

Buddhist Sector (7 Days/ 6 Nights)

Delhi-Patna-Nalanda-Rajgir-Bodhgaya-Varanasi-Delhi

An evolution of man from a normal human to an elevated soul leading the path to salvation is the primary guideline of Buddhism. The doctrine that was preached by Lord Buddha was not meant to be a religion but a path to lead the life. Buddha preached the four noble truths and the eight-fold path to salvation and attaining nirvana. Today one can seek for mental peace at these places where once the great soul left his footmarks.

Day 1: Delhi

On arrival at Delhi International Airport, our representative will receive and transfer to the hotel. New Delhi, the capital and the third largest city of India is a fusion of the ancient and the modern. Standing along the West End of Gangetic Plain, the capital city, Delhi, unwinds a picture rich with culture, architecture and human diversity, deep in history, monuments, museums, galleries, gardens and exotic shows. Comprising of two contrasting yet harmonious parts, the Old Delhi and New Delhi, the city is a travel hub of Northern India. Narrating the city's Mughal past, Old Delhi, takes you through the labyrinthine streets passing through formidable mosques, monuments and forts. You will also discover lively and colorful bazaars that boast to cater all sorts of good and items at mind-blowing prices amidst a barely controlled chaotic ambience. The imperial city of New Delhi displays the finely curved architecture of British Raj. It generates a mesmerizing charm reflecting well-composed and spacious streets under the shade of beautifully lined avenues of trees and tall and imposing government buildings. Overnight stay at hotel.



Day 2: Delhi - Patna

Morning after breakfast transfer for the sightseeing of the city. Visit the India gate and the Lotus temple. Evening flight to Patna. Upon arrival transfer to hotel for check in and overnight stay.



Day 3: Patna - Nalanda - Rajgir - Bodhgaya

Post breakfast in the morning, drive to Nalanda, one of the oldest known universities in the world. It not only had students various subjects like arithmetic and languages but also linguistics and medical sciences. It also had a dormitory for students. Nalanda was a great center of Buddhist learning in ancient times. A large number of Buddhist students thronged the Nalanda University to study



Buddhism. According to the Chinese traveler Hieun Tsang, the place owed its name to a Naga, who resided in a local tank. Lord Vardhamana Mahavir and Lord Buddha visited Nalanda quite frequently in the 6th century BC. Nalanda is also supposed to be the birth place of one Sariputra, one of the chief followers of Lord Buddha. The Nalanda University attracted large number of Buddhist students from different parts of the world. The University of Nalanda was founded in the 5th century by the Gupta rulers. There were thousands of students and teachers. The main courses which were taught there were the Buddhist scriptures (both Mahayana and Hinayana), Vedas, Logic, Shabda Vidya (grammar), Chikitsa vidya (medicine) etc. Nalanda (also called Bihar Sharif) district is one of the districts of Bihar, and Bihar Sharif town is the administrative headquarters of this district. Nalanda district is a part of Patna Division. The subdivision of Bihar Sharif in the old Patna district was upgraded to an independent district on November 9, 1972 and named Nalanda, after the famous university (the world's oldest) located here. Nalanda is 67 meters above sea level. Nalanda is referred to frequently in Jain and Buddhist scriptures. As the centre of the great Magadha Empire, the district has had a rich and glorious history extending over 2,500 years. Till its destruction by Mohammed Bin Bakhtiyar Khilji, army chief of Kutubuddin Ibak, in 1205 AD, Nalanda was the leading centre of learning in India. Later transfer to Rajgir, where the Lord spent most of his time, after attaining enlightenment. Rajgir is 14km south of Nalanda and sacred to the memory of the founder of both Buddhism and Jainism. Lord Buddha spent many months of retreat during the rainy season here, and used to meditate and preach on Griddhkuta, the 'Hill of the Vultures'. Lord Mahavir spent fourteen years of his life at Rajgir and Nalanda. It was in Rajgriha that Lord Buddha delivered some of his famous sermons and converted king Bimbisara of the Magadha Kingdom and countless others to his creed. Once a great city, Rajgir is just a village today, but vestiges of a legendary and historical past remain, like the cyclopean wall that encircles the town and the marks engraved in rock that local folklore ascribes to Lord Krishna's chariot. This legend, like many others associates Rajgir to that distant time when the stirring events recorded in the epic Mahabharata were being enacted. In the evening arrive at Bodhgaya, where the Lord attained enlightenment. Overnight at the Hotel.

