

# **BALOTRA HORSE FAIR SAFARI**

## **JODHPUR TO TILWARA**

**11<sup>th</sup> March 2020 to 21<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

**( 10 nights 11 days )**



**We require minimum six riders and maximum 12 riders to operate.**

**Delhi ARRIVAL ONE NIGHT AND FLIGHT/TRAIN DELHI – JODHPUR – DELHI.**

**Ride from Jodhpur to the heartland of the famous Marwari horse to visit India's biggest rural horse and cattle fair at Tilwara (Balotra).**

The safari recreates the age-old charm of horseback travel. Let your senses sway to the romance of the desert as you pass forts, palaces and historical landmarks. Gallop on the deserts, plains, canter through the hills or just get off and trek along. Spend evenings in camps and swing to the folk dances.

## **Day 1: Arrival- Delhi. (Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020)**

*Overnight a Hotel*

## **Day 2: Delhi to Jodhpur (Either by train or Flight)**

Assistance on arrival. Transfer to Hotel Ratan Vilas Palace. Built in 1920, by Maharaj Ratan Singh of Raoti, a keen horse lover and one of the greatest Polo players of his times, Ratan Vilas with its imposing Red Jodhpur sand Stone carved exterior and simple yet comfortable interiors is a genuine heritage edifice in sylvan setting.

The villa continues to be the home of the grandson of Maharaj Ratan Singh, Maharaj Bharat Singh and his family. In order to utilize this beautiful place the family decided to take in guests and now Ratan Vilas is a family run Hotel

AFTER LUNCH drive 45 minutes to the base camp where our horses and safari team have arrived from Nawalgarh .The guests are welcomed with folk music and given welcome gifts. The safari-riding leader helps the guests pick and choose their horses ---riding around the countryside.

Overnight at hotel ratan vilas or Similar at Jodhpur

## **Day 3: At Jodhpur**

**Morning sightseeing of Mehrangarh fort, explore parts of the old city of Jodhpur** with car and guide. Late afternoon drive to the base camp riding in the countryside. **Jodhpur** is on the eastern fringe of the Thar Desert and serves as the gateway to the wonderland of sand dunes and shrubs, rocky terrain and thorny trees.

Rao Jodha established the Rathore Dynasty in Jodhpur in 1459 AD. The spectacular Mehrangarh Fort was hewn out of the rocks and the city of Jodhpur emerged out of the sands of the Thar Desert to form the flourishing kingdom of Marwar, encompassing some 36,000 square miles and strategically placed on the trade route between Delhi and the Middle East. It was also a flourishing trading centre of wood, cattle, camels, salt and agricultural crops. The past, in fact, is never very far behind in Jodhpur where palaces, forts, temples and other elegant monuments of architectural and historical worth vie with each other for attention.

**Mehrangarh** Fort spreads over five kilometers on a hill. It houses a palace intricately adorned with long carved panels and latticed windows exquisitely wrought from red sandstone. It also has a museum with a rich

collection of palanquins, *howdahs*, royal cradles, miniature paintings of various schools, folk music instruments, costumes and impressive armoury.

Overnight Ratan Vilas Palace or similar at Jodhpur

#### **Day 4: Jodhpur / Luni / Satlana**

##### **Cross Country Safari begins**

Morning drive to base camp to commence your safari. The ride goes through dry flat area. The lunch halt is in a small rain catchment area besides a temple to a folk divinity 'mamoji'.

Each day you will cover a distance of 25 to 30 Kms riding through open countryside, farms and villages. The route follows the dry riverbed of river LUNI .

Overnight stay will be in tents in a specially set up moving luxury camp . Each evening swing to the rhythm of the camps folk musicians. A Camp barber who also does massages will be available to relieve you of any aches and pains of the hard days ride. .

During the safari you will pass through many settlements of the **Bishnoi community** who have made environmental protection their religion.

The Bishnoi people follow 29 principles laid down by Guru Jambhoji, who made environmental and wildlife protection a "religion" in the fifteenth century. Common throughout Rajasthan and Gujarat they are renowned for a concern for nature, particularly their refusal to harm the black buck, which now survive only in Bishnoi villages.

