

THE VIJAY NAGAR EMPIRE TRAIL

15 days / 14 nights

This tour covers some lovely sites, ancient and mediaeval; they are off the beaten track and are for someone who has already seen some of India and wants to explore further. It takes you into the wilderness on a white-water chase as well as a wildlife watch before leaving you somnambulant on one of the best stretches of sun and sand you will ever see. Start your journey in Hyderabad, a vibrant city of minarets and modern high-rise buildings. History has been kind to this region, each successive dynasty has added to the vast store of material heritage. The small town of Gulbarga, Bijapur, erstwhile capitals of empires, contains some outstanding architectural gems. Marvel over the second-largest dome in the world, the Gol Gumbad at Bijapur; the delicate beauty of mosques, palaces and tombs; and the many temples, some of them rock-cut, from the 6th and 7th centuries, that crowd the site at Badami, Pattadakal and the better-known Aihole.

The most famous site, of course, is the one at Hampi. From the man-made to the natural, ride the white waters of the river Kali as it rushes down the Western Ghats before you proceed to Goa to laze on the beach with a bottle of feni.

ITINERARY

Day 1

Hyderabad

Reception and welcome at Hyderabad followed by transfer to your hotel.

Day 2

Hyderabad

The entire day is devoted to the city, both the old and the futuristic new one. In the evening watch the famous sound and light show at Golconda Fort. B

Day 3

Hyderabad-Gulbarga 165 kms – 3 ½ hrs drive

This morning drive to Gulbarga. Both the town and the fort have much worth seeing. B

Day 4

Gulbarga-Bijapur

Visit the fortified capital city of Adil Shahi rulers of mediaeval India in southern Karnataka. B

Day 5

Bijapur-Badami 120 kms – 2 ½ hrs drive

Drive to Badami to view the rock-cut temples and the fort opposite. B

Day 6

Badami-Hospet 105 kms – 2 hrs drive

Drive to Hospet, stopping en route to see Aihole and Pattadakal temples. B

Day 7

Hospet

Explore the World Heritage site of Hampi, capital of the Vijayanagar kingdom, situated about 13 kilometres from Hospet. B

Day 8

Hospet-Dandeli 98 kms – 2 ½ hrs drive

Travel to Dandeli for a white-water adventure on the river Kali and camp overnight. B

Day 9

Dandeli

A predawn safari into the jungle in open jeeps is one of the best times for spotting wildlife. After breakfast, go out onto the river in local boats of bamboo and tanned buffalo hide to seek out the crocodiles. B

Day 10

Dandeli-Goa 85 kms – 2 hrs drive

Drive to Goa for three leisure nights. B

Day 11 & 12

Goa

Complete relaxed leisure on the golden beaches of Goa. B

Day 13

Goa-Mumbai

Fly to Mumbai and get the feel of urban life. B

Day 14

Mumbai

Tour the city and the caves of Elephanta. B

Day 15

Mumbai

Free day; this evening you will be transferred to the airport for your flight home.B