

*The Jewish Museum's Heritage Tour of India*  
*March 3 – 17, 2010*



India, known for its “sacred cow,” the Taj Mahal, and Hinduism, has also been the least known and most benevolent of Jewish Diasporas. Jews have lived in India for over 2000 years without a trace of anti-Semitism.

During the course of this unique Jewish Museum Tour of India to the exotic cities of Mumbai (Bombay), Cochin, New Delhi, Agra and Jaipur, participants will have the opportunity to meet with fascinating Jewish communities and learn the unknown secrets of the Jewish experience in India. For example, few people know that the patron saint of all Indian poets and intellectuals is a Jew who lived in India in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Who would believe there is a Jewish aspect of the Taj Mahal?

Accompanied by Rabbi Marvin Tokayer, one of the world’s leading experts on the Jews of India, and expert local guides, the itinerary is superb, the hotels are among the finest in the world and the program includes its rich Jewish heritage as well as the opportunity to experience the breathtaking scenery and fascinating culture of India!

## India Through Jewish Eyes

March 3-17, 2010

\*Itinerary

### **Wednesday, March 3**

For those choosing air arrangements through Lotus Tours, board Continental flight this evening, nonstop to India.

### **Thursday, March 4**                      **Arrival in Mumbai (Bombay)**

*Namaste* (welcome!). Upon arrival (evening in India), check in to deluxe sea-view rooms at the Taj Mahal Hotel Tower situated on Mumbai's waterfront - an area known for its shops and restaurants.

### **Friday, March 5**                      **Elephanta Island**

After a leisurely breakfast and orientation, travel by chartered boat from the Gateway of India to the fascinating Elephanta Island where we will learn about the origins of Hinduism and Hindu mythology - embodied by rock-cut temples dating back to the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Shabbat dinner (included) at Fort Synagogue (Kneseth Eliyahu, built in 1884) where we will meet representatives of the Sephardic community.

### **Saturday, March 6**                      **Mumbai**

At leisure to attend services or explore the city on our own. Afternoon: (optional) visit to the Prince of Wales Museum, a short walk from our hotel, world-reknown for its collection of Indian miniature paintings. Evening: elegant vegetarian dinner (included) at the home of a noted Hindu *swami*, one of the intellectual giants of India.

### **Sunday, March 7**                      **Konkan**

Over two thousand years ago, leaving the land of Israel, a group of Jews (traveling to India) were shipwrecked off the coast of Bombay. The survivors came ashore, kept the faith, lived in interior villages, and were unknown to the Jewish world for 2000 years. In India, they were known as the Bene Israel or "Sabbath oil pressers." We will visit the original landing site at Navgoan, see the historic monument, visit a Bene Israel village and meet the remaining Bene Israel Jews. Lunch (included) will be at the home of a Bene Israel family. We will visit a unique synagogue at Alibag and learn the compassionate story of this lost community, located in one of the most remote corners of the Diaspora. Evening: A memorable dinner (included) at the Magen David Synagogue.

### **Monday, March 8**                      **Flight to Cochin**

This morning, highlights of our city tour include the unusual Hanging Gardens, a Jain temple, Flora Fountain, the Sassoon Library and, time permitting, the most unique outdoor laundry in the world. Lunch (included) along the way. Afternoon flight to the southern seacoast city of Cochin where we will walk through the site of one of the most fascinating and least known chapters of the kindest Diaspora in Jewish history. Transfer to the Taj Malabar Hotel with a view of the exotic harbor and backwater. Evening: Free

### **Tuesday, March 9**                      **Jewtown**

Cochin is history. Here we will learn how and why Jews came to this remote area during the time of King Solomon. We will visit a church that prays in Aramaic, walk through the Palace of the Maharajah, and learn how he saved the Jews from the Portuguese over 500 years ago. At Cochin's Paradesi Synagogue, with its Hebrew clock tower and a gold Torah crown - a gift of the Maharajah - we will have the opportunity to hold original copper plates that established a Jewish Kingdom in the 4<sup>th</sup> century! And... be sure to mail a postcard from Jewtown - the post office will cancel the stamp with a Star of David. The International Pepper Exchange is also in Jewtown, on Synagogue Lane. Evening: Dinner (included) at Bharat House, followed by an exciting and colorful performance of the Kathkali dance, performed nowhere else in India.

