Through Jewish Eyes

INDIA

JANUARY 12–25, 2021

India is known for many things. What is typically not known is India’s long history as one of the most hospitable homes in the Jewish diaspora. For centuries, Jews found a haven in which their traditions flourished. Join us and visit the historic synagogues of Mumbai, Kochi, and Kolkata and explore scenic backwaters by boat to see little-known rural Jewish settlements. Kochi, perhaps the best known of India’s Jewish communities, boasts an architecturally unique sixteenth-century synagogue with a Hebrew clock tower and copper plates that granted regional Jewish autonomy in the eleventh century. Tour the iconic Taj Mahal, Amber Fort Palace, and fifth-century Elephanta Caves. Put your bargaining skills to the test at bustling, colorful markets offering a dazzling array of goods, from gems and jewelry to carpets and textiles. Enjoy traditional Indian dance, musical performances, and a variety of cuisine that’s simply out of this world.

Gain valuable insights from accompanying scholar and trip leaders Professor Nathan Katz, a leading authority and award-winning author on Indian Jewish life, and writer-photographer, Ellen Goldberg, both experienced leaders of Jewish tours to India who lived for years in South Asia. The itinerary is rich and varied; the hotels, world-class; and the people you’ll meet, spectacular!
Day-by-day itinerary

Tuesday, January 12

Arrival In Delhi

Namaste. Welcome to India!

After entry formalities, you’ll be met and driven to your hotel for check-in and overnight. India’s capital, Delhi, is the nation’s hub: a buzzing, international metropolis that draws people from across the country and the globe. Home to sixteen million people, the city is steeped in history with millennia-old architecture, including temples, and monuments, while also exuding a “New India” vibe with its modern metro system and mega-malls. From a tourist’s perspective, Delhi is divided into two main parts: Old Delhi and New Delhi. Old Delhi is the city of the Mughals and home to the Red Fort, Jama Masjid, and bustling markets. New Delhi, built by the British to be their Indian capital, offers tree-lined boulevards, including the Rajpath — stretching from India Gate to the Presidential Palace and reflecting the striking Raj-period architecture — and an abundance of museums and modern shopping areas. During your stay, you’ll get a good taste of what’s here!

Wednesday, January 13

Delhi

Start off the day in Old Delhi. See the Red Fort — the nineteenth-century UNESCO World Heritage Site — and board your cycle rickshaw for a whirlwind tour of Chandni Chowk, Delhi’s oldest and busiest market. You’ll end up at the tomb of Sarmad, a Jewish Sufi and mentor/guru to the Crown Prince of the Mughal Empire. Peer into the gates of the fifteenth-century Jama Masjid, India’s largest mosque and another World Heritage Site. Next, tour Raj Ghat, a memorial to Mahatma Gandhi, set in a lovely park, then visit a Tibetan Buddhist temple where Professor Katz will discuss the special relationship between the Dalai Lama and the Jews. Enjoy a visit to the Bangla Sikh Gurdwara temple, where pilgrims flock and perform devotional music. While there, you can help out in the community kitchen where volunteers prepare and serve ten thousand free meals daily! At day’s end, enjoy dinner and a restful evening at our hotel.

Thursday, January 14

Agra

Ride the new, deluxe bullet train to Agra, home of the fabled Taj Mahal. Emperor Shah Jahan built this monument in memory of his beloved Queen Mumtaz. This spectacular seventeenth-century UNESCO World Heritage Site, set amid Mughal gardens and on the Yamuna River, lives up to its billing. From there, you’ll visit another World Heritage Site: the sixteenth-century Agra Fort, which was the seat of Mughal rule and administration. There will be time for shopping. Take the evening bullet train back to Delhi and return to hotel.

Friday, January 15

Delhi

This morning, drive through New Delhi, passing by the Presidential Palace, Parliament House, and India Gate — a memorial to the seventy thousand Indian soldiers killed during World War I — as well as other elegant structures built in the first quarter of the twentieth century by famed British architects. Next, enjoy a private tour of the lavish Swaminarayan Akshardham Temple, meet with the swami, and have lunch. Built in 2005 with the help of more than eight thousand volunteers, artisans employed ancient techniques to fashion the pale, red sandstone into decorative reliefs that include twenty thousand deities, saints, and mythical creatures. It is one of the largest and most intricate places of worship ever constructed. In the evening, you’ll be escorted on the short walk to Judah Hyam Synagogue for Shabbat services and dinner with members of the local Jewish community. Shabbat Shalom!
Saturday, January 16
Shabbat In Delhi

Enjoy a day of leisure. Optional walking tour available through Lodhi Gardens, a nearby city park with lush grounds dotted with ancient Mughal mausoleums that make a walk in the park like no other. Delight in lunch and dinner in any way you choose. We’re happy to help facilitate whatever you’d like to see or do on your last day in Delhi.

