



Kathak

An odyssey of 11 nights and 12 days of a mélange of culture and cuisine with a cream of Kathak dance.

Everything in the universe has rhythm. Everything dances.

--Maya Angelou

Kathak, one of the major forms in Indian classical dance, originated and popular in the northern part of India by nomadic poets of this region called kathakars or storytellers. Great epic and mythology narrated by these Kathakars in the form of dance, songs and music. The rhythm of foot movements, adorned with small bells (Ghungroo) forms the basis of Kathak.

This evolved dance from oral tradition to enactments and performances in the Mughal courts, later a scorned art during the British raj and then the revival after post independence era. The dance form has three different forms, called Gheranas, are prevalent in three major cities: Jaipur, Lucknow and Benaras. Each of these Gheranas vary in their relative emphasis between enactment and footwork.

The tour allows to observe closely each of these different Gheranas of Kathak in these three cities with close interactions with prominent dancers, artists and experts. While getting acquainted and introduced of these dance forms, you will tour around the wonderful touristic spots, specialties of these areas and delicacies that will leave you smacking your lips for more. Come, experience one of a kind dance tour along with sightseeing of a few touristic north Indian cities.



The Journey

Day 1: Welcome the day with a lovely and colourful orientation tour of the Pink city with the Hawa Mahal (Palace of Wind) and Jantar Mantar. After the lips smacking experience of royal Rajputana food, we will visit the majestic Amber Fort. As the day progresses, in this princely state of Rajasthan, we explore yet another city Palace, followed by an enjoyable, mellifluous evening with a musical puppetry show.

Day 2: As the day breaks, after a good Rajasthani breakfast, we explore our theme by witnessing the dance recital with an interactive introduction to Kathak: from the origins, styles, enactment, expressions, rhythm, costume of this classical dance. After a thorough exposure session, we head to the chaotic but very colourful bazaar and shop for handicrafts, watch handmade paper being processed, and try your hands in making the blue potteries, typical of this region. As an eventful days concludes, a culinary evening experience awaits for you to have cooking session (our separate tour theme), with the chef of the hotel for you to blend in with the spices of Indian cooking.

Day 3: Beginning the day early to drive to Ajmer, where you would visit a sufi shrine. Take a moment to soak in the spirituality and reverence of so many pilgrims. Moving ahead to Pushkar, we get close to the camels and learn about the special market where once in a year is held one of a kind gigantic fair. Spend a night in arid deserts of Rajasthan, at a camp, under the starry night sky, where one can even spots of animals off the edge of jungle. Don't worry, it's completely safe !

Day 4: After a refreshing night, the morning welcomes you to an authentic Rajasthani breakfast. After that, we drive to Abhaneri, a small ancient town that hosts one of the loveliest and amazing photo-worthy site of a step well, Chand Baori, as an introduction to our another tour theme on stepwells of India. We proceed, next, to the famous monkey temple. Be watchful for the naughty, fun and clever monkeys ! We then return to Jaipur, to experience the 'veins of India' the Indian Railways with an overnight train to Lucknow.



Day 5: As the rhythmic noise of trains gets us to the Nawabi town of Lucknow, yet another Gherana of Kathak await to welcome us. After a short refreshing break, we acquaint and encourage you to taste the special flavourful Awadi cuisine for lunch, that will definitely fill more with the fragrance, than the food. After a sumptuous meal, we explore a few sites of the city, the Rumi gate, along with Bara (big) and Chota (small) Imambara. Following from where we left off at lunch, we continue in the evening, on a food tour of famous Lucknowi restaurants, who have been preserving their secret recipes and presenting their cuisines while operating for over 100 years. Get a taste of what the British (who ruled us for centuries) loved so much, that they didn't wish to leave.

