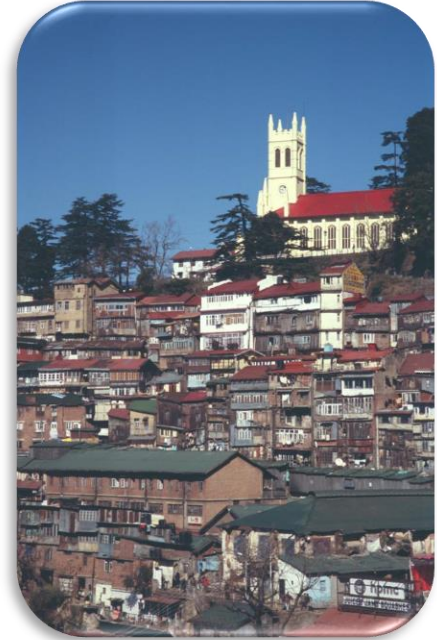


Not just a railway tour – get up close and personal with India’s colourful ambience, plenty of sightseeing too!

Tour highlights

- Tour Kolkata by private vintage tram, and see India’s busiest station at Howrah
- The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway needs no introduction – our usual unrivalled programme including a three-course dinner as steam blasts its way through the forests, plus steam-hauled charters over the whole of the available length.
- See the world-famous Taj Mahal – inside and out!
- A visit to the National Railway Museum, and its outpost at Rewari
- Ride the narrow-gauge Kalka-Shimla line in one of their amazing vintage railcars
- Sightseeing highlights: Apart from the Taj Mahal, there’s Kolkata’s Victoria Memorial, Assam tea gardens, Delhi (the capital), the Himalayas at Darjeeling, not to mention all the colourful bazaars and busy cities.



Please note all times are based on current timetables at January 2019 and are subject to change.

Wednesday 11 March

We’ll check in mid-morning (we can offer a choice of regional airports) for our flights to...

Thursday 12 March

...Kolkata. After clearing immigration you will meet your Tour Manager and board the coach for the transfer through the city suburbs to our hotel in the centre of Kolkata for two nights. (B,D)

Friday 13 March



In the morning we’ll take a ride on one of Kolkata’s remaining trams – it’s an excellent way of seeing the city in relative peace whilst still being close to the action. In the afternoon, we’ll take a gentle stroll through the teeming streets to see some of the city’s historic buildings, a couple of steam locomotives, the famous Howrah Bridge and Howrah station. Just down the road is Kolkata’s wonderful Railway Museum, well worth a visit (B)

Saturday 14 March

Today we will fly up to Bagdogra, the local airport for Siliguri and Darjeeling. From the airport, coaches will take us to the Cindrella Hotel, where we stay for three nights and from where the Indian arm of the Darjeeling Railway Society is run. The hotel’s restaurant is pure vegetarian, but the food is delicious! For those who prefer, if you let us know by 30 September, we can arrange travel on the ‘Intercity Express’ – the fastest train of the day – to New Jalpaiguri at the foot of the DHR. The journey takes us through the fertile rice-fields in the Ganges valley and across this enormous river at the Farakka Barrage, one of the largest river control complexes in the world. However, although the train is due into New Jalpaiguri at 1855 is frequently several hours late! (B,D)

Sunday 15 March

We'll start the day with a very interesting visit to a local tea estate where you will be shown the process that takes place to produce the tea that we drink. In the afternoon, we'll take the buses down to Siliguri Junction shed to meet the DHR's fleet of 'B' class steam locomotives. This will be followed by one of our exclusive 'dining trains', with a full three course dinner served on the train as it climbs through the forest to Rangtong.

(B,D)



Monday 16 March

We'll take a charter steam special from NJP to Siliguri Junction then onto Tindharia where we will pay a visit to the railway's workshops there, where the whole of the railway's fleet of rolling stock is maintained. As road and rail run together, a coach will accompany the train for those who wish to take photographs, and there are regular opportunities to change between coach and train. (B,D)

Tuesday 17 March

We will have a second steam charter running between Tindharia and Darjeeling. Again, a coach will run alongside for the photographers. There will be a short break at Kurseong, where Bengal's best samosas are made. Our hotel for the next two nights is the iconic Windamere, Darjeeling's premier hotel for the last 200 years! (B,D)

Wednesday 18 March



In the morning, we'll take the 'joy train' from Darjeeling up to Ghum to visit the Railway's excellent museum, and share a cup of 'chai' with the train crew. If we're lucky with the weather, there will be stunning views of Kanchenjunga, the third highest mountain in the world, and we'll have the opportunity to photograph the train with the mountain in the background. Fabulous! The rest of the day is free to explore Darjeeling – there's plenty to do. Don't miss Das Studio's albums of historic photos, fancy cakes at Glernary's, and

buy some tea from Keventers to take home. There is also the Planters Club, the Mountaineering Institute, the Zoo and The Tibetan Self-Help Centre. Or just chase trains.... In the evening, the 'Railway Club', with its library of DHR items will be open, with service from the bar. (B,L,T,D)