Sunday, January 17
Kolkata (Calcutta)

We will take a morning flight to Kolkata, once the capital of British India and filled with charismatic Raj-era architecture, fascinating street life, lovely parks, and rich intellectual and artistic traditions. You’ll have lunch at the Pareshnath Jain Temple, a beautiful site dotted with gardens and fountains, and learn about this religious tradition from Jain scholar, Professor Manju Nahata. Jain temples are known for their elaborate design, and this complex’s main sanctuary is filled with intricately patterned marble, mirrors, stained glass, European chandeliers, and gilded surfaces. From the late eighteenth to the mid-twentieth century, Kolkata had a thriving Jewish community that played a key role in the city’s development, built synagogues and schools, and thoroughly integrated into the fabric of society. Get an insider’s view from Jewish community leader Jo Cohen while touring the resplendent and recently renovated Magen David Synagogue, built in 1884 in the Italian Renaissance style. Nearby, see artisans at work at Kumortuli, a traditional potters’ quarter that for centuries has supplied the city with elaborate deities for its many religious festivals. Here, marvel at an army of sculptors as they work with straw, clay, bamboo, and other sundry materials to create vivid and fanciful art pieces. Great photo ops! Check in at hotel for rest and dinner.

Monday, January 18
Kolkata

After breakfast, revel in the lovely gardens at the striking Victoria Memorial, built in 1921 to commemorate Queen Victoria, who in 1876 adopted the added title of Empress of India. From there, take a boat ride along the Hooghly River for a unique perspective of Kolkata life. Time permitting, see the 130-year-old Mullick Ghat Flower Market to experience its riot of color and intoxicating fragrance. To round out the day’s touring, we’ll visit the famous Kalighat Temple, built in 1809 and dedicated to the Hindu goddess Kali, and the Catholic Missionaries of Charities’ Mother House where Saint Mother Teresa lived, worked, and, ultimately, was buried. Learn about Jewish life in Kolkata from Dr. Jael Silliman, who was educated and taught in the U.S. and returned to the city of her birth to document the community. Then, discover the unique beauty of classical North Indian music in an intimate concert by musician Aurobinda Bhattacharjee.

Tuesday, January 19
Kochi (Cochin)

Board your morning flight to the coastal city of Kochi, which has drawn traders and explorers to its shores for centuries. Today, it continues to be a unique ethnic mix of Christians, Hindus, Jains, Jews, Muslims, and Parsis (Zoroastrians) — a mix of people who for centuries have lived peacefully in this lush, tropical setting, interlaced with winding waterways and a major port on the Arabian Sea. After a Kerala-style lunch, head to Fort Kochi to see the iconic Chinese fishing nets, open-air market, Koder House where local Jewish “royalty” lived, and India’s oldest Catholic church, built in 1503 by Vasco da Gama. From there, it’s a short hop to Jew Town, so named for its once-vibrant Jewish community that at its height boasted several synagogues. First, visit the sixteenth-century Mattancherry “Dutch” Palace of the Raja of Kochi, who granted Jews land to build their synagogue next to his Hindu temple. Palace murals, depicting scenes from the Hindu epics the Ramayana and Mahabharata, are noteworthy. The beautiful Paradesi Synagogue, built in 1568, boasts a Hebrew clock tower, a jewel-encrusted gold Torah crown gifted by a maharajah, and the copper plates that granted Jewish autonomy in the eleventh century. There, meet community leader Queenie Hallegua, one of the few remaining Jews in
Kochi, who oversees the synagogue and nearby Jewish cemetery. Making your way through the narrow streets of Jew Town, explore the many antique, spice, and gift shops. One such shop is run by Sarah Cohen, the oldest surviving community member, who sells hand-embroidered goods, including kippot, or yarmulkes, out of her home with the help of her Muslim caretaker. Mail a postcard from Jew Town’s small post office — it will be imprinted with a Star of David cancellation! Onward to dinner, and then a well-deserved rest at the hotel.

