

North India & Madhya Pradesh

*North India Culinary Tour*

Hosted by Chef Geeta Maini

October 20 – November 5, 2019

*Optional add-on: Tastes of Royal Lucknow*

October 16 -20, 2019

So often these days eating Indian food passes for spirituality  
I don't meditate, I don't pray, but I eat two samosas every day – Dan Bern





## The India of Your Dreams . . .

Allow renowned Canadian chef and native Hindi speaker, Geeta Maini to introduce you to the real India. Teeming markets, local culture, delectable cuisine, Indian royalty, train ride, and even a slum visit to debunk stereotypes.

Start with an optional culinary-infused visit to royal Lucknow, where 15<sup>th</sup> C nabobs perfected cooking techniques that influenced traditional delicacies and still inform contemporary Indian cuisine. Follow up with a cultural and culinary immersion in the heartlands of this ancient land, pausing to celebrate Diwali in Jaipur.

Your safety and comfort are never compromised, but you *will* be taken off the beaten path in search of the quintessential cuisine and culture of India.

Are you ready?



## North India Culinary Tour

### What we love about this itinerary

- Gloves-off India with a small and intimate group
- Widest range of experiences — royalty in palaces, local families to eye-opening slum visit
- Colour, joy, celebration at festival of Diwali
- Timeless monuments, expertly guided to avoid tourist traps and crowds
- Select boutique/heritage hotels for maximum pampering and local interaction
- Markets where all food love starts
- Talks by Geeta on food traditions of festivals
- Cooking lessons, demos and hosted dinners/lunches
- Tastes of royal Lucknow: market walks, demos, and visits with famed *chikan* embroiderers



## At a glance | 16 nights/17 days: Main tour

- 3 nights Mumbai
- 1 night Nasik
- 2 nights Aurangabad
- 3 nights Jaipur
- 1 night Agra
- 3 nights Delhi
- 3 nights Goa

International flight into and out of Mumbai (or Delhi—we can help you transfer)

## Optional | 4 nights/5 days: Tastes of Royal Lucknow

- 1 nights Delhi (arrival)
- 3 nights Lucknow

International flight into Delhi and out of Mumbai (or Delhi/Delhi and we can help you transfer between the two)

### PAST TRAVELLERS SPEAK . . .

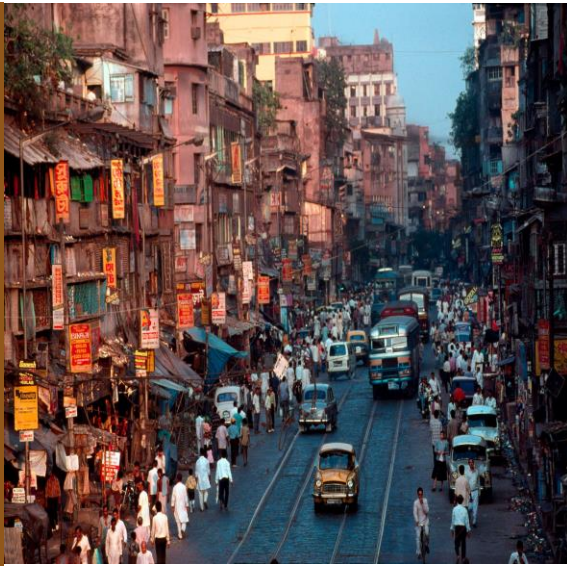
*“Absolutely magical”* - Carolyn W., Toronto

*“... unique, unforgettable”* - Val McDonald

*“No other tour like it. I would travel with E.Y.H.O. again in a heartbeat”* - Anne-Marie Applin

*“You provided the soft clouds upon which my dream of visiting India landed. My deep-felt thanks to you and your team. Oh, by the way . . . never had a bad meal or got sick!”* – Frank Mencarelli





Day 1: Sun Oct 20

## Mumbai

Welcome to Mumbai!  
Optional (\$) for early arrivals: morning visit to Elephanta Caves, collection of cave temples predominantly dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva.

Optional afternoon guided visit (\$) to *Chor* (Thieves) Market, one of the largest and most fascinating flea markets in India. Followed by foodie Crawford Market.

Evening group meet-up and welcome briefing/dinner

Meals : Welcome Dinner

Day 2: Mon Oct 21

## Mumbai

Early risers accompany Geeta to Sassoon Docks. The day's catch is bought and sold here by Mumbai's traditional fisher-folk.

After breakfast, guided walk through Matunga market and a visit to Tamil temple, immerse in Mumbai's cultural epic centre. Lunch on typical South Indian food.