Day 4: Bodhgaya

Full day sightseeing of Bodhgaya. Here under the Bodhi tree (Tree of Awakening). Shakyamuni Gautam attained supreme knowledge to become Buddha, the "Enlightened One", the propounder of one of the great religions of the world. The tree that stands today is believed to have grown from the original Peepal tree under which Lord Buddha meditated. River Niranjana in which the Buddha bathed after attaining enlightenment flows quietly outside the tiny hamlet where the story of Prince Siddhartha ended and the saga of the Buddha began. Overnight stay at Hotel.



Day 5: Bodhgaya - Varanasi

Morning after breakfast proceed to Varanasi. Upon arrival check in at hotel. Afternoon visit to Sarnath - the holy shrine of the Buddhist where LORD BUDHA preached his first sermon after he had gained Enlightenment. After the Buddha attained enlightenment in Bodh Gaya he came to Sarnath. Here in the Deer Park, he delivered his first sermon, or in religious language, set in motion the Wheel of Law (Maha-Dharmachakra Pravartan). The Emperor Ashoka (c 304 - 232 BC), who spread the Buddha's message of love and compassion throughout his vast empire, visited Sarnath around 234 BC, and erected a stupa here. Several Buddhist structures were raised at Sarnath between the 3rd century BC and the 11th century AD, and today it presents the most expansive ruins amongst places on the Buddhist trail. Sarnath is 10 km from the holy city of Varanasi, and is an exceedingly tranquil place. The ruins, the museum and temple are all within walking distance. We will see a number of Stupas, excavated ruins of monasteries, the deer park where Buddha gave his first sermon and the Ashoka Pillar with the four-sided lions head, which is India's National Emblem at Sarnath museum. In the Sarnath Museum, we will see a rich collection of Buddhist sculptures comprising numerous Buddha and Bodhisattva images, considered amongst the finest specimens of Buddhist art. Feel free to walk around (clock-wise) the great Stupa, or if you are feeling energetic, do the whole thing - walk around it 108 times. Over night stay at hotel.



Day 6: Varanasi - Delhi

Wake up even before breakfast in the morning and transfer to the River Ganga to take a boat ride on the Ganges and witness the sunrise. The beautiful site will mesmerise you. Varanasi or Kashi is older than traditions. Varanasi presents a unique combination of physical, metaphysical and supernatural elements. According to the Hindu mythology, Varanasi liberates soul from human body



to the ultimate. It is the Ganga Ghats of Varanasi that complement the concept of divinity. Ghats of Ganga are perhaps the holiest spots of Varanasi. The Ganga Ghats at Varanasi are full of pilgrims who flock to the place to take a dip in the holy Ganges, which is believed to absolve one from all sins. There are number of temples on the bank of the Ganga river in Varanasi. It is believed that people are cleansed physically, mentally and spiritually at Ganga Ghats. It is at the Ganga Ghats where we see life and death together. For thousands of years people have been thronging these Ghats to offer their morning prayers to the rising sun. There are more than 100 ghats along side Ganga in Varanasi. Some of the prominent and popular Ghats at Varanasi are the Dasaswamedh Ghat, Manikarnika Ghat, Harischandra Ghat, Kabir Ghat and Assi Ghat You may witness the hindu rituals taking place in the mighty and pious waters of the Ganges. Later back to hotel, have breakfast and transfer to the airport to take flight back to Delhi. Upon arrival transfer for sightseeing of the city. visit the Qutub Minar and the Raj Ghat. Inspired by the Minaret of Jam in Afghanistan and wishing to surpass it, Qutbuddin Aibak, the first Muslim ruler of Delhi, commenced construction of the Qutb Minar in 1193, but could only complete its base. His successor, Iltutmish, added three more stories and, in The Qutb Minar is itself built on the ruins of the Lal Kot, the Red Citadel in the city of Dhillika, the capital of the Tomars and the Chauhans, the last Hindu rulers of Delhi. The complex initially housed 27 ancient Hindu and Jain temples, which were destroyed and their debris used to build the Qutb minar.[1] One engraving on the Qutb Minar reads, "Shri Vishwakarma prasade rachita" (Conceived with the grace of Vishwakarma), this is The purpose for building this monument has been variously speculated upon. 1286, Ala-ud-din constructed the fifth and the last story. The nearby Iron Pillar is one of the world's foremost metallurgical curiosities, standing in the famous Qutb complex. The Qutb Minar is notable for being one of the earliest and most prominent examples of Indo-Islamic architecture. Raj Ghat is a memorial to Mahatma Gandhi. It is a black marble platform that marks the spot of Gandhi's cremation on 31 January 1948. Check in and overnight stay at the hotel.