**Wednesday, January 20**

**Rural Kerala Heritage Tour**

Go back in time to explore the historically important region of Muziris, a name the ancient Romans gave to this historically important region. Home to many diverse religious traditions — including India’s first mosque, first church, and one of the country’s oldest Hindu Shiva temples. Here too, Jewish life once thrived. Offering a glimpse of what life was once like and reclaiming a part of its proud heritage, the Kerala state government initiated the Muziris Heritage Project, which has restored many of the region’s historic religious and cultural places. You will see that restoration firsthand when you tour the architecturally unique seventeenth-century Chendamangalam and Paravur Synagogues, and the splendid Paliam Nalukettu, the eighteenth-century residence of the Hindu prime ministers and where women ruled. Lunch will be hosted at a nearby residence that offers meals for travelers who want to have a more in-depth experience of the local culture. Then it’s back to the hotel to enjoy a performance of Kathakali dance, unique to this part of India, followed by dinner.

**Thursday, January 21**

**Kerala | Mumbai (Bombay)**

After breakfast and check-out, visit an Ayurveda center. Ayurvedic medicine, developed in India some three thousand years ago, is one of the world’s oldest holistic healing systems and is based on the belief that health and wellness depend on a delicate balance between the mind, body, and spirit. You will have the opportunity learn about this ancient practice and, if interested, have a consultation, massage, and, possibly, a yoga lesson. From there, fly to Mumbai and check in to your hotel for dinner and a rest.

**Friday, January 22**

**Mumbai**

With more than twenty million people, Mumbai is a financial powerhouse, a principal shipping port, and home to Bollywood, the world’s most prolific film industry. Mumbai’s center contains spectacular colonial-era architecture and gardens, street bazaars, top-notch dining, posh shops, every imaginable place of worship, and rich history. See Mumbai’s Jewish life, both the historic — at the nineteenth-century Indian synagogues Magen David and Tiphereth Israel — and the heroic — at Mumbai Chabad House, recently reopened after the 2008 tragic events. At Mumbai Chabad House we will meet the rabbi and enjoy lunch. You’ll also tour Marine Drive, a picturesque promenade along the Arabian Sea; the posh neighborhood of Malabar Hill; and the unique Mahalaxmi Dhobi Ghat, the city’s largest open-air laundry. In the evening, take part in Shabbat services and indulge in a delicious dinner at the nearby Kenesseth Eliyahoo Synagogue, built in 1884 by Sir Jacob Sassoon and recently restored. Shabbat Shalom!

**Saturday, January 23**

**Shabbat In Mumbai**

Shabbat at leisure. This afternoon join an optional walking tour to the historic David Sassoon Library and the CSMVS (formerly Prince of Wales) Museum, which boasts a world-class art and history collection. Lunch and dinner on your own — explore the many fabulous dining options Mumbai has to offer! We’re happy to help facilitate whatever you’d like to see or do in this dynamic, multifaceted city.
Sunday, January 24
Mumbai | Elephanta Island

It’s a short stroll from your hotel to the Gateway of India where you’ll board a chartered boat to Elephanta Island, about six miles east in Mumbai Harbor. There, you’ll learn the origins of Hinduism and Hindu mythology embodied by this UNESCO World Heritage Site — its fifth-century caves are among India’s greatest examples of sculptural art and rock-cut architecture. The main Shiva-dedicated temple is adorned with courtyards, halls, shrines, and breathtaking statuary. In the evening, dinner will be served at the Joint Distribution Committee/Evelyn Peters JCC for an opportunity to learn more about Mumbai’s Jewish community and meet some of its members.

Monday, January 25
Mumbai City Tour And Farewell

Highlights of your morning city tour include such major sights as Flora Fountain, Rajabai Clock Tower, Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus Station), and Bombay University. After lunch and check-out, there will be time for shopping on nearby Fashion Street, or at the nineteenth-century Crawford Market that sells items ranging from food and unusual gifts to cosmetics and pets. At the farewell dinner, Professor Katz will summarize your Jewish experience in India. After dinner, we will board the flight home or onward destination. Bon voyage!

Please note: This tour has easy to moderate walking/standing that, at times, includes some uneven surfaces and steps to negotiate. The program- and activity-rich itinerary blends longer days with some shorter days and leisure time.

*Daily schedule may be modified subject to weather or unanticipated changes.*
Accommodations

The Taj Mahal Hotel—New Delhi

The Taj Mahal Hotel is a harmonious blend of grandeur and understated elegance with the use of antiques and priceless art flawlessly juxtaposed with contemporary style and state-of-the-art amenities. All rooms offer stunning views of Delhi’s iconic skyline. Situated on six acres of lush, landscaped grounds in the embassy district, the hotel is close to the fascinating Lodhi Gardens, and a ten minute walk to the synagogue.