Afternoon city tour of Mumbai including Dhobi Ghats, open air laundry. Time permitting, visit bazaars for carpet shopping. Evening, explore the street food scene at Chowpatty.

Meals : B, L

Day 3: Tue Oct 22

## Mumbai

Morning, visit Asia's largest slum, **Dharavi** as guests of a vocational training NGO, and debunk stereotypes in *Slumdog Millionaire*. Witness the resilience of Dharavi's residents, and importantly, their spirit. Led by a college student born in Dharavi.

Afternoon at leisure.

Evening, take in a civilised tea at the sumptuous Taj Mahal Hotel (\$), followed by a seafood dinner, specialty of Mumbai's fishing communities.

Meals: B, D



Day 4: Wed Oct 23

## Mumbai-Nasik

After breakfast, transfer 2 hours to Nasik in the heart of India's wine country. You won't believe you're in India until you catch sight of a temple nestled among rolling vineyards.

Tour of vineyards. Learn about the different soils that give Indian wine its distinctive terroir and the leap of faith it took to create the Sula phenomenon. Enjoy a hosted dinner with wine pairings to showcase the abundance of the region.

Meals: B, D



Day 5: Thu Oct 24

## Nasik-Aurangabad

Early morning transfer 4 hours – with lunch en route – to Ellora, a UNESCO site, world's largest monolith and finest example of top-down rock-cut caves. 4x size of Parthenon, 7000 labourers toiled over 150 years in continuous shifts to create a monument-sculpture of unsurpassed dimensions and intricacy.

Check in at your luxury hotel followed by dinner.

Meals: B, L



Day 6: Fri Oct 25

## Aurangabad

After early breakfast, drive to Ajanta Caves (2 hrs). Ajanta, a UNESCO World Heritage site, showcases 2nd century BC Buddhist cave temples. Original fresco and vivid sculptures reflect the peak of ancient Indian art and architecture. Led by a nationally-recognized Ajanta monument scholar.

Lunch at local restaurant. Return to Aurangabad after a full day's sightseeing. Cool off at your palace hotel's pool in manicured grounds and relax in the evening.

Meals : B, L



Day 7: Sat Oct 26

## Aurangabad - Jaipur

Early morning flight to Jaipur via Mumbai. Arrive in Jaipur, the picturesque pink-hued capital of Rajasthan. India's first planned city will be abuzz with pre-Diwali festivities. Check in to your heritage boutique hotel, and wander out into the teeming bazaars for a guided walk.

Evening: presentation by Geeta about food traditions during festivals, followed by a hosted dinner.

Meals: B, D



Day 8: Sun Oct 27

## Jaipur

Diwali! Jaipur will be abuzz. Diwali is a major festival on the Hindu calendar with family and community celebrations and, of course, much feasting. We will celebrate in typical fashion with a local family. Witness generational and familial bonds, and take in a temple visit on this holiest of days. Try your hand at a traditional card game, auspicious for welcoming the Goddess of Wealth and drop in at a Laxmi Puja, a ritual blessing of accounting books for the new year. Partake in evening fireworks.

Meals : B, L



Day 9: Mon Oct 28

## Jaipur

Morning drive to outskirts of Jaipur to 1500-year old Amer Fort, ancient citadel of the ruling Kachhawa clan. Climb up to this fort on elephant back. Return to Jaipur and visit City Palace, Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds) and Observatory.

Afternoon, relax at your palace hotel, or shop the renowned bazaars of Jaipur for block- print fabrics, home furnishings, jewelry, and handicrafts.

Evening: hosted dinner at Jaipur's iconic AD 1135 restaurant at Amer Fort.

Meals : B, D



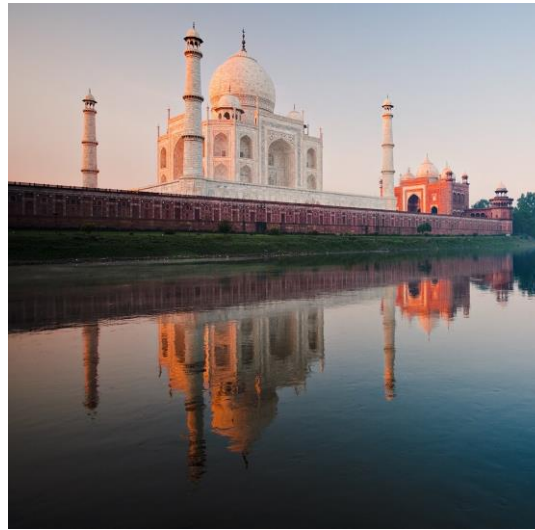
Day 10: Tues Oct 29

## Jaipur-Agra

After breakfast, last chance to shop Jaipur's bazaars before drive to Agra. Agra came into its own when Sikander Lodhi of the Delhi Sultanate moved his capital here in 16thC, later rebuilt by Mughal Emperor Akbar.

