

Holi India Retreat

March 17–27, 2027 | 10 Nights • 11 Days Across Northern India

A Sacred & Immersive Spiritual Pilgrimage *Varanasi • Rishikesh • Haridwar*

Heart of the Journey: What to Expect & How to Prepare

As we prepare to journey together through some of India's most sacred spaces, keeping a few practices in mind will help us fully immerse ourselves in the local culture and spiritual traditions.

- **Savoring Nourishment:** To honor the spiritual environments and ashrams hosting us, all of our communal meals throughout the trip will be delicious, wholesome vegetarian cuisine. In keeping with the purity of this pilgrimage, our journey is entirely alcohol- and stimulant-free.
- **Honoring Sacred Spaces (Temple Etiquette):** When we visit temples and ashrams, we show our respect by dressing modestly.
 - **How to Dress:** Plan for loose, comfortable clothing that easily covers both your shoulders and your knees. Soft, breathable layers work beautifully.
 - **Footwear:** We will remove our shoes before entering sacred structures, so slip-on shoes or sandals that are easy to put on and take off are highly recommended.
 - **Presence:** Inside the inner sanctuaries, we practice maintaining a quiet, reflective, and reverent presence.

The Itinerary & City Highlights

1. Varanasi (Spiritual capital of India, the abode of Shiva)

One of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities. A profound tapestry of history, mythology, beautiful architecture, and ancient, unbroken pilgrimage practices.

- **Accommodations:** Stay at *Hotel Temple on the Ganges*, located at Assi Ghat.
 - *What makes it special:* Assi Ghat is a beautiful series of steps that lead down to the water, where the peaceful Assi River meets the holy Ganga.
- **Daily Highlights & Activities:**
 - **Sunrise Boat Journey on the Ganga:** Experience the river awakening at dawn, accompanied by traditional chanting.
 - **Shiva Rudrabhishek Ceremony:** A deeply moving, traditional Shiva ritual.

- **Ganga Aarti:** Witness the breathtaking evening devotional ceremony of light, prayer, fire, and song offered on the riverbanks.
- **Temple Visits:** Visits to the historic Hanuman and Durga Temples.
- **Roof-Top Yoga:** Immersed entirely in the natural "Sounds of India"—hearing the *Hanuman Chalisa* playing in the distance, passing taxis, and the authentic heartbeat of the city.
- **Cultural & Local Craft Immersions:**
 - An evening classical cultural dance performance.
 - Visits to traditional silk looms and local silk shops to see the weavers' artistry.

2. Rishikesh (The yoga capital of the world)

A spiritual center nestled along the foothills of the Himalayas beside the Ganges River. A welcoming place to walk around, explore, and reflect.

- **Accommodations:** Stay at *The Green Hotel*.
- **Daily Highlights & Activities:**
 - **Daily Practice:** Access to both indoor and outdoor yoga rooms, as well as opportunities for meditation and chanting along the banks of the Ganga.
 - **Parmarth Niketan Ashram:** Participate in their world-renowned evening Ganga Aarti, a beautiful ritual of worship with fire and song.
 - **The Historic Beatles Ashram:** Explore the famous, historic site where The Beatles stayed and learned Transcendental Meditation (TM) in the late 1960s.
 - **Spiritual Meetings & Satsangs:**
 - **Maa Vanamali (Vanamali Gita Yogashram):** An opportunity to meet this revered Hindu teacher and author of beautiful Bhakti stories. Her name means "the weaver of a garland of wildflowers." As a dedicated follower of Lord Krishna, she wears only purple to represent Krishna's transcendence and embodies a truly saintly presence.
 - **Maa Gyaan Suveera:** Seema Johari's teacher. A meeting with the founder of the Ciplus/Maagyaan association, a highly respected teacher and spiritual guide.
 - **Wellness & Rejuvenation:** Time is carved out for traditional Ayurvedic massages.

3. Haridwar (The Gateway to God)

A deeply spiritual city on the banks of the Ganges that offers an authentic, less-touristy glimpse into ancient Vedic traditions.

- **Accommodations:** Stay at *Johari House*.
 - *What makes it special:* This is the home of the esteemed Johari family, beautifully carrying forward the lineage, art, and yogic/tantric wisdom of the late Harish Johari.

- **Daily Highlights & Activities:**
 - **Traditional Yajna Ceremony:** A sacred Vedic ritual of offering, gratitude, and devotion, hosted intimately right at Johari House.
 - **Har Ki Pauri Ganga Aarti:** Experience the evening light ceremony at this legendary ghat. Honoring Lord Vishnu (whose footprints are said to be preserved here), this is also the site of the famous Kumbh Mela, held every 12 years.
 - **Anandamayi Ashram:** Visit the final resting place (Mahasamadhi) of Sri Anandamayi Ma, an extraordinary spiritual mystic revered by many as "The Living Kali."
 - **Sri Ram Ashram:** Connect with the meaningful orphanage and humanitarian work established by the silent monk, Baba Hari Das.
 - **Shree Yantra Temple:** An excursion to view this magnificent Sri Chakra temple, beautifully carved entirely from a single stone.
 - **Interactive Creative Workshops:**
 - **Ayurvedic Cooking Class:** A fun, hands-on culinary workshop with Anu.
 - **Yantra Painting & Mantra Chanting:** A creative session guided by Seema Johari.
 - **Local Artisan Visits:** Connect with local Mala makers, experience traditional Henna, and browse the vibrant local markets.
 - **Holi Celebration:** A joyful, immersive experience celebrating the Festival of Colors—honoring unity, love, renewal, and the triumph of light over darkness.
 - **Roof-Top Yoga:** No music, only city ambiance.

Investment & Details

- **Full Rate:** \$4,500 per person
- **Reserving Your Space:** A \$1,008 non-refundable deposit holds your spot.
- **What is Fully Included:**
 - All accommodations.
 - All meals throughout our 11 days together (Vegetarian).
 - All guided activities, excursions, workshops, and temple entries.
 - Daily yoga, meditation, and spiritual practices.
 - Travel within India.
- **What to Plan For Separately:**
 - International flights to and from India.
 - Passport.