



CHEESEMANS' ECOLOGY SAFARIS

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India

Especially Tigers!

April 13 to May 2, 2021



Tiger
© Exotic Heritage Group

SAFARI OVERVIEW

Explore the heart of India and its famous wildlife reserves and national parks as you seek magnificent tigers, many other mammals, and beautiful birds. Soak in India's wildlife for six days in Ranthambhore National Park and five days in Bandhavgarh National Park. Our comprehensive tour visits cultural marvels at the famous Taj Mahal and the Khajuraho Monuments en route from Ranthambhore to Bandhavgarh. You also visit Keoladeo Ghana National Park at Bharatpur, a unique wetland wildlife preserve where you walk and ride in rickshaws around the bunds (embankments). While our focus is on tigers, you will have lots of opportunities to see other wildlife!

HIGHLIGHTS

- Search for tigers and their prey, including Indian gazelles (chinkara), four-horned antelope (chowsingha), chital, nilgai (blue bull) in parks famous for wildlife: Ranthambhore and Bandhavgarh.
- Enjoy primates, such as rhesus monkey and northern plains gray (Hanuman) langur.
- Photograph sunrise at the Taj Mahal and spend a morning among the famous Khajuraho temples.
- Experience India by 4x4 jeep, private bus, train, 4x4 vehicle, and rickshaw!
- Soak up the hospitality of India's friendly people while staying in lovely accommodations.

LEADERS: Gail and Doug Cheeseman, Vishnu Sinsinwar, Sunil Gaur, Ansar Khan, and Mohan Singh Solanki.

DAYS: 20, including estimated travel time.

GROUP SIZE: 10.

COST: \$11,600 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for one-way flight from Jabalpur to Delhi), singles extra. See the *Costs* section on page 6.

Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
Apr 13–14	Travel to Delhi, India.		
Apr 15	Arrive in Delhi, India.	Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport	—
Apr 16	Five-hour train ride from Delhi to Ranthambhore National Park, famous for its tigers.	Vivanta Sawai Madhopur Lodge, Rajasthan	B, L, D
Apr 17–21	Game drives in open national park jeeps, each accompanied by one of our resident guides.	Vivanta Sawai Madhopur Lodge, Rajasthan	B, L, D
Apr 22	Five-hour drive to Keoladeo National Park, situated next to Bharatpur.	The Bagh, Bharatpur	B, L, D
Apr 23	Morning wildlife watching in Keoladeo National Park, then drive to Agra, home to the Taj Mahal.	The Gateway Hotel, Agra	B, L, D
Apr 24	Sunrise at the Taj Mahal! Mid-morning nine-hour train ride to Khajuraho.	The Lalit Temple View, Khajuraho	B, L, D
Apr 25	Morning at Khajuraho temples, then drive in our 4x4 vehicle to famous tiger reserve, Bandhavgarh National Park.	Kings Lodge, Bandhavgarh	B, L, D
Apr 26–29	Spend the mornings and afternoons (one afternoon you will have a bird walk as the park is closed that day) game driving by open national park jeeps.	Kings Lodge, Bandhavgarh	B, L, D
Apr 30	Last morning game drive in Bandhavgarh. Drive four hours to Jabalpur, and then fly to Delhi.	Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport	B, L, D
May 1	Flights homeward.		B
May 2	Arrive home.		

LEADERS



Doug Cheeseman

Doug leverages his expertise gained during 35 years of teaching ecology and zoology at De Anza College to offer travelers a unique learning experience in wildlife-rich regions of the world. Doug and Gail have led over 70 safaris to Africa, especially to Tanzania and Kenya, since 1978. They also led many tours to all corners of the globe including the Antarctic, South America, Australia, and Asia. A love of photographing wildlife behavior and giving college-level lectures to interested groups adds to his accomplishments.

Gail Cheeseman

Gail is a naturalist of the best kind—self-taught through a lifetime in the field fueled by a deep passion for wildlife. Her attention to tour details and individual desires ensures that each Cheesemans' traveler has the experience of their dreams. Gail has a true spirit for conservation that drives her actions on many issues, both local and worldwide. Together, Gail and Doug make a team of remarkable ecologists who seek to inspire others to enjoy and conserve the Earth's wild landscapes.

