

# Welcome to Rajasthan, Delhi & Agra

*Rajasthan, Delhi and Agra are the jewels in India's crown. From fairy-tale palaces and epic forts to dizzying festivals and wildlife encounters, this is India at its unbeatable Bollywood best.*

## The Golden Triangle

The famous Golden Triangle is a traveller's survey of Indian icons. It starts at the daunting mega-metropolis of Delhi with its majestic Mughal heritage, and then directs you to Agra, where one of the world's most famous tombs, the Taj Mahal, defines a city. The third point is Jaipur – a city painted pink with the Hawah Mahal and some of the most colourful bazaars in India. Jaipur is the gateway to Rajasthan, one of India's major drawcards; once you've stepped into a palace, stared up at a fort or swayed on the back of one of its camels, you'll readily understand why.

## Magnificent Monuments

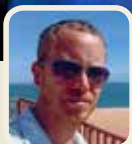
Most travellers to this region will arrive by air in the nation's capital. Delhi is an overwhelming, bursting-at-the-seams city that still manages to charm visitors with its magnificent heritage and heady cocktail of old Mughal architecture and the new of an India striding into the 21st century. A short train journey to the south, the Taj Mahal lives up to its hype with its perfect proportions and marble tones. In Rajasthan, it's the forts that grab you, from Jaisalmer's fairy-tale desert outpost, to the grandeur of Mehrangarh, which overlooks Jodhpur from its imposing hill-top setting.

## Royal Heritage

Rajasthan is literally the Land of the Kings. It is home to the chivalrous Rajputs, and its battle-scarred heritage has bestowed legacies of pride and tradition. The upper echelons of this medieval society built magnificent palaces and forts, many of which are now glorious hotels and museums. In addition, stunning handicrafts and fine arts were developed and nurtured through patronage of the maharajas. Village life remains steeped in tradition but, just like the rest of India, the pace of change is ever accelerating. Turbaned men still barter for decorated camels, but now they relay the successful deal home via a smart phone.

## Festival of Colour

The colours of this region are impossible to ignore and the effect of emerald green, canary yellow and fire-engine red turbans and saris is simply dazzling. The lucky might even see a flash of orange while tiger-spotting in Ranthambhore National Park. Easier to collect are the bright hues of Rajasthan's many festivals, from brightly decorated mounts at the camel and elephant festivals in Pushkar and Jaipur respectively, to the colourful explosions of Diwali and Holi, celebrated across the region.



## Why I Love Rajasthan, Delhi & Agra

By Paul Clammer, Writer

Is there any better way to see Rajasthan unfold before you than through India's railways – tucked up in your berth and watching village life pass through the window, refreshed by the chai-wallah who passes through the carriage with an urn of sweet steaming tea? And when you arrive at your destination, you'll tumble through the backstreets by autorickshaw to the real magic – astounding fortresses and palaces, camel safaris and elephant rides. This is the India of the imagination made real. Noise, spice, heat and colour: what's not to love?

**For more about our writers, see page 288.**