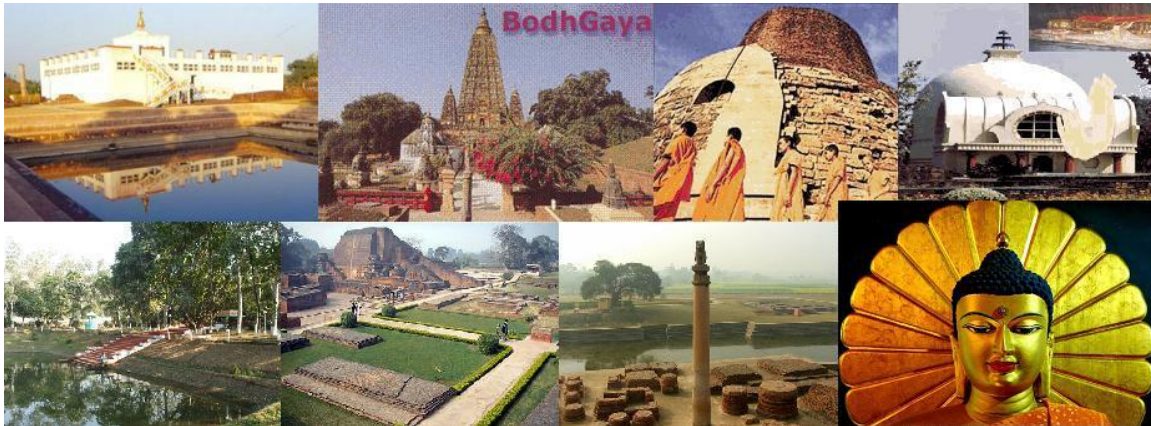


INDIA: In The Footsteps of the Buddha

10D8N covering Lumbini, Bodhgaya, Sarnath & Kushinagar plus Varanasi, Nalanda, Rajgir, Sravasti, Vaishali and Kolkata.



"Ananda, there are four places the sight of which should arouse emotion in the faithful. Which are they? 'Here the Tathagata (Lord Buddha) was born' is the first. 'Here the Tathagata attained supreme enlightenment' is the second. 'Here the Tathagata set in motion the Wheel of Dhamma' is the third. 'Here the Tathagata attained the Nibbana-element without remainder' is the fourth. And, Ananda, the faithful monks and nuns, male and female lay-followers will visit those places. And any who die while making the pilgrimage to these shrines with a devout heart will, at the breaking-up of the body after death, be reborn in a heavenly world."

- The Buddha's words naming the **4 places of pilgrimage (Lumbini, Bodhgaya, Sarnath & Kushinagar)**, as recorded in the Mahaparinibbana Sutta (Discourse on The Great Passing), Digha Nikaya (the book of long discourses of the Buddha)

DAY 1: Delhi arrival - overnight train to Varanasi (D)

Malindo Air 9.15am flight to Delhi; arrival at 12.15pm. Transfer to Delhi for dinner. Then catch overnight train to Varanasi (2nd class Air-conditioned sleeping berth train).

Dinner: restaurant in Delhi

DAY 2: Varanasi - Sarnath – Varanasi (L/D)



Late morning, arrival in Varanasi train station. Check in hotel and have lunch. Transfer to **Sarnath** (14 kms), to visit the **Deer Park**, where the Buddha gave his **first sermon** and **ordained the first 5 monks** (therefore Sarnath is considered the birthplace of the Maha-Sangha, the Buddhist Monastic Order). Visit **Dhamekha Stupa**, erected 500AD at the site said to be where the first sermon took place. Visit also **Sarnath Archeological Museum**. Back to hotel in Varanasi to overnight.

Breakfast: NOT INCLUDED; (you are on the train; prepack food before journey)

Lunch: hotel in Varanasi

Dinner: hotel in Varanasi

DAY 3: Varanasi – Sravasti



(B/L/D)

Early morning **boat ride on the holy river Ganges** to view daily activities of the locals. Back to hotel for breakfast.



Transfer to Sravasti, (300km, 6.5hr) with lunch en-route in Ayodhya or Faizabad. Arrival in **Sravasti**, the ancient capital of the **Kosala Kingdom**, whose King Pasenadi was a devout follower of the Buddha. Visit Jetavana Monastery (**Prince Jeta's Grove monastery**), the monastery where the Buddha spent the majority of his rains retreat; 19 out of 45. This monastery was donated by Ananthapindika, a wealthy lay-supporter, after he had bought the land from Prince Jeta. Overnight in Sravasti.

Breakfast: hotel in Varanasi

Lunch: restaurant in Ayodhya or Faizabad

Dinner: hotel in Sravasti

DAY 4: Sravasti – Lumbini

(B/L/D)



Visit **Angulimala stupa**, said to be the stupa over relics of Venerable Angulimala, the serial killer who repented, ordained as a monk by the Buddha and later attained liberation.