Check in, followed by guided tour of Agra Fort where Emperor Shah Jahan was imprisoned by his son and where he spent dying days gazing upon the monument for the love of his life. Time permitting, visit a private collection Mughul costume gallery.

Meals: B, L



Day 11: Wed Oct 30

## Agra-Delhi

Sunrise visit to The Taj Mahal. Witness the sun rise over this monument to love that took 20,000 tradesmen 22 years to complete. Follow your E.Y.H.O. guide for his time-tested ways to avoid crowds and experience the magic of the Taj.

Back to hotel for breakfast, followed by drive to Delhi (5 hours). En route lunch at a local "dhaba", or roadside eatery with freshly prepared plain fare served piping hot.

Arrival Delhi, check in. Evening, time permitting, visit to Dilli Haat, with its open air food stalls and crafts market

Meals: B, L

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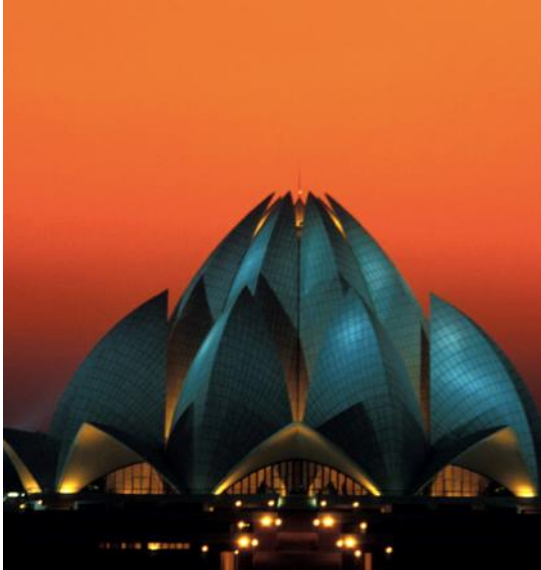
Day 12: Thu Oct 31

## Delhi

After breakfast explore the old city of Delhi, including Jama Masjid, the seat of India's Muslims. Chaotic and captivating, Chandni Chowk is the pulsing heart of Delhi, where street food and spices scent the air. On a rickshaw, weave in and out of narrow alleys piled high with all manner of offerings.

Geeta will introduce you to North Indian street food (safe to eat). Visit Humayun's tomb in Lodhi Gardens for a breath of fresh air and homage to the second Mughal emperor.

Meals: B, L



Day 13: Friday Nov 1

## Delhi

Morning: Bangla Sahib Gurudwara (temple) where volunteer-run kitchen feeds 10k free of charge every day as part of the Sikh faith. Try your hand at making rotis, followed by visit with the renowned Rocky Mohan, author of several cookbooks and founder *Gourmet Passport*. Rocky is BBC's Rick Stein's go-to chef. Learn the secrets of North Indian staples stripped of restaurant additions such as cream and excessive spices. Enjoy lunch at his beautiful home filled with a private art collection.  
Evening at leisure.

Meals :B, L



Day 14: Saturday Nov 2

## Delhi-Goa

Morning at leisure, followed by flight to Goa. Arrive at Ahilya by the Sea, a home-turned boutique property located 40 min from the hubbub of Goa.

Goa, once a Portuguese colony, has a food scene that regularly sends foodies into rapture, in addition to bendy palms, sandy beaches, and a rich architectural heritage.

Over next three days, relax, unwind, and allow Geeta to introduce you to the seafood-rich cuisine and culture of Goa. Market visit followed with dinner by Ahilya's renowned chefs.

Meals : B, D



Day 15: Sunday Nov 3

## Goa

After breakfast, join Geeta in the kitchens for a cooking lesson following her best loved Goan recipes. Enjoy lunch of specialties you've helped cook.

Rest of day at your leisure. Opt for excursions organized by Ahilya by the Sea (\$): cast a line with local fishermen to catch a crab for your lunch. Or walking tour of the historical Fointainhas district with colonial architecture and winding streets. Or try birding on an evening river cruise on one of the many river channels that cut across the coast here.