Vishnu Sinsinwar

Born in Bharatpur, Rajasthan, Vishnu is a professional naturalist and ornithologist who has led trips throughout India since 1989. He has an extensive knowledge of both flora and fauna and spent a month leading a trip with Gail and Doug Cheeseman in 1989 covering Central, Eastern, and Western India. He wrote a book with his brother, Colonel Shyam Singh, on the birds of Bharatpur and is a member of Bombay History Natural Society (BHNS).



Sunil Gaur

Sunil has 15 years of experience as a naturalist, including Bharatpur where he lives, Bandhavgarh, Corbett, Ranthambhore, Kanha Jungle Lodge, and many others. He earned his master's degree and is a member of Life Line for Nature Society, the Bombay Natural History Society, World Wildlife Fund for Nature India, and the Guide Association of Keoladeo National Park. He participates in mammal censuses, non-native plant eradication, such as water hyacinth removal, and in vulture surveys. He is a wonderful teacher with a great personality.

Ansar Khan

Ansar specializes in wildlife photography and guides many wildlife tours in northern and eastern India and in Bhutan. He is an expert on India's birds and mammals. Ansar was born at Bharatpur and comes from a family of foresters who have worked in the Keoladeo National Park for two generations. Many of his photographs have appeared in magazines and books. He is also active with Life Line for Nature Society, a Bharatpur-based nonprofit working towards the welfare and conservation and wildlife and nature.



**Mohan Singh Solanki**

Mohan turned his childhood passion into a flourishing profession. He graduated from University of Rajasthan in India and was awarded Naturalist Guide's title from the Government of Rajasthan's Department of Forest and is an approved tourist guide from Government of Rajasthan Department of Tourism Art and Culture. Using his vast knowledge of flora and fauna he has birded and guided all over India for more than 15 years, including Keoladeo National Park.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Apr 13–14 ~ Travel to Delhi, India**Apr 15 ~ Arrive in Delhi, India**

Arrive in Delhi, India from home. Upon arrival a local transfer agent will meet you and transfer you to your hotel.

Apr 16 ~ Train to Ranthambhore National Park

Enjoy a big breakfast at the hotel before you transfer to board a train for the five-hour ride to Ranthambhore National Park in Rajasthan, where you will spend the next five days looking for tigers and other wildlife.

Apr 17–21 ~ Game drives in Ranthambhore National Park

Ranthambore National Park is famous for its tigers, as it's one of the best places in the country to see these majestic predators in the wild. The varied topography of the park is home to many mammals, including predators like jackal, mongoose, sloth bear, and leopard, but the main attraction is tigers. Surrounded by the Vindhya and Aravali hill ranges and located near the outer fringes of the Thar Desert, Ranthambore offers the best of the desert lands.

Apr 22 ~ Drive to Keoladeo National Park

After checking out from the hotel, head out for five-hour drive to Bharatpur situated next to the World Heritage Site, Keoladeo National Park. Your hotel is on 12 acres in a 200-year-old former maharajas heritage garden with abundant bird life.

In the afternoon, you'll head for the marshes of Keoladeo Ghana National Park, its official name. *Keolade* is the ancient Hindu temple in the center of the park and *Ghana* refers to the dense forest of former times. Before becoming a national park, former maharajas protected the marshlands in the late nineteenth century, when it was created for duck hunting. Most of India's wildlife reserves were once hunting reserves and this was the best duck hunting reserve until it became a national park and hunting was prohibited. You'll ride in rickshaws around the bunds (embankments) to the best places for birds and mammals. Look for sambar, nilgai, and chital (spotted deer) in woodlands, grasslands, and in the shallow waters of the wetlands. If the weather is right, large Indian rock pythons come out of their underground hiding places to sun themselves.

Apr 23 ~ Morning in Keoladeo Nation Park and drive to Agra

Spend your last morning in Keoladeo National Park observing wildlife. Take rickshaws around the bunds (embankments) to the far reaches of the park with stops along the way for great photography, where you may find darters, cormorants, ducks, geese, egrets, eagles, hawks, falcons, owls, and dozens of other birds. After lunch, drive two hours to Agra.

