

CH>RITY
CH>LLENGE



TRIP NOTES

**BELIEVE
ACHIEVE
INSPIRE**

**CYCLE INDIA AND THE TAJ MAHAL
INDIA**

Fri 20 Nov - Sun 29 Nov 2020





In aid of your choice of charity

20 Nov - 29 Nov 2020

10 DAYS | INDIA | CHALLENGING

Ride through royal Rajasthan, a region offering dramatic desert landscapes, fantastic wildlife, exquisite forts, bustling cities and a peek into the rural life of the locals. This cycling challenge offers a unique insight into this idyllic region, enabling you to explore deeper into the culture of the more remote villages.

Your challenge begins in Delhi. Looking beyond the initial chaotic facade, this is a city rich in culture, architecture and history. The beautiful Agra, home to the Taj Mahal, is the perfect backdrop for the start of your ride. The itinerary takes you through an eclectic mix of everything India has to offer before you arrive on the outskirts of Jaipur, Rajasthan's 'Pink City'..

- Cycle 500kms through Rajasthan, known as 'Land of the Kings'
- Tackle a great variety of terrains
- Visit the tigers at Ranthambore National Park
- Step inside the Taj Mahal, one of the seven wonders of the modern world
- Discover the chaotic magic of India's capital

YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

DAY 1 Fri 20 Nov

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International departure from London

After months of training and fundraising, the day has finally come for your trip to Delhi. The flight gives you a perfect opportunity to get to know your fellow cyclists or just sit back and relax before the challenge ahead.

DAY 2 Sat 21 Nov

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Arrive Delhi, India's capital

A local Charity Challenge representative will meet you and escort you to your hotel. Depending on the flights, there may be the opportunity to explore the labyrinth of streets and markets, overloaded with exotic produce and unusual gifts. Cultural highlights include the Raj Ghat, memorial place of Gandhi, or a walk around India's largest mosque. Tonight will be your first team dinner together at the hotel, providing you with a great chance to ask any questions about your challenge. (D)

Accommodation: Delhi hotel

DAY 3 Sun 22 Nov

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Visit the Taj Mahal

All aboard the early Shatabdi express train to Agra, home to the most magical mausoleum– the Taj Mahal. Constructed by Emperor Shah Jahan in 1631-1653 in memory of his beloved wife, the magnificent monument is a modern wonder of the world. From here, you will prepare your bike and meet with the support team for the forthcoming ride. Tonight, you will have dinner in the hotel and get a good night's sleep before the start of your cycle. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Agra hotel

DAY 4 Mon 23 Nov

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Taj Mahal to Fatephur Sikri (approximately 85kms)

Your first day in the saddle will be spent on dirt and tarmac roads. As the Taj disappears in the distance, you power on towards Fatephur Sikri, a fortified ghost city and former capital of the Mughal Empire between 1575-1585. Pilgrims flock in their thousands to the palace complex which houses the tomb of Sheikh Salim Chishti. You will pass Fatephur Sikri, continuing through villages and past bright yellow fields of mustard onto Keoladeo National Park. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Local hotel

DAY 5 Tue 24 Nov

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Keoladeo Ghana National Park to Karauli (approximately 113kms)

This diverse state was home to the Rajputs, warrior clans and tribes who controlled this part of India for thousands of

years. Their rule left the region with a legacy of forts, palaces and mansions. Pedaling past camel and donkey carts and locals in traditional dress gives the impression of a living museum. Ancient forms of agriculture and trade still exist. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Local hotel.

DAY 6 Wed 25 Nov

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Karauli to Ranthambore National Park (approximately 112kms)

Today, you'll cycle to the rugged Ranthambore National Park, between the Aravali and Vindhya hills. Famous for being a prime example of Project Tiger's conservation, the park is popular with wildlife photographers from around the world. Besides the majestic tigers, you might be lucky enough to spot sambar, cheetah, wild boar, leopard and sloth bears. Tonight you will be sleeping within a beautifully landscaped garden in the luxury tents and guesthouse. This will provide you with a great spot for birdwatching as you enjoy your evening meal. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Luxury tents and guesthouse

DAY 7 Thu 26 Nov

-

Ranthambore National Park Cycle (approximately 45kms)

