



GRASSHOPPER
ADVENTURES

PHOTOGRAPHY
by Ewen Bell

TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY ADVENTURE

PRE-TRIP DOSSIER 2007/2008

INDIA



Advance your photographic skills while travelling through the Indian province of Rajasthan on a 14 day adventure. We have designed an integrated programme of travel and workshop themes to create the most wonderful opportunities you could ever imagine - for beginners and advanced photographers alike. You get 2 leaders, a guaranteed maximum group size of 8 and the experience of a lifetime.

TOUR ITINERARY



Day 1 : Delhi

Our meeting place will be Delhi, a vibrant city with magnificent mosques and crazy rickshaw drivers. There will be several highlights for travellers who arrive early and wish to acclimate to the culture of India. Our group meeting will be at 6pm on day one and we'll introduce the themes and inspiration for the photo tour ahead.

Days 2-3 : Jodhpur

We fly direct to Jodhpur and have two days of exploration in the "Blue City". The city gets its colour from the indigo pigment added to white wash on walls. The streets are fascinating to wander and become familiar with the locals. Overlooking Jodhpur is the Meherangarh Palace, one of the most beautiful and well preserved fortress palaces in India. This will also be your first chance to become familiar with Jain temples.

Day 4 : Manvar

We head into the desert and take a camel train into the dunes. Our reward for this adventure is the tented camp at Manvar with a touch of luxury. As the sun goes down over the dunes we will enjoy some unique photographic opportunities and relax with the company of our camels.

Days 5-6 : Jaisalmer

The Yellow City of Jaisalmer is famous for its bright sandstone walls that rise from the desert. The lower regions of the city are filled with Haveli homes and temples, while inside the fort walls the colors of textiles and jewellery burst onto the streets. Take care as you walk the narrow laneways inside the fort, you may have to give way to passing Brahman Cows.

Days 7-8 : Bikaner

The Junagarh Fort of Bikaner is one of the highlights of the tour. Local bazaars and friendly smiles are a feature of this city and you'll notice the change in pace as we move further towards the rural areas of Rajasthan. We also hope to make a visit to the Rat Temple near Bikaner, a place where our rodent friends are given pride of place and revered for their connection to Hindu gods.

Days 9-10 : Mandawa

The wide stretches of rural Rajasthan can be sampled from our Haveli inspired accommodation in Mandawa. This is a small town with great character and genuine charms. A little time to slow down and enjoy the flavours of India will be welcome at this stage of the trip. We will have the option to venture further into the countryside and engage with very remote villages where subsistence farming is still a way of life.

Day 11 : Jaipur

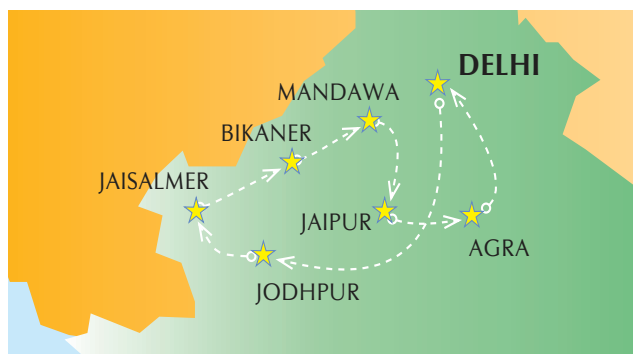
As we head back towards Agra to complete the tour we make an overnight stop outside Jaipur. This allows us to visit the famous Amber Fort and the Women's Wall. Jaipur is known as the Pink City, for its liberal use of earthy red pigments. Our accommodation will be a former palace outside the city walls.

Days 12-13 : Agra

No trip to India is complete without visiting Agra and photographing the Taj Mahal. This is the world's most beautiful building, a temple constructed as a symbol of eternal love. We visit the Taj Mahal twice, once in the afternoon of day 12 and then again first thing of the morning of day 13. This is a rare photographic subject that will mark your learning and experience in India more than any other.

Day 14 : Delhi

The evening of day 13 will be spent in Delhi, with a final group dinner and ready to checkout on day 14.



THE TRIP AT A GLANCE



WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS

- Understanding your subject
- Getting closer to your subject
- Capturing intimacy and expressions
- Portrait photography on the run
- How to make use of your wide angle lens
- Landscape Photography
- Using available light for dramatic effect
- Capturing a sense of motion
- Shooting for context
- Using pattern repetition, colour and form
- Techniques unique to digital photography
- Responsible travel with a camera
- Safety issues when travelling as a foreigner

Experience a unique and challenging journey through some of India's most beautiful regions. You will be more than a traveller however, you will be learning new photographic techniques along the way and getting the chance to put these skills into practice. This trip will immerse you in the cultural, scenic and human richness of India while giving you an unparalleled opportunity to develop your own style and techniques as a photographer.