Apr 24 ~ Sunrise at the Taj Mahal and train ride to Khajuraho

Get up early to arrive at the Taj Mahal for sunrise – the most magnificent, stunning time of day with less people and fantastic photo opportunities. Built by Emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his beloved consort Mumtaz Mahal, this mausoleum is pure white marble. More than 20,000 people worked on the buildings and grounds, combining Persian, Turkish, Indian, and Islamic architectural styles, taking 22 years to complete! It is truly one of the Seven Wonders of the World. The surrounding grounds are home to Eurasian hoopoe, purple sunbird, green bee-eater, several species of doves, and other birds. Return to the hotel for a late breakfast before catching a train for a nine-hour journey to Khajuraho.

Apr 25 ~ Khajuraho temples and drive to Bandhavgarh National Park

Khajuraho is known for its temples, not only for their symmetry and design, but also for intricate and erotic carvings on their walls, and they are among the most creative examples of Indian architecture. Only 22 of 85 temples built between 950 and 1050 during the Hindu dynasty of the Chandela Rajputs survive today. Carvings depict griffins, nymphs, beasts, demons in revolt, gods in cosmic evolution, fear, doubt, jealousy, ardent love, and consummate passion. Many of the temples are dedicated to the Hindu deities Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. The most magnificent, the Kandariya Mahadeo Temple, is dedicated to Lord Shiva, representing Chandela art at its zenith.

After lunch, embark on the five-hour drive to Bandhavgarh, stopping to look for some waterbirds alongside a lake. Arrive in time for dinner at your lodge.

Apr 26–29 ~ Search for wildlife in Bandhavgarh National Park

Bandhavgarh National Park is full of both fascinating historical monuments and wildlife. Much less visited and hot during this time of year, the tigers tend to gather at the water holes. With hills, valley, rivers, marshes, and meadows, the vegetative biodiversity in Bandhavgarh is unique. Tiger is the keystone species, but 34 species of mammals, 260 species of birds, and 70 butterflies call it home. The temples in the park have tenth century rock carvings of the incarnations of Vishnu. Among the temple rocks you may find blue rock-thrushes, crag-martins, and other birds.

You'll spend the mornings and afternoons (one afternoon you will have a bird walk as the park is closed that day) game driving by open national park jeep with a break in the middle of the day for walking, lunch, and rest; except on April 28 you'll spend a morning game driving and afternoon bird watching because the park is closed during this afternoon. You'll depart early enough to be at the national park gates when they open at dawn. While we cannot guarantee that you'll find tigers each day, you will spend as much time in nature to increase your chances! You may find Indian gazelles (chinkara) grazing in the grassland areas with four-horned antelope (chowsingha) and nilgai (also known as blue cow and blue bull), the largest of the Asian antelopes. Rhesus monkey and the northern plains gray (Hanuman) langur are common in the park. The birding around the lodge is outstanding with parakeets, hornbills, minivets, leafbirds, flycatchers, and others. You'll take walks where it is allowed.

Apr 30 ~ Morning game drive and drive to Jabalpur

Spend the last morning on a game drive in the park, enjoy a late breakfast, and then embark on a four-hour drive to Jabalpur, stopping for lunch on the way, and then fly to Delhi.

May 1 ~ Fly homeward

Transfer to the airport for flights homeward.

May 2 ~ Arrive home

COSTS (ALL COSTS ARE IN US DOLLARS)

Cost

Type	Cost per Person
Trip Cost, double occupancy	\$11,600
Single supplement	\$3,125

Costs are per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for one-way flight from Jabalpur to Delhi), singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

If you are a single traveler, we will find a roommate for you, but if we cannot find you a roommate, we may charge you a single supplement. Single rooms cost extra and are subject to availability.

Payment Schedule

Payment	Due Date	Amount per Person
Deposit	Due now to reserve your space	\$2,500
Second	June 15, 2020	\$2,500
Final	November 15, 2020	Remaining Balance

Payments are due based on the schedule above. All reservations require a deposit to confirm reservation of your space.