Today, it's an early start for your sunrise safari into Ranthambore National Park. Keep your eyes peeled for wildlife, especially signs of tigers. After your safari, you will cycle to the small village of Rawat where you can spend time with the locals. From there, you'll continue your cycle to Dastkar Kendra, a women's skills project designed to preserve traditional crafts and give women skills and jobs in this area. Tonight, you will be staying in luxury tents and guesthouses again. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Luxury tents and guesthouse

DAY 8 Fri 27 Nov

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Ranthambore National Park to Bhanderej (approximately 80kms)

It's another early start for your second exciting sunrise safari. Besides looking out for wildlife, this morning you will be exploring the many Hindu settlements, temples and shepherd encampments en route. Today's route will also take you over terrain which was used by the pilgrims, traders and armies who impacted on the local culture. After a long day of cycling you will finish in Bhanderej where a hearty evening meal will be waiting for you. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Local hotel

DAY 9 Sat 28 Nov

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Bhanderej to Finish Line (approximately 56kms) Then transfer to Delhi

It's your final day in the saddle as you pedal to the finish line on the outskirts of Jaipur. A celebration lunch awaits you before you transfer straight back to Delhi. Booking onto the Jaipur City Extension gives you time to

explore Rajasthan's Pink City. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Delhi hotel

DAY 10 Sun 29 Nov

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Delhi to London

This morning it's time to wave a fond farewell to India as you head to the airport for your return flight to London. You arrive back home on the same day, armed with photos and memories to share with family and friends. (B)

NB

B = Breakfast / L = Lunch / D = Dinner

The itinerary is there as a guide and may change due to flight changes, weather patterns, wildlife movements, and the strength of the group. We will do our best to keep to the set itinerary; however, we cannot be held responsible for any last-minute changes that might occur. In all such circumstances, your expedition leader will have the final say.

HOW TO FUND YOUR CHALLENGE

This page provides you details of the costs of your challenge.
The costs below are per person.

SELF FUNDER

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Pay a registration fee of £385.00 when you book
Then a balance of £1612.00 (10 weeks before your challenge)
Raise as much as you can for your charity.

MINIMUM SPONSORSHIP

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Registration fee of £385.00 when you book
Raise a minimum of £3290.00 for your charity.

FLEXI

-

Registration fee of £385.00 when you book
Then £385.00 towards challenge costs (10 weeks before your challenge)
Raise a minimum of £2504.00 for your charity.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

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- Members only benefits and discounts at a wide range of clothing and equipment suppliers including Outdoorhire, Cotswold Outdoor, Runners Needs, Snow + Rock, Water to Go, The Altitude Centre, Sporttape and Nomad & MASTA.
- Access to your own password protected account including support materials and training schedules

On your challenge

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- International flights to and from the UK (including all known UK air taxes, and fuel surcharges, at the time of costing)
- Activity equipment such as bikes, tents and rafts as per the challenge activity
- All ground staff including English speaking guide, drivers, cooks, and porters
- All internal transfers
- A Charity Challenge T-Shirt
- Full back-up support including first-aid qualified staff and first-aid supplies
- Entrance fees to national parks or other places of interest visited on the itinerary
- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- Accommodation during the challenge (usually in twin share)

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Before you go

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- Travel to and from the UK airport of departure
- Visa
- Vaccinations (please check Trip Notes for requirements)
- Travel Insurance (you can buy at time of booking or in your Account Area, or provide your own

On your challenge

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- Tips
- Departure Tax (if applicable)

policy details)

THE DETAILS

Fundraising deadlines

You will need to send your sponsorship money to the charity as you raise it. At least 80% of the minimum sponsorship required must be sent to the charity 12 weeks before departure (by 28/08/2020), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 27/12/2021). If you have raised the necessary funds, the charity will then pay the balance of your challenge costs. The charity benefits by keeping the remaining sponsorship money and every pound over and above that you raise.

Prices include all known air taxes

We include ALL known air taxes (including fuel) at the time of costing. Many companies do not include air taxes at all, and clients are therefore hit with a surcharge of three or four hundreds of pounds just before departure. Our aim is to provide you with transparent pricing and clear instructions as to what is included in our prices and if applicable what isn't.

