# Full Detailed Itinerary - India Photo Tour

## Day 1: Arrival in Delhi

After your arrival in India’s bustling capital you will be transferred to a hotel for the night.

## Day 2: Delhi to Bharatpur

This varied tour first begins within the vast wetlands of Bharatpur. A former hunting reserve of the Maharajas (Indian royalty), this park is littered with pools and swamps that are interspersed with dry scrub and woodland. After a good monsoon, it is home to immense numbers of waterbirds, making for a wonderful wildlife spectacle. Photographers rarely visit just once, as memory cards come back jam-packed with images of storks, herons, ducks, jacanas, and geese, as well as the many photogenic passerines and day-roosting night birds within this reserve. We will have the entire afternoon to begin exploring the area, traveling from our lodge just outside the reserve to gate within a vehicle, although once in the reserve we will take a series of rickshaws, as these are the only permitted vehicles within the core zone of the park. We will be cycled around, allowing us quiet approach to the many animals and birds that call this park home. Three nights will be spent in a hotel just outside the park.

## Days 3-4: Bharatpur area

We will have two full days to explore areas both within and around the reserve In wet years it is likely we may not need to travel much beyond the borders of the reserve, as a myriad of pools will bring literally thousands of birds and their attendant predators (such as a high number of raptors) into the reserve. While in dryer years there are plenty of other close areas where we can target the same species. While in Bharatpur we will have chances to photograph such species as Gray Francolin, Bronze-winged Jacana, Greater Painted-Snipe, Sarus Crane, Spotted Owlet, Crested Serpent-Eagle, Painted Stork, Indian Roller, Black-rumped Flameback, and plenty more. Other targets include India’s national bird, the extravagant Indian Peafowl, the massive Nilgai or Blue Bull, and Asia’s largest deer, the Sambar. It is common for local guides, who will assist us in the park, to have stake-outs for roosting nightbirds, such as Indian Scops-Owl, Large-tailed Nightjar, and Dusky Eagle-Owl. We will not struggle for avian targets during our time there, whether it be in the open scrubland, the wooded areas, or in the wetlands that have made this sanctuary famous.

## Day 5: Taj Mahal (Agra) to Chambal

No visit to northern India would be complete without the considerable cultural diversion of the Taj Mahal. This pristine white marble mausoleum stands prominently on the banks of the Yamuna River and is a wonder of exquisite architectural design. After shooting the Taj, we will return to nature and travel to a lodge close to the Chambal River, a vital sanctuary for waterbirds, which we will explore with cameras, and by boat, the following day. A single night will be spent at Chambal Lodge.

## Day 6: Chambal River Cruise to Agra

The Chambal River is a globally important sanctuary for a number of species, which gather there due to the clean, crystal-clear waters, compared with a number of other large rivers in the country which have suffered

serious pollution. The main bird for which the site is famous is the endangered Indian Skimmer, which can often be found perched along its banks, and often allow close approach by boat. Other birds we might find along the banks include some other large impressive species like Bar-headed Goose, Ruddy Shelduck, Red-naped Ibis, and Great Thick-knee. The river is also home to other spectacular animals that are sure to keep our cameras active, like the menacing-looking Mugger Crocodile and the bizzare-yet-elegant Gharial. After a morning and lunch in the Chambal area, we will drive back to Agra and catch an overnight sleeper train bound for Central India, and the tigers of Bandhavgarh… the night will be spent on board the train, where we will have comfortable berths for sleeping.

## Days 7-12: Bandhavgarh National Park

After arrival in the early morning of day 7, we will have the remainder of that day, and the next five full days to explore this fascinating tiger park. Located in the state of Madhya Pradesh in central India, we will enjoy African-style adventures in Bandhavgarh, the world's premier tiger reserve, boasting some of the highest density of Bengal Tigers on Earth. With plenty of time in the park we hope to have multiple chances to photograph this magnificent and fierce beast from open-top jeeps. Aside from India's flagship animal, plenty of other Asian animals roam the park, from "holy" Hanuman Langurs to spritely Chital Deer and Golden Jackals. The myriad animals on site are also accompanied by a healthy bird population, which includes such species as Crested Hawk-Eagle, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Jungle Owlet, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo and Rufous Treepie. Two jeep rides will be undertaken within the park each day, and other times we can spend relaxing and photographing around our lodge grounds just outside the park. On the night of day 12 we shall take an overnight sleeper train back to Delhi, arriving during the day of day 13.

## Day 13: Bandhavgarh to Delhi

Our overnight train will bring us into Delhi during the afternoon on this day. The night will be spent in Delhi, to recuperate after our long train journey and ready us for the next exciting leg of the trip.

## Days 15-16: Kaziranga National Park

The most prominent animal in the park, and the principal reason for including it on this photo tour, is the robust Asian One-horned Rhinoceros, which will be a major target for our lenses, along with Eastern Swamp Deer and the rare Asiatic Water Buffalo. Vast herds of Asian Elephant also wander around this remote park. This game park is good for birds too, offering large, spectacular storks like both Greater and Lesser adjutants, the regal Pallas's Fish-Eagle, and even the chance of capturing the beautiful Bengal Florican as it dances above the grasslands.

## Day 17: Kaziranga to Delhi (departure)

We will drive back to Guwahati, then take an internal flight back to the capital Delhi, to connect with international departures.

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