Bishnoi beliefs came to the political forefront in 1730, when the king of Jodhpur ordered his men to collect wood for his new place. Despite the pleas of Bishnois, felling commenced in the small village of Khejadali near Jodhpur. In desperation Amritdevi, a Bishnoi women, hugged a tree. The fellers, assuming that the King's request was to be respected, ignored her plea. She and 362 of her fellow people lost their lives trying to protect the forest. On hearing the news the king recalled his men and accorded state sanction to the Bishnoi religion, a turning point in the history remembered each September when thousands attend a festival at Khejadali.

Overnight in camp.

## **Day 5: Satlana / Ghana**

Riders go upstream in the large expanse of the dry river bed of the Luni river. Being very sandy the going is very slow. After leaving the riverbed the ride takes you through villages and dry scrubby country. The festival of colour holi has just passed so in this region people are still celebrating with dancing and drum music...

Before reaching the camp the ride crosses 8 / 9 kms of protected bush land of the Ramdev ji Temple. Such temple protectorates are called "Oran". The camp is in the field of a farmer. In the evening we may have the farmers family or other ladies of the nearby village come visiting our camp.

Overnight in camp.

## **Day 6: Ghana / Karmavas**

The ride on this day will take you through fat dry desert land arid but not sandy. Riders will be surprised at the clean well-maintained clay houses of the villagers. the movement will be west North-west. The riders approach the campsite with low hills of Aravali ranges visible on the horizon. Typical desert flora will be seen on this day.

Overnight in Camp

## **Day 7: Karmavas / Asotra**

Riding towards the hills pass acacia clusters the riders cross the village 'mangla'. The lunch stop is in the backdrop of a hillock facing the dry luni river bed. After lunch ride on to asotra .... A big surprise a green belt.

Around ASOTRA aquifer created by the ancient saraswati river basin from 2000 BC has been discovered. As a result farmers pump water by electric pumps and raise crops and riders will go through this fertile oasis belt. Our camp is in a farmer's field and riders are able to meet the villagers and the family.

Overnight in Camp

## **Day 8: Asotra / Balotra Fair (Tilwara)**

As we pass the balotra city riders would be compelled to ride along a road with moving traffic . Therefore for the safety of the riders The horses leave early morning being escorted by the grooms while the

riders would travel by jeep till JASOL . Ride starts from jasol towards the fair at tilwara village approximately 16 kms .

Evening reach Tilwara. Explore the fair grounds on arrival. Evening campfire and folk entertainment.



## **BALOTRA HORSE & CAMEL FAIR**

In southwest Rajasthan 145 Kms. From Jodhpur on the banks of the dry seasonal river Luni is a small village "TILWARA". The closest town 19 Kms. From Tilwara is Balotra falling in district Barmer of Rajasthan. It was here many centuries ago that the famous ruler MALLINATHJI ruled. He is worshipped as a divinity. The temple to Mallinathji is located on the opposite bank of the dry river Luni from Tilwara village. Every year in the first fortnight of the Hindu month of "Chaitra" a large fair is held here. Horses, camels, bullocks and in the last phase donkeys come to the fair. The fair according to the Christian calendar falls in the month of March./March.

The owners of the animals camp in the dry riverbed. They may use their carts or make temporary dwellings from acacia bushes. The prosperous horse owners and traders bring their tents and attendant staff, cooks etc.

The animal owners occupy the dry riverbed for many kilometers. They cook, sleep & trade in these temporary dwellings called "AALI" in the local dialect. At sunrise and sunset horse owners display their horses riding up and down the riverbed. Audiences and buyers cheer them. Any

body can accost the riders and bid or negotiate the deal.

Now the state government organizes horse-judging competitions. The function last year was presided by The Maharaja of Jodhpur. The fair is held in the heartland of our Indian breed of horses. The 'Marwari', some very good horses come to the fair. People from far away states the Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat & Maharashtra come to purchase animals to this fair.

It is rare spectacle to see 5 to 7 thousand horses, 15 to 20 thousand camels and about 30 to 40 thousand bullocks and cattle and their owners in the flat expanse of the dry sandy riverbed.

