

Agra

YES, Agra is the home of the Taj Mahal, but the 16th-century Agra Fort is a gem in its own right. From its imposing position on the west bank of the Yamuna River you can catch your first glimpse of the Taj Mahal less than a mile away. Try to visit the Taj either at sunset or early in the morning as the light catches the white marble. If you're early enough, it's possible to get *that* photo with nobody else in the background.

Regal tip: Stay at the ITC Mughal Hotel, where you can have your very own massage room, private swimming pool and a butler called Trevor.

Forts and all: The Agra Fort (above), near the Taj Mahal, is worth a visit too. The ITC Mughal Hotel (below) is handy for both



Delhi

TRY a cycle rickshaw ride through the narrow lanes of Old Delhi and the spice market. Get there early morning before it's too busy. Take in Humayun's Tomb (pictured), which inspired the Taj Mahal, and the 12th-century Qutub Minar tower. Animal lovers will enjoy the Jain Hospital for birds. And, if you like the Raj, you have Sir Edwin Lutyens' imperial buildings in New Delhi.

Regal tip: Sip cocktails at sunset from the infinity pool on the rooftop of the Leela Palace Hotel.



Fort for the day: The Nagaur fort is out of the way

Nagaur

THIS 12th-century fort town is off the usual tourist circuit in the Thar Desert. If you want exotic and remote, this is it. The fort houses a magnificent palace where you can see painstaking restoration work being carried out.

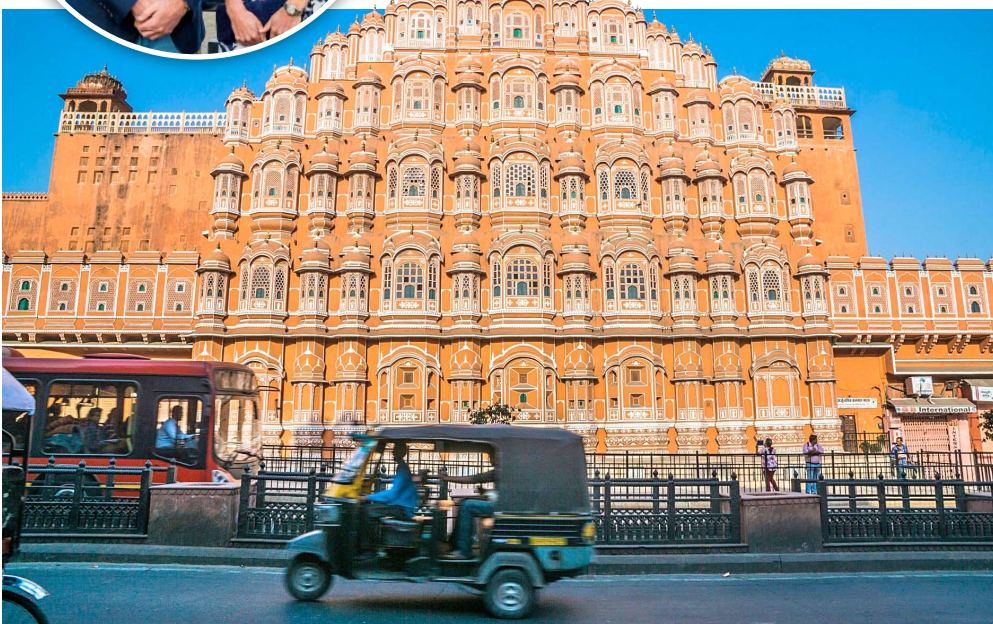
Regal tip: Also inside the fort is the Ranvas Haveli, a beautiful 27-room hotel made up of 18th-century 'havelis' (mansions) built for the queens of the Maharaja of Jodhpur. Each has its own courtyard and veranda. Paradise.



Remote: Ranvas Haveli was created for queens

TOUR INDIA LIKE A ROYAL

William and Kate will get a taste of India this week. But as our own very regal tour proves, you don't have to be a royal to enjoy magical Rajasthan, says **Ted Young**



Jaipur

THE Pink City is the state capital and largest city of Rajasthan. If you're not keen on an elephant ride up to the Amber Fort, perched high above the town, it's easy to get a lift in a jeep. Take in the 18th-century observatory and City Palace plus its 'Palace Of The Winds' extension, once used by the ladies of the court to watch life in the streets below.

Regal tip: The Suján Rajmahal Palace Hotel was home to the Maharaja and has hosted the Queen and Prince Philip, plus Jackie Kennedy and the Shah of Iran. It has been beautifully restored with 14 royal apartments, suites and palace rooms.

Room with a view: The Palace Of The Winds. Suján Rajmahal (below) has hosted the Queen

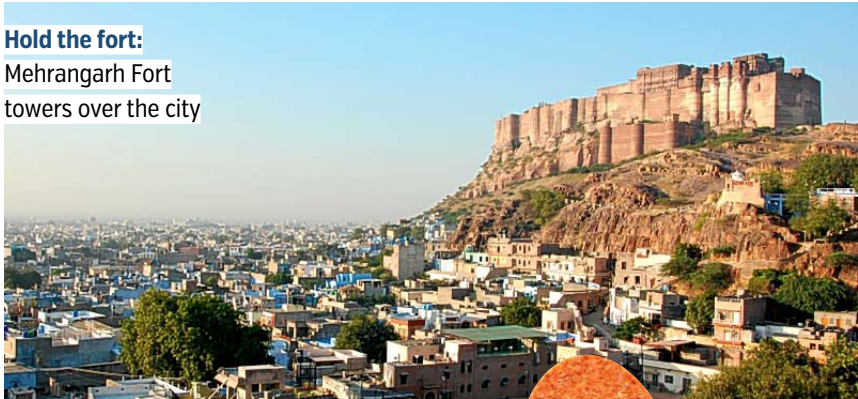


Udaipur

SEE the Crystal Gallery at the City Palace, which overlooks Lake Pichola, and enjoy their nightly sound and light show. Visit the Jagdish Temple, dedicated to Lord Vishnu, which was completed in 1651.

Regal tip: Be transported by boat to the Taj Lake Palace Hotel and enjoy an ice-cold martini on the terrace looking across to the city – just like Bond did in Octopussy.

Sound and vision: The Crystal Gallery at City Palace. Above, Jagdish Temple and Lord Vishnu



Hold the fort: Mehrangarh Fort towers over the city

Jodhpur

FIRST the Pink City of Jaipur, now the Blue City, a two-hour drive from Nagaur where you can see the mighty Mehrangarh Fort, which was built 120 metres above the teeming markets below. Get your cloth at Kapron ka Bazaar, jewellery at Sarafa Bazaar and spices at the Mirchi Bazaar, which can be posted back home.

Regal tip: Take tea on the lawns of the Taj Umaid Bhawan Palace Hotel. With 347 rooms and 3,000 staff it makes Buckingham Palace look rather plain.



Tea time: If you wish you could stay in the Taj Mahal, give the Taj Umaid Bhawan Palace Hotel a try – a hotel fit for a king



GETTING THERE

A ten-night itinerary starts at £2,900 per person with Greaves, including international and internal flights and accommodation at The Leela, Delhi; ITC Mughal Hotel, Agra; Suján Rajmahal Palace Hotel, Jaipur; Ranvas Haveli, Nagaur; Taj Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur; Taj Lake Palace Hotel, Udaipur and ITC Maurya Hotel, Delhi, all on bed and breakfast. greavesindia.com