the afternoon, visit the narrow-gauge museum in the suburb of Pratapnagar, and have a look at an amazing 15" scale model of an LNER 'A3' near the Baroda Cricket Club. Overnight in Vadodara

Thursday 28th March

At 0800, take a car for the hour's journey to Dabhoi, then catch the 0930 narrow-gauge train to Miyagam Karjan, due to arrive at 1105. The car will then take you on an hour's journey to Jambusar for another narrow gauge ride back to Pratapnagar, and the car will then take you back to the Vadodara hotel.

Friday 29th March.

A free day in Vadodara, for sightseeing, including the Laxmi Vilas Palace. In the evening, catch the train at 1737 for the overnight rail journey to...

Saturday 30th March

...Jaipur, due at 0705. The day is free for sightseeing in this Pink City: on no account miss Jantar Mantar, the observatory. Overnight in Jaipur.

Sunday 31st March

The morning is free in Jaipur, before catching the train at 1320, due to arrive in Delhi at 1935. This leaves time for a dinner before going out to the airport around midnight.....

Monday 1st April

...to check in at 0030 in preparation to catching the 0415 flight via Dubai back to Heathrow, where you are due to land at 1225