Celebrated restaurants within the hotel include Machan, House of Ming, The Grill Room and Wasabi by Morimoto. The Emperor Lounge is the place for high tea (or coffee) and a world-class selection of fine malts, wines and martinis are served up at Rick’s Wokkerie and Lounge Bar.

After a day of touring, be pampered in the Jiva Spa, lounge in the inviting swimming pool or burn some calories at the well-equipped fitness center.

The Oberoi Grand—Kolkata

The Oberoi Grand, fondly referred as the “Grande Dame of Chowringhee” offers the ultimate classical residence in the City of Joy. This heritage hotel’s neo-classical facade and grand pillared entrance mark a successful fusion of classical Victorian and traditional Indian style and reflect the city’s colonial history. It’s location in the main business and shopping district of Kolkata makes it is an ideal location for travelers.

Standing stately for over 125 years, The Oberoi Grand combines classic architecture and charm with state of the art amenities and facilities, offering guests an oasis of tranquility amidst the bustling city.

The hotel features elegantly appointed rooms, equipped with all modern facilities blending uniquely with the colonial architecture.

The dining options at the hotel provide a great opportunity to savor cuisines from around the globe. Recreational facilities include an outdoor swimming pool, a fitness centre and a full service Oberoi Spa.

Continued next page...
**Taj Malabar Resort & Spa—Cochin**

The Taj Malabar Resort & Spa, situated on one of a cluster of picture-postcard islands off the Malabar Coast of Kerala, offers old-world charm and world-class luxury.

The modern guest rooms feature an array of amenities and facilities along with stunning views from your private balcony overlooking the harbor out to the distant Chinese fishing nets.

Kerala’s cuisine features fresh seafood, herbs and spices. The traditional banquet, called Sadya, is an elaborate meal with multiple courses and more than twenty different accompaniments. The hotel features several restaurants including the Rice Boat Restaurant, 24-hour dining at Pepper, and Mattancherry, the comfortable lounge named after the port city closest to Jew Town, Cochin.

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**Taj Mahal Palace and Tower—Mumbai**

The original Taj Mahal Hotel was opened in 1903. The Taj Tower was added in 1970. It fully addresses the expectations of today’s traveler with luxuriously modern rooms overlooking the Arabian Sea or the dramatic cityscape of Mumbai.

The Gateway of India is at its front door, as is the ferry jetty to Elephanta Island and other points along Marine Drive and beyond. Behind the hotel are shops, restaurants, museums (the former Prince of Wales Museum) and Knesseth Eliyahoo (Fort Synagogue). This is the place to stay in Mumbai.

Within the hotel and the adjoining heritage wing, one will find numerous dining options such as The Zodiac Grill, Wasabi by Morimoto, Souk, and Chef’s Studio, the by-appointment-only gourmet dining space. The Patisserie as well as Shamiana, Mumbai’s first all-day coffee house, complement several unique lounges including Harbour Bar which holds Mumbai’s Bar License No. 1.
Traveling with you...

Trip Leader and Scholar: Nathan Katz

Nathan Katz, Distinguished Professor Emeritus at Florida International University, has authored numerous books and scholarly articles about the Jews of India. Founding editor of the Journal of Indo-Judaic Studies, he was selected as a delegate to the historic 1990 Tibetan-Jewish dialogue hosted by H. H. the Dalai Lama, and in turn hosted three visits by the Dalai Lama to Miami.

Professor Katz has authored 15 books and over 100 academic articles. Among his numerous publications are a memoir, Spiritual Journey Home: Eastern Mysticism to the Western Wall; Who Are the Jews of India? which was a Finalist for the National Jewish Book Award; The Last Jews of Cochin: Jewish Identity in Hindu India (with Ellen S. Goldberg); Ethnic Conflict in Buddhist Societies: Sri Lanka, Thailand and Burma (with Ellen S. Goldberg); and Buddhist Images of Human Perfection.

Professor Katz studied, taught, researched and lived in South Asia for more than eight years and, together with his wife leads study tours throughout India and Sri Lanka.

Trip Leader and Scholar: Ellen Goldberg

Ellen Goldberg is a Miami-based author, writer and photographer. With an extensive background in journalism and photography, she was a correspondent in India and Sri Lanka for The Christian Science Monitor for two years, during which time she interviewed His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and covered the ethnic civil war in the island nation once known as Ceylon. In addition to the Monitor, her works have been published in The Boston Globe, The Tampa Tribune, St. Petersburg Times, The Jewish Press, and Hadassah and Arts of Asia magazines, among others.

Ellen’s many publications are Kashrut, Caste and Kabbalah (with Nathan Katz); and The Last Jews of Cochin: Jewish Identity in Hindu India (with Nathan Katz).