Day 6: We wake up to sonorous sounds of small bells (Ghungroo) and rhythm that taps the foot, gestures of hands (mudras) and expressions gherana. We learn from a style of Kathak

on the face of a Kathak dancer of Lucknow Kathak guru, the art and difference of Lucknow along with a dance recital and a close interactive session. After that, we transit from a mind of reverberating music to the clamour of the city, as we proceed to the colourful and photographic site of an ancient bazaar. With the dusk, we return to our hotels, with an optional cooking lesson, for those who are keen.



Day 7: We begin our next day's tour with a visit to the British residency that provided refuge to over 3000 British inhabitants during the 1857 uprising, continuing with our historical journey, we

witness the Kaiserbagh Palace. After a lovely Nawabi lunch, we then explore nearby shopping areas of Hazratganj and Aminabad, where Lucknowi style of embroidery since several generations, and also visit a women's centre that specialises in this embroidery.

Chikankari is famous , a

Day 8: Beginning early, we drive to to Lucknow's twin city of Kanpur. We visit two famous temples: The JK temple a mix of modern and ancient architecture and the Jain Glass temple an ornate temple made with mirrors, glass and enamel. Finally we visit Kanpur memorial church built in 1875 in honour of the British soldiers that died in the siege of Kanpur (Cawnpore). After a short visit to the bazaars of Kanpur, we return to our hotel in Lucknow.



Day 9: At dawn, after our quick breakfast, we board the intercity train from Lucknow to Varanasi. After a short refreshing break, post checkin to our hotel, we take a boat ride in the sacred river of Ganga and, in the evening, witness the famous Ganga aarathi, an everyday prayer ceremony at sunset. We retire for the night, after an early dinner.

Day 10: With an optional activity, we begin the day with a yoga session (as a part of our other tour theme) at the hotel. After the vegetarian breakfast, we get introduced to the third form or gherana of Kathak, from holy city of Benares. By the banks of the river ganga, our host artist, prominent dancer

and expert will interact in this introduction to this Benaras style of Kathak. The blend of flowing river, the distant sounds of temple bells along with rhythm of the ghungroo at every foot tap would be a mesmerising moment of bliss. We explore through a few sightseeing spots and temples in Benaras, while witnessing the lovely bazaars and being wary of omnipresent monkeys to complement the rest of the day.



Day 11: We once again begin our day with yoga (optional). After our breakfast, we guide you through the nooks and corners of the by lanes of this holy city, and give you a glimpse of blending cultures, co-evolving lives of every being with a touch of spirituality. After our lunch, we visit the famous Benares silk weavers and observe the them making the lovely, colourful sarees which adorn many Indian women. In the evening, we take a few



moment to recapitulate and reminisce the entire tour with a gathering for snacks and mehendi session for ladies, before retiring to bed.

Day 12: After breakfast, we head to the airport and bid a fond adieu before departing in our flights back home, as we end the tour.

Journey Inclusions

Airfare

Airport Transfers from a common major airport in Europe.

Sightseeing.

Accommodation is arranged for a twin sharing basis in a standard double in 4 star hotels (or similar standard) with all meals included.

Driver fees, toll , parking.