Thursday 19 March

If you can stand being up for six-thirty and the weather is kind, the view of Kanchenjunga and the Himalayas from Observation Point (200 yards from the Hotel's back door) is nothing short of stunning, and not to be missed. The rest of the morning is free for train-chasing and sightseeing. In the afternoon, the coaches will take us back down the hill to Siliguri for one night. If train services permit, we can arrange for train travel back to Siliguri Junction for those who wish, but we do need to know before 30 September if you wish to take the train option. (B,D)



Friday 20 March

After breakfast, we will need to make our way out to Bagdogra airport for our lunchtime flight over to Delhi, India's capital, our base for the next two nights. (B,D)



Saturday 21 March

We'll take the train for the ninety minute journey to Rewari, the new outpost of the National Railway Museum where they keep their operational steam locomotives. There is the possibility that the train may be steam hauled for the outward journey with a steam locomotive. Sorry, no guarantees! On the return journey, our coach will call at the Heritage Transport Museum at Gurgaon, which has excellent displays of

all forms of transport and transport related art. (B,L)

Sunday 22 March

We will take the early morning train from New Delhi for an early afternoon arrival at Kalka, the gateway to the famous 2'6" gauge line up to Shimla. On this line, we can make the journey in one of the Railway's iconic Railbuses, but accommodation is limited, and this is open to the first 12 applicants only, and may be today or Tuesday. Otherwise, the journey will be on the Kalka Shimla Express in its first class coach. We should arrive in Shimla by 6p.m for a two night stay. (B,D)



Monday 23 March

The day is free to explore this beautiful Hill Station, the summer capital of India in the days of the Raj. There is the possibility that we may be able to arrange a steam-hauled excursion on the Kalka-Shimla line – if this can be done, we will contact you all to give you the option of riding it. (B,D)

Tuesday 24 March

We will travel back to Delhi today, starting at a relatively civilised 1030 from Shimla, taking the narrow gauge train all the way back down to Kalka. This connects with the evening Shatabdi to Delhi – dinner is served on the train, and we arrive in Delhi relatively late at 10pm. We will stay two nights. (B,D)



Wednesday 25 March

We'll arrange a sightseeing tour of India's capital city in the morning, seeing India's impressive parliament building, India Gate, and the impressive Humayan's Tomb. In the afternoon, we'll arrange a visit to the National Railway Museum, a very impressive collection of locomotives, stock and models. (B)

Thursday 26 March

Today, we'll take the Gatimaan Express at 0810 down to Agra for the day. We will visit the Taj Mahal and the Red Fort, both of which are justifiably world-famous, and should not be missed on any Indian tour. In the evening, the return train leaves Agra at 1750, and there will be good snacks served on the way back to Delhi, where we are due to arrive at 1930. (B, light D)

Friday 27 March

We'll need to move to Delhi's international airport for the 1035 flight back to the UK. (B)

Optional extension to the Nilgiri Rack-railway – 27 to 31 March 2020

Friday 27 March

We'll be at the airport for the 1350 flight to Coimbatore, due to arrive at 1645. A coach will meet us and take us for the hour's drive to Mettupalaiyam, at the foot of the Nilgiri Line, where we stay one night. There is a modest hotel here, handy for the station, so (providing the flight is on time) we'll have a walk down before dinner to see the downhill train arrive, due at 1835. (B,D)

Saturday 28 March



The steam-hauled train with the 0-8-0 rack tank pushing loud and hard climbs the 18 miles through lush green scenery to Coonoor, from where a diesel takes over for the last 11 miles to Ooty (for short – it was once Ootacamund, now Udagamandalam!). This is where the game of snooker was invented. A coach will take us round to the five-star Taj Savoy hotel. The afternoon is free to walk round this very British hill resort. (B,D)

Sunday 29 March

Today is a free day in Ooty if you wish to just enjoy the Hotel's beautiful gardens, or to explore further. There is the opportunity to ride the train back down to Coonoor and visit the locomotive works there, and then back to Ooty by train. (B,D)

Monday 30 March

After a free morning, the coach will take us back down the hill to Coimbatore, where we'll catch the evening flight to Mumbai, due in at 2220, where we transfer to the international terminal.... (B)

Tuesday 31 March

...for our flights back to the UK.

What's included?

Economy class flights to/from India, breakfast and dinner (*) daily, accommodation in 3-4 star hotels (or best available locally), all transport, charter trains and excursions as set out in the itinerary and the services of a Darjeeling Tours Limited Tour Manager. All tips throughout the tour (except for the Tour Manager) are included and will be dealt with on your behalf. Personal and incidental expenses are not included.

(*) Dinner is not included in Kolkata, Delhi or Mumbai, where there is plenty of choice, both in and out of the hotel. Food is not expensive, and this allows considerable individual flexibility. On a daily basis, meals provided are shown with the following key: B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, T= Afternoon tea, D=Dinner.

The tour

This tour involves a walking tour of Kolkata, the only practical way of seeing the city's highlights, and covers about 3km (2 miles) at a reasonably gentle pace, taking around three hours.

Prices

Fully inclusive price from London:	£ 3,695 based on two people sharing
Ground only price (international flights excluded)	£ 3,195
Single supplement:	£ 595
Extension to Ooty	£ 495 based on two people sharing
Single supplement:	£ 240



Please note that carriers, flights times and train times are subject to change.
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