Typical group size

The typical group size is 16 - 30 participants

Small group supplement

The costs and sponsorship levels on our website are based on a minimum of 16 participants. We can run this trip with 10-15 people, but there will be a small group supplement of £75. This is payable by your charity if you book under the Minimum Sponsorship or Flexi options, and by yourself if you choose the Self Funder option. We will notify you 12 weeks before departure if this is necessary.

Optional extras

Extensions at end of trip*
Single room supplements*
Business class upgrades*
(*subject to availability)

Travel insurance

Your safety when travelling with Charity Challenge is our main concern, which is why it is a booking condition that you have a suitable travel insurance policy, which covers you for the adventurous nature of your challenge, the activities you are undertaking, and the altitudes. We have chosen to partner with specialist travel insurance providers Campbell Irvine, who offer cover for an extensive number of adventurous activities. Cover is available directly from Campbell Irvine for most European residents and includes cover for emergency medical and repatriation and for your cancellation or curtailment of the challenge. Full details including costs may be found at <https://www.campbellirvine.com/charitychallenge>.

Level of Difficulty

This challenge has been graded 'Challenging', This is the perfect challenge for participants who are of an adventurous spirit and an open mind, but perhaps haven't taken on a strenuous challenge event before and are hoping to push themselves out of their comfort zone. You can tell your supporters that on Ride India, you will be:

- Cycling between 7-9 hours per day
- Covering an overall distance of 450 kilometres.
- Hitting the tarmac in extremely hot conditions
- Staying in basic hotels

Typical day

You will wake early (around sunrise) in time for a hearty breakfast. Cycling days will last between 4-8 hours, including breaks and snacks. You will have a leisurely break for lunch around noon – packed or cooked lunch will be provided. You will arrive at your accommodation before sunset. Supper will be prepared at around 7pm and then you can relax as the stars come out.

Safety

Charity Challenge considers the safety of all of its participants and staff to be a top priority, and as such we have set up an advanced and thorough safety management system. In a nutshell, Our Challenge Safe brand formalises our ethos when it comes to safety, and brings together the procedures and risk management strategies that we use to audit all aspects of our challenges, from vehicles to accommodation to the activity itself. Your welfare is paramount!

In terms of your challenge, there are a couple of important points that you should be aware of:

- Riding in the heat of India is a major challenge in itself, so make sure you are well hydrated throughout.
- The tarmac roads are prone to potholes and can be fairly bumpy in parts.
- This trip involves some dirt tracks with lots of loose stones and rocks.
- Smoke alarms are not compulsory in India, and as such very few accommodation will include them. Your tour leader will explain the emergency procedures.
- You will be riding on the right-hand side of the road and occasionally through busy areas. Make sure that you are paying attention at all times.
- The brakes on the bikes may be on the opposite side to what you are used to in the UK. Take the first morning slow and steady until you get used to this.

Responsible Tourism

At Charity Challenge we are committed to sustainable and responsible tourism, and work closely with bodies such as the International Porter Protection Group and Climate Care to ensure that our challenges benefit the local environments and communities in which they take place. We ensure that all rubbish is disposed of responsibly, and following local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection and respect, we aim to limit our impact on the natural environment. In addition to taking these practical steps to ensure that our challenges are sustainable, we also make a contribution each year to a number of local community projects, so as to give something back directly to the communities that we visit. Since 2000 we have donated almost £200,000 to such projects, supporting a range of initiatives, including schooling for children in Africa, shelter for street children in Brazil, and Orang-utan conservation in

Indonesia. We recommend that any gifts brought over for children are given to the UK challenge leader and distributed where needed by them and our local Ground Agent. If you wish to do more, you should consider buying drinks, postcards and souvenirs from the local vendors. For many, it is their sole source of income. For more information, please visit our [Responsible Tourism](#) pages, where you will be able to view a list of the projects that we currently support.

Extension

Jaipur City Extension

Jaipur, often referred to as 'the Pink City', is the vibrant capital of Rajasthan. This buzzing metropolis is an enthralling mix of old and new; a place where vegetable laden camel carts and traditionally dressed locals meet with buzzing auto rickshaws and swarms of motorbikes. The splendours of Jaipur's majestic past offer a sense of calm amongst the chaos, reminding visitors of a different pace and another world. (B,L,D)

Day 10: Amber Fort, Polo Bar and Raj Mandir Cinema

This morning, you will head north of Jaipur to Amber, the ancient capital to visit the Amber fort. Built in 1592, this stunning example of Rajput architecture is situated on the hillside offering superb views of the lake below. After this, it will be time for refreshments at the Polo Bar in the opulent Rambagh Palace. Finally, you will head to one of the most luxurious and famous cinemas in India, the Raj Mandir Cinema, where the audience themselves are worth watching. The evening will finish with a Rajastani banquet.