The market places, which come up, sell all kinds of goods. Camel carts, water tanks, earthenware utensils, rugs, ropes, horse tack, camel saddles, colourful girdles, beds, doors, brass, copper and steel pots and pans. Many stores of recycled material like conveyor belts, parachute materials, musical instruments & all things which villagers would buy.

The fair is a photographer paradise. It takes a visitor to atmosphere of biblical times. One feels to have walked into the past.

Our safari camp is set up 1 to 1 and half kilometres on the banks of the riverbed overlooking the fair site.

Guests go on their horses and ride around the fair. At a pre-decided point our grooms await them so they can leave their horses and walk around if they want to.

Guests have to be warned that temperatures in March are warmer than January / February and can go up to 28-38. However they will be more than rewarded by this extraordinary event and will enjoy the visit immensely.

This fair is much larger than the famous Pushkar or Nagaur camel and cattle fair and is not frequented by tourists. At sunset and sunrise there is spectacular display of horse rider on the flat riverbed. It is an unspoiled horse fair.

Overnight in Camp.

### **Day 9: Balotra / Fair**

Morning and evening ride. Afternoons explore the fair grounds.

Evening campfire and folk entertainment.

Overnight in Camp.

### **Day 10: Balotra / Fair**

Morning and evening ride. Afternoons explore the fair grounds.

Evening campfire and folk entertainment.

Overnight in Camp.

### **Day 11: Balotra Fair / Jodhpur / Jaipur or onward destination (Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2020)**

Morning ride around fairground if you wish to. After breakfast drive to Jodhpur (4 hr). Lunch at Ratan Vilas. Rooms may be available for Wash & change. Later transfer to Railway station for train to Jaipur or delhi.

**No Single tent supplements are applicable in safari camps, if guest requires we will provide single occupancy tents.**

### **TOUR COST**

All Services of Horse Safari Including Luxury Camp, All Meals, Unlimited actual consumption of Mineral Water, Soft Drinks, Accommodation at Hotel Ratan Villas, Jodhpur includes the cost of moving the Horses by Box from Stables to and fro Jodhpur

**Rs 3,00,000 Per Person on Twin Sharing Basis**

**Per person supplement cost for use of single room in Jodhpur and Jaipur Rs. 18000**

**Non rider's spouses and friends joining the safari travelling in four WD jeep Rs. 2,58,000 Per Person**

**5% GST is applicable extra**

### **WHAT OUR TOUR PRICE ON ARRIVAL AT JODHPUR INCLUDES:**

a) Accommodation on a twin-share basis with attached

bathrooms/showers rooms as stated in itinerary.

b) Sightseeing tours & excursions as specified. Entrance tickets at Jodhpur fort

c) Airport/ Railway Station transfers as specified at Jodhpur

d) All meals during safari and at Jodhpur

e) Service of English speaking guide, local representatives, tour managers (Wherever required)

f) Transport Private car / Jeep / tempo traveller Van

g) all meals starting from arrival in jodhpur till departure from jodhpur

### **What our tour price DOES NOT INCLUDE**

a) Insurance.

b) Telephone calls, faxes and all forms of communication.

c) Items of personal nature such as Alcoholic/ Non Alcoholic drinks, laundry, sundries etc.

d) Single room or sole occupancy costs supplements

e) Personal service tips and gratuities.

**Services of arrival departure airport transfer at Delhi, hotel at Delhi and air /train tickets Delhi-Jodhpur-Delhi**

### **To be provided and costed by travel agency**

**Note** March is beginning of summer season riders have to inform that it will be warm during the days. Riding will start early with a long lunch break and ride till late evening. Day temperature will be approximately 25 to 38 C, Night temperature 15 to 20 C.

Useful Items the riders should bring

1. Soft water bottle for the saddlebag.
2. Riding cap or helmet.
3. Sheep skin for saddle.
4. Small torch or flashlight.
5. Sun hat and sun cream
6. Bath gown for ladies. (bath tent is adjoining accommodation tents)
7. Lightweight raincoat.
8. Leather chaps.
9. Camera battery charger with a cigarette lighter lead (our jeep has two sockets working by jeep battery).