### **Wednesday, March 10** **Backwaters ~ Fly to Jaipur**

Today, sightseeing will include a boat ride on the backwaters of Cochin harbor where one can see and try their hand at working the unusual Chinese fishing nets. Visit to the old synagogue at Ernakulum dating to the 13<sup>th</sup> century,

shop for local handicrafts, visit a Hindu temple, and smell the fragrant spices. Box lunch en-route (included). This afternoon, we will board our flight to Jaipur - situated in heart of the Rajasthan desert, and check-in to the exquisite Rambagh Palace Hotel. Evening: Free

**Thursday, March 11                      Jaipur**

Writers and explorers have brought back mythical tales from Rajasthan. At the Amber Fort, ride a bejeweled elephant, and enjoy a photo op at Hawa Mahal (the Palace of Winds) with its ornately latticed façade. Explore the marvelous astronomical observatory built by the child Prince Jai Singh in the 18<sup>th</sup> century that is accurate even today! Shop for gifts in Jaipur, world-famous for beautiful hand-made jewelry, ceramics and exquisite handicrafts. Evening: Free

**Friday, March 12                      Drive to Agra**

Morning departure across the fabled Rajasthan desert toward Agra. En-route, we will stop at an oasis for lunch (included) before we continue on to Fatehpur Sikri - the ghost city of palaces and unique desert architecture - and join the search for the lost synagogue in the emperor's palace. Check-in at the deluxe Jaypee Palace . Evening: Shabbat dinner (included) at our hotel.

**Saturday, March 13                      Day at Leisure**

At leisure to attend services, and/ or explore the city on our own - including the Taj Mahal, one of the wonders of the world. Built by the Emperor Shah Jahan in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, we will learn about an unknown Jewish connection to this world-renowned monument. Evening: Vegetarian feast (included) at the famous Dosaprokash.

**Sunday, March 14                      Agra ~ Delhi**

Morning visit to Fort Agra, the red sandstone fortress built by Emperor Akbar in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. After lunch (included) at Zorba the Buddha Café (written up in the NY Times), depart for Delhi - with rest stop at Miriam's Tomb. Upon arrival in New Delhi, check-in at the Taj Mahal Hotel. Evening: Free

**Monday, March 15                      Delhi**

New Delhi has magnificent museums and beautiful Hindu temples. We will visit little known markets and areas of Old and New Delhi that tourists rarely visit, take in the "must see sights" including the Red Fort, the Parliament and Gandhi Memorial ... and recite Kaddish at the tomb of Sarmad, Jewish patron saint of Indian poets and intellectuals. At dinner (included), we will meet historian Ezekiel Malekar, Director of the Judah Hyam Synagogue, who will describe the recently discovered Jewish presence in Kashmir. Evening: Enjoy a cultural show at the fascinating One World theater.

**Tuesday, March 16                      New Delhi**

Day at leisure to explore and/or shop. At the farewell dinner (included), Rabbi Tokayer will summarize the Jewish experience in India. Tonight, transfer to the airport to board your flight to New York.

**Wednesday, March 17 Arrival in New York**

Arrive U.S.A. this morning. *Welcome home!*



**Participation: Limited to 25 participants:**

The Jewish Museum Travel Program is open to all members of The Jewish Museum; non-members are welcome to join the Museum to participate. Designed for people of all ages, the Museum travel programs entail walking moderate distances which may include uneven or slightly hilly terrain. Please feel free to call The Jewish Museum Travel Program office if you have any questions and we will be happy to speak with you personally.