Day 7: Delhi

Post breakfast at the hotel, transfer to for sightseeing of the city. Visit the Humayun's tomb and the Jama masjid and the Red fort. Humayun's tomb is a complex of buildings built as the Mughal Emperor Humayun's tomb, commissioned by Humayun's wife Hamida Banu Begum in 1562 CE, and designed by Mirak Mirza Ghiyath, a Persian architect. It was the first garden-tomb on the Indian



subcontinent, and is located in Nizamuddin East, Delhi, India, close to the Dina-panah citadel also known as Purana Qila, that Humayun founded in 1533. It was also the first structure to use red sandstone at such a scale. The complex was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Shah Jahan shifted his capital from Agra to Shahjahanabad and laid the foundation of Red Fort, or the Lal Quila, on 16th April 1639. It took nine years to build this mighty citadel and it got completed on 16th April 1648. It is said that about one crore rupees, an astronomical sum in those days, was spent on its construction. Half of this sum was spent to build the exotic palaces within the fort. Built of red sandstone, it is octagonal in shape, with two longer sides on the east and west. The foundation of the historic Jama Masjid (Friday Mosque) was laid on a hillock in Shahjahanabad by fifth Mughal Emperor of India, Shahjahan, on Friday the October 6, 1650 AD, (10th Shawwal 1060 AH). The mosque was the result of the efforts of over 5,000 workers, over a period of six years. The cost incurred on the construction in those times was 10 lakh (1 million) Rupees, and it was same Emperor who also built the Taj Mahal, at Agra and the Red Fort, which stands across the Jama Masjid, which was finally ready in 1656 AD (1066 AH), complete with three great gates, four towers and two 40 m-high minarets constructed of strips of red sandstone and white marble. Later time free to visit the local markets for shopping. Late in the evening transfer to the international airport to take flight back home.

Hotels:

Day	Place	Best Value	Budget	Deluxe	Super Deluxe
1	Delhi	ASHOK COUNTRY RESORT	CLARKS INN- Kailash Colony	JAYPEE SIDDHARTH	TAJ PALACE HOTEL
2	Patna	PATLIPUTRA ASHOK-ITDC	SAMRAT INTERNATIONAL	PATLIPUTRA ASHOK-ITDC	MAURYA PATNA
3	Bodhgaya	THE ROYAL RESIDENCY BODHGAYA	HOTEL SUJATA	LOTUS NIKKO BODHGAYA	THE ROYAL RESIDENCY BODHGAYA
4	Bodhgaya	THE ROYAL RESIDENCY BODHGAYA	HOTEL SUJATA	LOTUS NIKKO BODHGAYA	THE ROYAL RESIDENCY BODHGAYA
5	Varanasi	PALACE ON GANGES	SIDDHARTH HOTEL	MERADEN GRAND	THE GATEWAY HOTEL GANGES
6	Delhi	ASHOK COUNTRY RESORT	CLARKS INN- Kailash Colony	JAYPEE SIDDHARTH	TAJ PALACE HOTEL

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