Meals: B, L





Day 16: Monday Nov 4

## Goa

After breakfast, accompany Geeta to Mapusa Market where locals shop for everything from fresh fish to coir rugs to fruit. Pick up spices and stock up on cashews which are grown on plantations close by. Back at Ahilya, enjoy a cooking demo with Geeta's market purchases. Break for lunch and enjoy a siesta amidst gentle waves breaking ashore.

Evening, transfer 1 hour for group farewell dinner to a local Goan food institution for typical Goan fare.

Meals: B, D



Day 17: Tuesday Nov 5

## Goa Departure

Today is departure day, and you are free to depart anytime. Per your request, we will arrange your transfer by air to either Delhi or Mumbai for connection with international flight home.

Thank you for travelling with E.Y.H.O. Tours! We look forward to welcoming you again.

Meals: B



## ***Tastes of Royal Lucknow***

(4 nights from Delhi, before main tour)

Few destinations in India command the respect that Lucknow enjoys for pioneering “Awadhi” cuisine. In the regal 14-15thC city, *bawarchis* (gourmet royal cooks) invented *dum* cooking, or cooking sealed meats and vegetables over a slow fire. Flavours are enhanced and food is melt-in-the-mouth succulent. Dum cooking set the standard for nuanced kebabs, biryanis, and kormas, accompanied by papery rotis and *warqi* parathas. Wander alongside Geeta in Lucknow’s bustling markets for street food that could rival fine dining, and learn secrets that Nawabi royals forged through centuries of trade, war and religion.

### **Day 1: October 16, 2019**

Arrival Delhi. Most transcontinental flights arrive at late night or early morning. Transfer to airport hotel. Arrivals earlier than noon require an extra night.

### **Day 2: October 17, 2019**

Morning flight Delhi to Lucknow. Arrive, freshen up after check in and begin with a visit to Aminabad bazaar to sample a Tunde ke kabab, one of the city’s most popular eating experiences. Continue on culinary walk through the Nawabi-style flavours of Awadh cuisine at food-stalls that take pride in their distinctive cooking. Evening, dinner at an iconic restaurant.

### **Day 3: October 18, 2019**

Morning sightseeing of grand Charbargh Railway Station, 18th century Bara Imambara Shrine and the Hussainabad Clock Tower, tallest in India. Lucknow is famous for its *Chikan* embroidery. Later visit local workshops that keep the 400-yr old craft alive. Evening, enjoy a traditional *Thali* at a sumptuous restaurant on the banks of the Gomti River.

### **Day 4: October 19, 2019**

Following a leisurely morning we’ll enjoy a cooking demonstration amongst the Art Deco architecture of one of the city’s finest hotels. In the evening, enjoy a culinary lecture by a generational cook of the traditional royal household.

### **Day 5: October 20, 2019**

Flight for Bombay. Meet up with main tour.

# SELECT HOTELS

A SAMPLE OF EXCLUSIVE ACCOMMODATIONS  
YOU'LL ENJOY



Trident Nariman Point,  
Mumbai 5\* hotel



Source at Sula, Nasik



The Grand, Delhi or similar



Ahilya by the Sea, Relais and Chateau

## Questions?

Bring them on! Please email:  
[shila@eyhotours.com](mailto:shila@eyhotours.com)

or

visit [www.eyhotours.com](http://www.eyhotours.com)

For your complete peace of mind, we are  
TICO (Travel Industry of Ontario)  
accredited #50023991

Please note: we guarantee no bookings until registration and receipt of deposit.

## COST

**Main tour** 17 days fully escorted, led by chef Geeta Maini

**USD 5660 double occupancy per person/** Add for single supplement: **USD 2380**

*Min. 10-12 pax*

**Optional Tastes of Royal Lucknow** 5 days fully escorted, led by chef Geeta Maini

**USD 1950 double occupancy per person/**add USD 750 single supplement

### What's included

- Conceptualised and led by Chef Geeta Maini of Khaana Sutra
- All cooking demos and hands on workshops
- Complete road transport which includes all transfers, tours and excursions
- All entrance fee at monuments
- Expert English-speaking guides throughout
- Accommodation on twin sharing basis with breakfast
- Meals as indicated – 6 hosted dinners and 9 lunches
- Internal air fare: Aurangabad/Jaipur, Delhi-Goa, Goa-Mumbai or Delhi

### What's not

- International flights
- Tipping and gratuities
- Travel Insurance
- Alcoholic beverages at hosted meals