**Program Details:**

Program cost: \$8800\*

(plus \$75 Jewish Museum membership fee for nonmembers)

- 5-star deluxe hotels throughout
- Buffet breakfast daily; five lunches and eight dinners
- Special programs with the Jewish Communities of Mumbai, Cochin and New Delhi
- Sightseeing and cultural events via chartered coach with English-speaking guide
- Chartered sightseeing boats in Mumbai and Cochin
- Local flights within India on modern Boeing and Airbus jets
- Group transfers via chartered coach with English-speaking representative to meet and assist
- All hotel taxes, service charge and portorage
- Passport wallet, luggage tags and India guidebook

\*Based on double occupancy; Single supplement available at: \$3485. For those preferring to share a room and need a roommate, we will try and provide one for you; otherwise, single supplement will apply. Payment in full due by October 15, 2009. Round trip air to India available, via Continental airline, at \$1100 (plus tax & fuel charges applicable at time of ticketing). India visa application fee (\$135) and gratuities (\$125) additional.

**Required Travel Documents**

Passport valid to at least September 2010; tourist visa for India

**To Register:**

Include non-refundable deposit of \$1000 payable to The Jewish Museum. Please complete the attached registration form and return to:

The Jewish Museum Travel Program  
27 North Chestnut Street  
New Paltz, NY 12561

(OR) Registration accepted by telephone or fax with credit card.

Tel. (845) 256-0194 Fax (845) 256-0196

**Changes:**

All rights are reserved by The Jewish Museum to make faculty substitutions and/or to modify the itinerary (including hotels) as needed.

**Insurance:**

**We strongly recommend travel insurance** for losses necessitated by you having to cancel your participation. For your convenience, insurance forms will be sent upon registration or consult your own insurance agent.

**Balances due, Cancellations and Refunds:**

Additional deposit of \$1000 due September 1, 2009; Balance in full due Dec.1, 2009. All cancellations must be received by the Jewish Museum Travel Program in writing. Cancellations received by September 1, 2009: full refund less \$1000 deposit per person; September 2 -December 1, 2009: 50% refund per person after nonrefundable deposit. No refunds after this date.

## Registration:

The Jewish Museum Heritage Tour of India II: Please complete, include deposit of \$1000 per person, and mail or fax to:

The Jewish Museum Travel Program    Tel. (845) 256-0194 / Fax (845) 256-0196  
27 North Chestnut Street  
New Paltz, NY 12561

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (eve): \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

YES! I am registering now and my non-refundable deposit is enclosed.

I prefer a double room.     I need a roommate.

I'll be traveling with \_\_\_\_\_

I would prefer a single room (single room supplement \$3485)

I am a member of The Jewish Museum.

I am not yet a member of The Jewish Museum.

(Basic Membership fee of \$75 will be added to final invoice. Information, including benefits of membership and options for other levels of membership, will be forwarded with registration acknowledgment.)

Credit Card Registration Accepted by Telephone or Fax:

Telephone: (845) 256-0194, Fax (845) 256-0196, or mail.

Visa     Master Card     American Express

Card holder's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Card number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Disclaimer of Responsibility:

By registering for this program, participant specifically waives any and all claims of action against The Jewish Museum and its staff for damages, loss, injury, accident or death incurred by any person in connection with this tour. The Jewish Museum and its respective employees assume no responsibility or liability in connection with the service of any train, vessel, carriage, aircraft or other conveyance which may be used wholly or in part in the performance of their duty to the passengers. Neither will The Jewish Museum be responsible for any injury, death, loss, accident, delay or irregularity through neglect or default of any company or person engaged in carrying out the purposes for which tickets, vouchers, or coupons are issued. No responsibility is accepted for losses or expenses due to sickness, weather, strikes, wars and other causes. In the event it becomes necessary or advisable for any reason whatsoever to alter the itinerary or arrangements, such alterations may be made without penalty.