HOW WE TRAVEL

The travel style for this journey will bring you right up close to India. You will meet the real people and experience a little of their lives. Key attractions are included on this itinerary, such as the remarkable fort of Jaisalmer and the romantic Taj Mahal, but we have also included out of the way destinations and the time to enjoy them. Our time in the rural town of Mandawa will no doubt remain a favourite memory for a lifetime. You will never be rushed from one place to another, instead you will have time to delve a little deeper and make your own connection. This is a vital ingredient to successful travel photography and the process of cultivating your skills.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

This is a special way to learn about photography. Time is set aside during the trip for theme sessions which introduce techniques and concepts. After each session

you will have a chance to put them into practice. There will be frequent reviews of your work and a chance to discuss your experiences for that day. The skills covered in this course are aimed at travel photography particularly, but will benefit all areas of your work.

No matter what your level of skill or experience you will learn invaluable techniques on our course. For 14 days we will be at your disposal to explore the high level concepts and fine detail practicalities of travel photography. Beginners can expect to learn basic skills, new ways of thinking about their photography and gain structured themes to help them take great photos in challenging conditions. Advanced photographers will also gain insight into the world of publishing travel photos and high level concepts that determine which images will be more likely to gain selection by an editor.

ACCOMMODATION

The standard of accommodation for our tour in India will be excellent and our hotel selections offer character and charm that reflect the unique cultures of each province. Expect hot water, clean rooms, and climate control when staying in the city. Rural areas may offer more rustic charms where accommodation is concerned, such as haveli houses and former palaces, but is always comfortable and clean. This trip operates on a twin share basis, hence single travellers will be allocated a same-sex room mate. Please ask for a single-room rate if you do not wish to share your accommodation for the duration of the trip.



TAKE BETTER PHOTOS

The photographic workshops included with this trip are aimed at people with a fundamental knowledge of their camera. A basic knowledge of aperture, focal length, depth of field and exposure is useful, but not essential. We will even help you learn the technical use of your camera, if that's what you need. People of many different skill levels and ambition will be gathered for the journey, so expect to be in the company of diversity.

This course will appeal to anyone who wants to immerse themselves in the process of cultivating skills and exploring cultures. Material is presented at key stages during our journey. You will have a chance to discuss the techniques and principles behind the material, and then immediately go out and put the material into practice. This will not give you a qualification, but hopefully will give you confidence and direction to take better photos.

The course offers two things. Firstly it provides an unparalleled opportunity to practice photography in an exotic land. We help you to get the right sunset, to access the most idyllic wilderness, to meet the real people of India and to make sure you have the time to explore your craft in the process. You won't be worried about travel and accommodation - it's taken care of for you. And you won't be rushed from hotel to hotel; you will have time to take photographs and to review them at the end of each day.

We also present a series of photographic themes which introduce key concepts and techniques which will help you improve your photography. Each session will discuss a topic and outline associated techniques. A set of course notes are provided to accompany these sessions. Your travel itinerary has been developed in conjunction with the course sessions, so you can immediately practice the skills you learn.

We will also encourage people to share their work during the trip. Review is very important and can greatly assist the development of your own personal style. Throughout the trip you will be free to consult with your instructor as well. You are not confined to course sessions to talk about your work and ideas! This will be a 14 day immersion that will accelerate your learning and development.

WHY SHOOT DIGITAL

For the purpose of this course a digital camera is the most suitable equipment to carry. We will save the debate about film vs digital for the journey, there will be plenty of time to discuss opinions! Our trip is a chance to develop new skills and the immediate feedback offered by digital cameras is hence valuable. The quality, manual control and practicality offered by Digital SLR's make them perfect for travel photography.

Your instructor will also be carrying a laptop computer for the journey, so there will be ample opportunity to review your photographs and study your image in detail.

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

At all times during our journey we need to be mindful of how our presence can impact on the cultures we wish to observe. Travel photography carries an even greater burden to ensure that you respect cultural beliefs and personal privacy. We never take photos of people without their express consent; instead we will learn techniques to enable you to overcome language barriers.





ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

We recommend the use of Digital SLR cameras for this workshop, but you are not restricted from using any type of camera you may have, including conventional film SLRs and compact cameras. Digital SLR cameras offer excellent manual controls and plus us the ability to review our work at the end of each day - a valuable part of this course. You may wish to consider an additional storage disk or even bring your laptop if you have one.

We also recommend that you carry a wide angle lens in preference to telephoto. Most of our course involves being close up with the subject. We strongly advise that if you own a Digital SLR camera that you purchase an equivalent 18mm lens or even wider for the purpose of this journey. (Remember that most Digital SLRs multiply a standard lens by roughly 1.5, so factor this in when determining your wide-angle). The range of 24mm to 70mm will cover almost every need, be it a single wide-angle zoom lens or two of fixed focal length.