Additionally, her photographs have appeared in various exhibits including the Hebrew University of Jerusalem: B’nai B’rith Klutznick National Jewish Museum in Washington, D.C.; the Judah L. Magnes Museum in Berkeley; and the Jewish Museum of Florida.
What’s included

Program Cost: $8950*  
(plus $54 Museum of Jewish Heritage fee for nonmembers)

- Thirteen nights’ accommodations at five-star deluxe hotels*
- Full breakfast daily; eleven lunches; ten dinners
- All plane, train, and boat transportation in India, as listed in itinerary
- All lectures, presentations, guided tours, and site entrance fees
- All sightseeing via superior, air-conditioned coaches
- Group and Individual transfers between airports and hotels by air-conditioned vehicles
- Porterage of one bag per person
*Per person, double occupancy; single supplement ($2,500) and gratuities ($175) additional.

Reserve your place with a nonrefundable deposit of $1,000 per person: complete the online registration form or call our office. A second nonrefundable deposit of $1,000 is due on May 1, 2020. Balance in full is due by September 1, 2020.

Registration Information

Participation Limited to 26 participants, the program will entail considerable walking, including uneven terrain. Participants need to be in active, good health, able to keep up with the group, and ready to travel and experience group and cultural differences with grace. If you have any questions, or need help with your travel plans, please call the Jewish Heritage Travel Office at 845.256.0197.

Insurance Participants are strongly urged to purchase travel insurance for losses necessitated by having to cancel participation due to health issues. For your convenience, insurance forms will be sent upon registration, or consult your own insurance agent. Please contact The Jewish Heritage Travel office at 845.256.0197 for more information.

Cancellations All cancellations must be received by The Jewish Heritage Travel Program in writing. Cancellations received up to 120 days prior to departure: full refund less non-refundable deposits, per person; 119-90 days prior to departure: 50% refund per person after non-refundable deposits. No refunds after this date.

Changes All rights are reserved by the Program Directors to make faculty substitutions and/or to modify the itinerary (including hotels) as needed.

Disclaimer of Responsibility By registering for this program, participant specifically waives any and all claims of action against the Museum of Jewish Heritage, and the Jewish Heritage Travel office and their respective staffs for damages, loss, injury, accident or death incurred by any person in connection with this tour. The Museum of Jewish Heritage, and the Jewish HeritageTravel office and their respective staffs assume no responsibility or liability in connection with the service of any train, vessel, carriage, aircraft or other conveyance which may be used wholly or in part in the performance of their duty to the passengers. Neither will the Museum of Jewish Heritage, and the Jewish Heritage Travel office or their staffs be responsible for any injury, death, loss, accident, delay or irregularity through neglect or default of any company or person engaged in carrying out the purposes for which tickets, vouchers, or coupons are issued. No responsibility is accepted for losses or expenses due to sickness, weather, strikes, wars and other causes. In the event it becomes necessary or advisable for any reason whatsoever to alter the itinerary or arrangements, such alterations may be made without penalty. All rights reserved to require any participant to withdraw from the tour at his/her own expense when such an action is determined by the tour staff to be in the best interest of the participant's health and safety, and that of the group in general.
## How to register

**Online**  [jhtravel.org](http://jhtravel.org)

**Mail**  Fill out this registration form and mail with your check or credit card information to:

Jewish Heritage Travel  
27 North Chestnut St  
New Paltz, NY 12561

**Fax**  Fill out this registration form and mail with your check or credit card information and fax to:  **845.256.0196**

**Telephone**  Call our office:  **845.256.0197**, Monday-Friday, 10am-5pm

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**Through Jewish Eyes**  
**INDIA**  
**JANUARY 12–25, 2021**

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**Accommodations**

- [ ] I would like a single room (for single room supplement please see trip details)
- [ ] I’ll share a room with:

Please share any special information we should know to enhance your experience.

**Flight Arrangements**

- [ ] I will make my own flight arrangements.  - [ ] I need assistance and will call (845.256.0197).

**How did you hear about us?**

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**Deposit**  Make your deposit by check or credit card.

- [ ] Enclosed is a check made payable to Jewish Heritage Travel for $________________________.
- [ ] Please charge $___________________ to my:  [ ] Master Card  [ ] Visa  [ ] AmerEx

**Card holder’s name**

**Card number**  exp. date: mo/yr  validation code

**Signature**

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**Additional participant names:**

- [ ] Museum Member  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

- [ ] Museum Member  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

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**Flight Arrangements**

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