Then transfer to **Lumbini**, the **birthplace of the Buddha** in Nepal (190km, 5.5hrs). Arrival in Lumbini, check in hotel. After lunch, visit birth place of the Buddha. **Lumbini** was a park and the pregnant Lady Mayadevi gave birth to the Buddha (given the birthname of Siddhartha Gautama) here while she was on her way back to Kapilavastu. The holy site has a **sacred Bodhi tree**, **an ancient bathing pond**, the **Asokan pillar** erected by King Asoka and the **Mayadevi temple** (built over the precise spot where the Buddha was born). Overnight in Lumbini.

Breakfast: hotel in Sravasti

Lunch: hotel in Lumbini

Dinner: hotel in Lumbini

DAY 5: Lumbini – Kushinagar

(B/L/D)



Transfer back into India and drive to **Kushinagar** (130km, 4hrs), to visit **Mahapari-nibbana temple** built on the **site where the Buddha entered Pari-Nibbana** (the final death of an enlightened person, to be finally released from the cycle of rebirth) and **Ramabhar Stupa** (where the Buddha was cremated). Overnight in Kushinagar.

Breakfast: hotel in Lumbini

Lunch: hotel Kushinagar

Dinner: hotel in Kushinagar

DAY 6: Kushinagar - Kesariya – Vaishali – Rajgir

(B/L/D)



Transfer to Kesariya to visit remnants of the **Kesariya Stupa**. During Buddha's time, Kesariya was known as Kessaputta, and it is where the Buddha gave the sermon named **Kalama Sutta** (considered the Buddha's "charter of free inquiry").



Then continue to **Vaishali**, which was the capital city of the Licchavis, one of world's first republics and where **the Buddha preached his last sermon before entering Pari-Nibbana**. Visit **The Pillar of Asoka** and **Ananda Stupa**. Then transfer to visit the **Stupa of the Buddha's Relics** (where the Licchavis enshrine their share of the Buddha's Relics). Continue to **Rajgir** and check in hotel and overnight.

Breakfast: hotel in Kushinagar

Lunch: restaurant in Kesariya

Dinner: hotel in Rajgir

DAY 7: Rajgir - Nalanda – Bodhgaya



(B/L/D)

Transfer to **Rajgir**, the **ancient capital of Magadha Kingdom** where King Bimbisara devotedly supported the Buddha and the

monastic order. Visit **Gridhkuta Peak (Vulture's Peak)**, hills where the Buddha often stayed for meditation and preached to monks. Firstly take the sky chair up to the top where the **Japanese built Peace Pagoda** is; then walk down the steps to the **area with caves** where the Buddha and monk disciples stayed and practiced. Walk down to the bus parking area.



Transfer to visit **Venuvanaram (Bamboo Grove Monastery)**, the 1st monastery of Buddhism, donated by King Bimbisara). Then transfer to visit **Bimbisara Jail** (where the King Bimbisara was put into captivity by his usurper son, Prince Ajatasattu).

by



After lunch, transfer to visit **Nalanda university** site; known as "one of the first great universities in recorded history", a famous center of Buddhist studies for monks. It was already established the time of King Asoka rule (273–232 BC) but flourished from 427AD to 1197AD, until it was sacked by Turkic Muslim invaders. Then visit **Nalanda archeological museum**, exhibiting valuable artifacts uncovered from the grounds of the university. Transfer to **Bodhgaya**, check-in hotel for dinner and overnight.

*Breakfast: hotel in Rajgir
Lunch: restaurant in Rajgir
Dinner: hotel in Bodhgaya*

DAY 8: Bodhgaya - overnight train to Kolkata



(B/L/D)

Tour of **Bodhgaya**, the **site of the Buddha's enlightenment**. Visit **Mahabodhi temple** and the **Bodhi tree**, under which the Buddha attained enlightenment. Then to **Sujata Village** and the **Niranjana River**. Return to hotel for lunch. Afternoon, at leisure time for you to

visit your preferred **monasteries** built by many countries (such as Bhutan, China, Japan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tibet, Vietnam, etc.). Dinner and transfer to Gaya town to catch overnight train to Kolkata (2nd class Air-conditioned sleeping berth train).

*Breakfast: hotel in Bodhgaya
Lunch: hotel in Bodhgaya
Dinner: hotel in Bodhgaya*

DAY 9: Kolkata

(B/L/D)



Arrival in the morning at **Kolkata's Howrah Train Station** (oldest and largest train station in India). Transfer to a hotel for breakfast and to shower. Visit **Victoria Memorial Hall** (built to commemorate Queen Victoria: now a museum), **Mother Teresa's Motherhouse** (the tomb of the compassionate Nobel Peace prize winning Catholic nun) and shopping time at **New Market**. Dinner and then transfer to airport for flight home.

Breakfast: hotel in Kolkata

Lunch: restaurant in Kolkata

Dinner: restaurant in Kolkata

DAY 10: Kolkata – Kuala Lumpur

12.40am Air Asia flight departure from Kolkata airport; arrival in KLIA 2 at 7.15am.

RATES: per person twin share basis, based on hotels options and group size as indicated below; valid from Oct 2015 to Apr 2016.