A good quality day pack will be an essential part of the packing list. Crumpler and Lowe make excellent packs that are designed for camera equipment. Ideally your pack should be comfortable, spacious, and practical. The traditional type of 'over-the-shoulder' camera bag is not very suitable for travel photography, a day-pack is better.

Remember that you will be carrying your gear for days on end, so it's worth buying something comfortable with good shoulder straps and a little extra room to fit both your camera gear and your daily necessities.

Flash equipment and tripods are not recommended. Our study themes will not address the use of advanced flash photography and the additional weight and bulk must be considered against the rare occasions of use - if used at all. Similarly for tripods, they are cumbersome and difficult to travel with. Practise and experience with using your digital equipment and fundamental skills will negate the need for tripod or monopod.

Finally, full travel insurance and coverage for your 'additional items' is absolutely necessary. Standard travel insurance is generally inadequate to cover the value of your equipment unless you stipulate your equipment when buying insurance. It costs very little, so don't be caught short. Please check very carefully that you are fully covered and have completed all necessary details to qualify for suitable coverage.



ABOUT YOUR LEADERS

You will enjoy the company of two leaders for this journey. One is there to help you travel, the other to help you learn about travel photography.

Jason Williams have been operating small group adventure tours for over 7 years. He lives in Asia and operates about 15 trips each year, including this photography course. Jason operates many trips for other, more well known, travel companies. By dealing directly with his company, Grasshopper Adventures, you get the best price, exceptional service and the most customised itinerary possible. You wont find a better tour operator.

Ewen Bell has been a commercial photographer since 1990 and has experience in many aspects of photography - scientific, commercial, travel and personal. Ewen's work is published in brochures for numerous travel companies and appears in regular travel publications including the Escape weekend editions across Australia, Melbourne's Herald-Sun travel section and the national magazine Vacations & Travel.

He has journeyed to over 30 countries on photographic assignment and works freelance in photography and publishing.

He understands the full end-to-end process for travel photography because he has worked at every level himself.

PRE-TRIP ESSENTIALS

Additional Accommodation

Should you require extra accommodation in Delhi we can offer you competitive rates at our hotel. Please book extra nights when you book your trip. Rooms cost will be advised upon request and may vary according to season and proximity to date of travel.

Visas

Most western nations will require a visa before arrival in India, so be sure to contact the consulate in your country before confirming plans to travel and make sure you have a visa before you leave.

Money

The official currency of India is the Rupee, which should be used for all transactions. India has a modern banking system with ATMs and money changers in all cities and some tourist towns. In India it is possible to use Visa/Mastercard and Cirrus/Maestro cards, however, we do advise that you carry some cash currency in US Dollars as a backup. Travellers Cheques are not always as easy to change by comparison.

The current exchange rate is: US\$1 = 40 Indian Rupees

Costs

We recommend that you allow approximately US\$20 for food and general living costs per day. Shopping money should be considered extra to this amount. Some meals are included with travel days and course sessions, but you will have the opportunity to choose between dining with the group or alone on most occasions.

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of participating in a Grasshopper Adventure that you hold travel insurance for the duration of the trip. Insurance must include comprehensive medical and emergency evacuation. Your travel insurance details will be checked by your group leader on arrival at the starting point hotel.

Health

There are no specific health requirements for travelling in India, however, we recommend that you visit a travel medicine doctor before travelling. Please advise your doctor that you plan to travel to northern regions of the country and they may recommend anti-malaria tablets to guard against infection. You should carry a well stocked first aid kit with you when you travel. All Grasshopper Adventures Group Leaders are first aid trained, however, they are not permitted to distribute any medications.

Group Size

8 maximum. Each group will have the services of a tour leader, photographic instructor and various local guides.

Phrase Book

A highly memorable part of your travels will be the local people that you meet. In the tourist areas some people will speak English but away from these areas you should learn a few words of Hindi. We will teach you some of the basics but if you want to really interact we recommend bringing a phrase book (unless you are really good at charades). We can recommend the Lonely Planet Hindi Phrase Book.



Packing

You will be required to carry your own luggage at times and bags will need to be loaded on and off trains and up and down stairs at stations. For this reason we recommend that you pack as lightly as possible in a backpack. This trip covers rural and northern areas during the cooler seasons so temperatures can plummet at night. Please remember to bring warm clothes for cold nights and chilly mornings.

You should consider bringing the following items:

- Backpack
- Long trousers
- Shorts
- Shirts
- Hat (sun & woolly)
- Thermals
- Fleece Jacket
- Sandals/Light Shoes
- Sunglasses
- Light Rain Coat
- Toiletries
- Small Towel
- Sunscreen
- First Aid Kit
- Mosquito Repellent
- Alarm Clock
- Passport (with 6 months validity and spare pages)
- Passport photo
- Travel Insurance details
- Flight Tickets
- Money - Travellers Checks/Cash/Credit Card
- Phrase Book

Important

All information in this Profile is researched with care and provided in good faith. The information is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and Grasshopper Adventures.