Day 11: The Observatory, City Palace, Hawa Mahal and Johri Bazaar

Today begins with a visit to one of Jaipur's main attractions – the Mahara Jai Singh II Observatory. At first glance it appears to be a random assortment of sculptures. However, as you investigate further you realise the specific purpose each one has; from measuring the positions of stars to calculating eclipses. Next you head to the Hawa Mahal (Palace of the Winds). Originally built to enable the ladies of the Royal household to watch the processions, it now offers stunning views over the city. The day continues at the City Palace, a treasure trove of interesting artefacts including the largest silver objects in the world. Finally, you will have some time to stock up on local handicrafts, jewellery and sweets at the Johri Bazaar to ensure that you arrive home laden with souvenirs and gifts to remember your trip by. You will then transfer back to Delhi. (B,L,D)

Day 12: Return to UK

This morning you will transfer to Delhi airport for your flight to the UK. (B)

Flights

You will be flying from London Heathrow to Delhi, India. Your flight info can be found in your Account Area under 'Flights'. Your flight tickets will be emailed to you before your departure. If you choose to book your own flights you must confirm with the Charity Challenge office before paying otherwise, you may be liable for your included group flights (please contact flights@charitychallenge.com for further assistance).

Please note: Timings of the group flights are subject to change. Please be aware of this when booking additional services, such as internal transfers to the departure airport.

Visa

If your expedition ventures to a country which requires a visa, this information will be uploaded to your online account area 3 months prior to departure. The visa information is per the FCO website where a link will be provided to the visa office for that country.

All foreign nationals require a visa to enter India. Please note that British Citizens are now eligible to get an online visa before arrival to India.

Important note: British passport holders of Pakistani origin may have difficulty in obtaining a visa for India. If the visa is granted it will certainly take much longer than for other UK nationals, and there is a chance that you may not receive it in time to depart on your challenge. Charity Challenge's cancellation terms will apply in all circumstances.

Insurance

It is a condition of travelling with Charity Challenge that you have a suitable travel insurance policy which covers you for your entire challenge. We have a special policy which covers among other things, medical (emergency, evacuation and repatriation) arrangements, cancellation and curtailment of the challenge, and more specifically for the adventurous activities undertaken on this challenge.

If you have your own travel insurance policy, you must ensure that it provides at least the same level of cover as our recommended policy, including protecting the charity in the event of your cancellation 56 days or less prior to departure. If you choose not to purchase our recommended policy when you book we will send you a disclaimer which you must complete and return to Charity Challenge prior to travel.

For more travel insurance questions, please refer to our main [FAQs page](#) or for any specific queries, please contact us at bookings@charitychallenge.com.

Vaccinations & Medication

For up to date vaccination information please check the Travel pro health page:
<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/43/medicines-abroad>

The Charity Challenge team are not medical experts and we would encourage you to visit your doctor or travel nurse to discuss vaccination requirements. Your doctor may ask questions about the specific locations that you are visiting, and as such it may be useful to take a copy of your itinerary with you.

Medication

- Carry medicines (including those bought over the counter) in their correctly labelled original packaging, as issued by the pharmacist. These should be carried in your hand luggage.
- Consider packing a spare supply of medication in the hold luggage in case of loss of hand luggage
- A letter from the prescriber detailing the medicines with the generic names for the medications can be helpful for border control checks, and in case medicines have to be replaced or medical help is required
- Carry a note from the prescribing physician on letterhead stationery for controlled substances and injection medications
- Take out an appropriate level of travel health insurance including repatriation and specific cover for any pre-

existing illnesses

- If you have an allergy that requires an epi-pen, ensure that you carry 2 epi-pens during the trip.