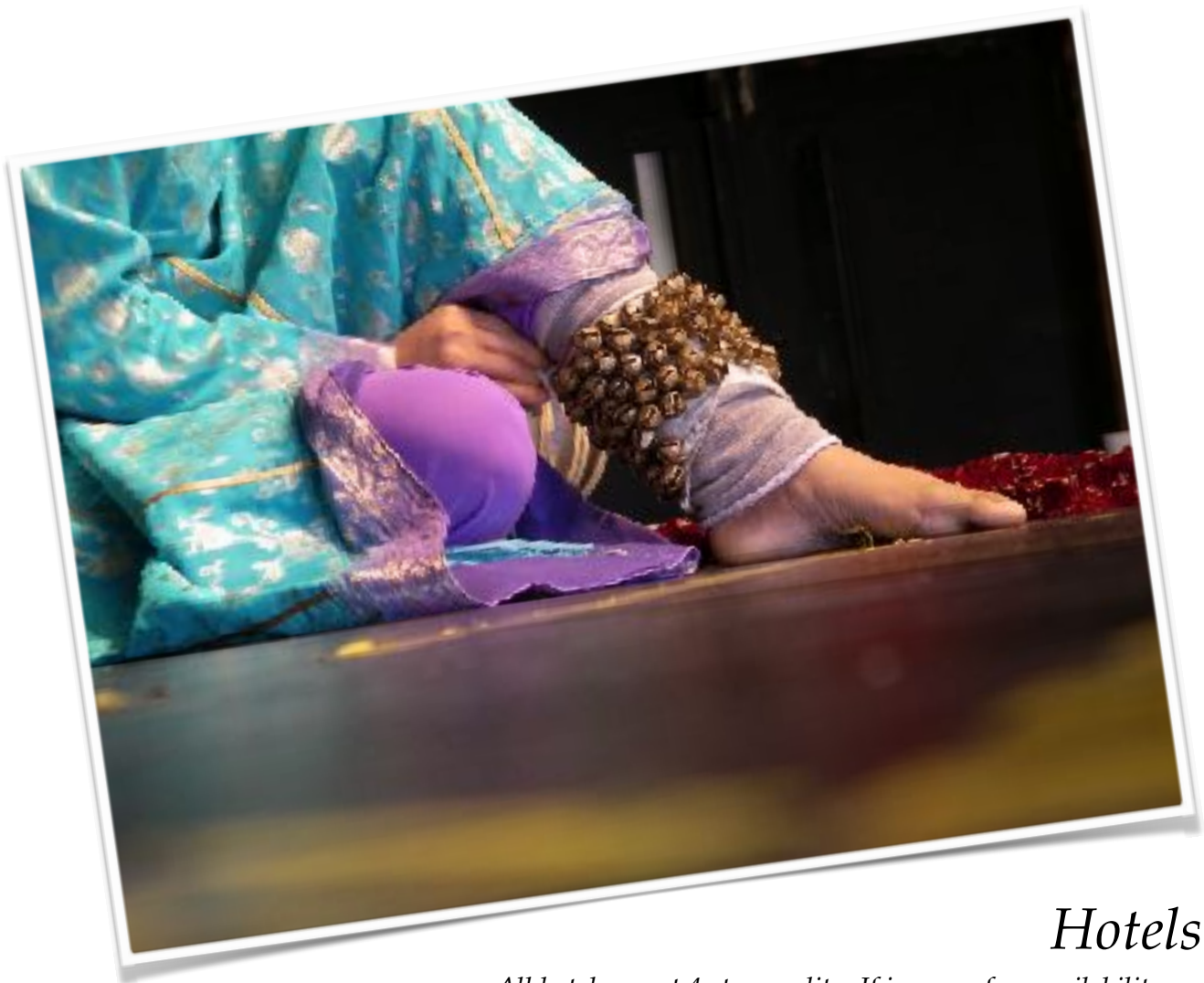
Same driver will be there with you for the entire trip.

Journey Exclusions

4% service tax.

*Adventure Activities/ Sightseeing Cost/
Entrance fees.*





Hotels

All hotels are at 4 star quality. If in case of unavailability, good 3 star hotels with excellent reviews are arranged.



Additional Features & Tours



Yoga Sessions

During the tour, tourists can opt for regular sessions of yoga, at most mornings of the tour, at their hotels. For more information to include the yoga package to your tour, please contact us.

info@tripalfresco.com or yuvrajharsha@tripalfresco.com.

Relics, Royals & Mughals

Explore the regions ruled by the royals of *Rajputs* and *Mughals*. Witness some of their relics and marvels while traversing through the deserts, ancient towns of northern India. Also, visit the 10th century temple of lust, with sensual graphics idolising the art of sexuality. To learn more about this tour, contact us: info@tripalfresco.com or yuvrajharsha@tripalfresco.com.