- Rates not valid for Jan 12 – 26, 2016 Kalchakra Puja religious event period
- Surcharges may apply for X'Mas and New Year Eve – to be advised

SUPERIOR OPTION: 4 - 7 paxs: RM 2790 8 – 9 paxs: RM 2590

10 – 14 paxs: RM 2560 15 or more: RM 2460 Sgl Supp.: RM 730

Varanasi 3*: Hotel New Temple Town / City Inn / similar

Sravasti 3*: Lotus Nikko / similar

Lumbini 3*: Pawan International / Buddhamaya / similar

Kushinagar 2*: Hotel Olive Tree / Adelphi Grand / similar

Rajgir 3*: Gargee Grand / similar

Bodhgaya 2*: Hotel Tathagat / Om International / Delta / similar

Kolkata (breakfast & shower only; 4 to 5 persons/room): Orbit Hotel / similar

DELUXE OPTION: 4 - 7 paxs: RM 3240 8 – 9 paxs: RM 3040

10 – 14 paxs: RM 3010 15 or more: RM 2910 Sgl Supp.: RM 1160

Varanasi 4*: Hotel Hindustan International / Ideal Tower / similar

Sravasti 3*: Lotus Nikko / similar

Lumbini 3+*: New Crystal / Nirvana / Nansc / similar.

Kushinagar 3*: Hotel Lotus Nikko / similar

Rajgir 4*: Indo Hokke

Bodhgaya 3*: Hotel Regency / Galaxy / Gautam / similar

Kolkata (breakfast & shower only; 4 to 5 persons/room): Orbit Hotel / similar

From **MINIMUM 16 persons group** (min 8 rooms), 1 person will be on FOC basis for ground tour arrangement; however train tickets, tipping, Nepal visa, etc. are payable.

CHILD RATES:

Child 0 - 5 years: Free without any extra bed (exclude train tickets of RM200)

Child With Extra Bed 5 to 11 years: 80% of adult rate (exclude train tickets of RM200)

Child No Extra Bed 5 to 11 years: 60% of adult rate (exclude train tickets of RM200)

NOTES ON TRAIN BERTHS:

- Rates above based on 2nd air-con sleeper class train coach (berths of lower and of upper levels with curtain for privacy).
- To upgrade to 1st air-con sleeper class (2 lower and 2 upper berths in a compartment with lockable slide door for privacy):

DAY 1 Delhi to Varanasi: UPGRADE to 1st air-con sleeper = add RM75 /person
DAY 8 Gaya to Kolkata: UPGRADE to 1st air-con sleeper = add RM55 /person

Rates & itinerary subject to changes in Forex rates, unforeseen surcharges, train schedules, weather, local conditions, etc.

INCLUSIVE:

- a) Airport-hotel transfers and private coach for tours.
 - 4 persons: Toyota Innova (4 seater)
 - 5 to 7 persons: Tour Van (9 seater)
 - 8 to 9 persons: Tour Van (12 seater)
 - 10 to 14 persons: Mini Coach (18 seater)
 - 15 or more: Large Coach (35 seater)
- b) Air-conditioned 2nd class sleeping berth train tickets for DAY 1 Delhi to Varanasi (at RM 115) and DAY 8 Gaya to Kolkata (at RM 85); ticket prices subject to change by Indian Railways. To upgrade to 1st class, refer to surcharge in rates section above.
- c) Hotel accommodation as per options (SUPERIOR or DELUXE) listed above
- d) Meals: 7 Breakfasts, 8 Lunch & 9 Dinners
- e) For groups 5 or more persons, an English speaking licensed guide accompanying from beginning DAY 1 (arrival Delhi airport) to DAY 9 (Kolkata airport send-off).
For group of 4 persons, due to seating limitation of tour vehicle, local site guides provided at each tour destination reached (no tour guide accompanying on train).
- f) Entrance fees for attractions as per itinerary
- g) Boat trip on Ganges River at Varanasi
- h) 1 bottle drinking water per traveler per day

EXCLUDING:

- a) Air tickets, Airport taxes and Airline surcharges. Itinerary based on the following flights (timing subject to change by respective airlines):
 - DAY 1 Malindo Air OD207 KUL 0915 DEL (Delhi) 1215
 - DAY 10 Air Asia AK62 CCU (Kolkata) 0045 KUL 0720
- b) India visa: as per Indian High Commission regulation, to be applied directly in-person at India visa center; RM168 /person double entry visa (double entry required as you will re-enter India again after visiting Lumbini in Nepal)
- c) Travel insurance: can be arranged separately, RM74 per person, 10 days coverage AXA Smart Traveler VIP Plan (covers both India & Nepal)
- d) Nepal visa on arrival: USD 25 /person (at Sunauli border to visit Lumbini)
- e) Tipping for guide & driver:
 - Group size up to 6 persons: minimum USD6 /traveler/day
 - Group size 7 persons & above: minimum USD 4 /traveler/dayKindly pay to guide at end of tour and guide will divide between himself and driver
- f) Camera/Video fees at attractions where required
- g) Expenses of personal nature like other optional activities not in itinerary, drinks during meals, laundry charges, etc.