Cancellations

Until the Final Payment due date, deposits are refundable except for a cancellation fee of \$2,150 per person (\$2,000 per person is for the pre-purchased, **non-refundable** and **non-transferable** game drives in Ranthambhore and Bandavgarh and Jabalpur to Delhi flight); \$150 per person of the cancellation fee can be applied toward another tour if reserved within six months of the cancelled trip's departure date. Cancellations are non-transferrable. No refunds are given after the Final Payment due date.

Included

- All leaders, transport, park entry fees, and permits for all activities unless described as optional.
- Airport transfers between the Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport hotel and the Delhi Airport on April 15 and May 1.
- Accommodations for the nights of April 15 through April 30.
- Meals from breakfast on April 16 through breakfast on May 1.
- One-way flight from Jabalpur to Delhi; **non-refundable** and **non-transferable**.
- Transportation by private bus in Delhi, Ranthambhore, Bharatpur, and Agra.
- Game drives by 4x4 jeep in Ranthambhore and Bandhavgarh; **non-refundable** and **non-transferable**.
- Train tickets from Delhi to Ranthambhore and from Agra to Khajuraho.
- Purified or bottled water during meals and in your hotel room.
- Trip Materials – information about flights, packing, entry and departure requirements, airport transfers, gratuities, etc.

Not Included

- All airfare (except flights listed as included), airport and departure taxes, and excess baggage fees. Round-trip airfare is approximately \$850 to \$1,500 between the US and Delhi, depending on origin.
- Passport and visa fees.
- We can arrange divergent airport transfers and extra hotel nights for an extra cost.
- Gratuities – tipping is always discretionary. However, we suggest budgeting about \$22 to \$25 per participant per day for April 15 to April 30 with our four resident guides (about \$352 to \$400 total per participant).
- Emergency medical and evacuation insurance and trip cancellation insurance. For more information see www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance.
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, alcoholic and other beverages, items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Reservation Form.

SIGN UP

Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Reservation Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant.

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

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OTHER DETAILS

Climate

Temperatures generally range from around 70°F at night to 110°F during the day. Although most days will be hot, it can be cool and breezy in the early morning. Although it is the dry season, rain is possible.

Fitness Level

Most days consist of early mornings, game drives on uneven roads, and full days in nature that require good energy levels. Most walking is optional and around lodge grounds between game drives. Transportation between locations range between four and nine hours. Please contact us if you have any health concerns that may make this trip challenging.

Accommodations

All lodges have air conditioning.

Transportation

On game drives in the parks, you travel in open, six-passenger 4x4 jeeps that provide 360° viewing and excellent photography opportunities; we'll have three participants in each vehicle sharing with one of our resident guides, a park ranger, and a park driver. In Keoladeo Ghana National Park you'll have the opportunity to travel in a rickshaw. Between parks and cities travel by private bus, train, plane, or 4x4 vehicles (during our bumpy ride from Khajuraho to Bandhavgarh).

Flights

Unless listed as included, airfare is not included in trip costs. Detailed logistical information and the contact information for our recommended flight-ticketing agent are included in the Trip Materials we will send you. Please let us know if you are arriving earlier or staying later as we are happy to assist you with any extra overnights that you might want to arrange.

Flights you (or a travel agent) book: Arrive in Delhi, India (DEL) on April 15. Depart from Delhi, India (DEL) on May 1.

Flights we book for you: The one-way flight from Jabalpur to Delhi is included in the trip cost.

Terms and Conditions

Read our current Terms and Conditions at <https://cheesemans.com/terms-and-conditions>.

Conservation

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris is passionate about conserving the precious regions that we travel to and supports many conservation efforts. By visiting these areas, we contribute to sustainable conservation of these valuable wildlife habitats. We urge you to support conservation organizations that protect and restore natural habitats and write letters to tourism and government agencies to promote work in preserving wildlife.

We aim to make all our trips carbon neutral by splitting the cost of carbon offsetting with our participants. For your convenience, the optional donation amount for your half of the carbon offset will be indicated on your invoice. We source high quality offsets through CarbonTree Conservation Fund, a non-profit we helped found, supporting pioneering forest conservation in the Rio Bravo Reserve in Belize, a Nature Conservancy project (www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/latin-america/belize/rio-bravo-conservation-area/).