N.B. Some medications are banned abroad so please check. You can find further information at

<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/43/medicines-abroad>

Climate & Terrain

Climate

The post-monsoon period in Rajasthan runs from Oct to Dec, when temperatures can average from the mid to high 30s, down to around 18C. During the winter season (from January to March), there is a marked variation in minimum and maximum temperatures, and regional variations right across the state. January is the coldest month, when temperatures can drop down to 0C in some places. There is slight precipitation in the north and north-eastern regions of the state, and light winds, predominantly from the north and north-east. At this time of year the relative humidity ranges from 50-60% in the morning to 25-35% in the afternoon.

Terrain

The terrain is mainly flat, with a few short uphill sections. Many roads are in poor condition with potholes and gravel. On some days you will be cycling on main roads and you should listen to your leader's safety briefings carefully.

Training

A good level of fitness is definitely required. Anyone who leads an active and healthy lifestyle and cycles on a regular basis, with training, should find this a manageable challenge. As always, however, the more you exercise before the challenge, the more you will get out of it. To train, cycle for a full day at a time or even a whole weekend in order to build up your stamina. Don't forget that the climate is different to the UK, and that you will be exercising constantly for a number of days in the heat and sunshine. You will only be expected to carry water and any essentials that you would carry on a day ride – our support team will take care of the rest of your luggage. Also see the [Fitness Training](#) Advice notes.

Challenge Training

If you would like to get a feel for our challenges ahead of your departure, why not consider booking on a 1 or 2 day UK Challenge?

We have a variety of challenges, covering all levels of difficulty, taking place in stunning National Parks across the UK that are led by highly qualified and experienced expedition and mountain leaders. These challenges will give you the perfect opportunity to monitor fitness levels, test out your kit, meet people in the great outdoors, share fundraising stories and gain valuable advice and support for the challenge ahead. We encourage participants to make use of our highly knowledgeable leaders and ask them any questions you may have about clothing and equipment, expedition health and wellbeing, trekking skills, walking techniques and teamwork!

We are offering all participants **50% off** the registration fee when you book on one of the UK challenges listed via the link below. Just use the code **TRAINING** when booking. T&C's – you must have an active booking on a challenge to avail of this offer. Discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Find out more [here](#)

Luggage allowance and valuables

The luggage allowance will depend on the airline being used for your challenge, but in general it will be one piece of checked baggage at approximately 20kg.

Each cycling day, your personal kit will be transported to the next stop by a support vehicle. You will carry a daypack/bumbag for your daily needs such as sun cream, lunch, water, camera and lightweight waterproofs.

We will do everything to provide adequate security for your possessions. The general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Carry your passport with you and make sure you have a photocopy of your documents (travel insurance, passport, visa etc.) in case they get lost or damaged.

We recommend carrying 1 day of cycling clothes in your hand luggage. In the unlikely event that your hold bag should go missing, you will be able to begin the challenge until you are reunited with your luggage.

Leadership

There will be an English-speaking challenge leader who will be responsible for the logistics and co-ordination of your challenge. There will also be numerous local support guides and staff to assist them. The challenge leader will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group.

Group Size

Each group is intended to be 15 people minimum in order to run and a maximum of approx. 30 people. We will be able to run this challenge for 10 to 14 people by charging a small group supplement of £75 which will be added to your final balance invoice (self funders) or charged to your charity (minimum sponsorship or flexi).

Clothing and equipment

Good quality, durable kit could mean the difference between a fantastic challenge experience and an uncomfortable one. For your cycle challenge, padded cycling shorts and comfortable footwear are essential, and helmets are compulsory throughout. Training with your cycling shorts is definitely advised! You can bring equipment like clip-in pedals or a gel seat, if desired, in order to adapt your bike in country, and we would also recommend technical/wicking t-shirts rather than cotton shirts. A full kit list for this challenge can be found [here](#), and once you book you will have access to kit discounts with our partners The Outdoor Shop, Outdoorhire and Cotswold Outdoor.

Bikes

The bikes are 18-gear Trek, Target or Firefox hybrid bikes. They are some of the best bikes available in India; however, they probably do not compare to your bike at home. We add removable bar-ends to the bikes. We also add bells and water bottle holders. Please bring your own toe-clips and pedals if you prefer and we can add them. We take plenty of spares and our mechanics are on hand at all times for repairs or adjustments. The maximum frame size available in India is 19-inch.

Accommodation

Accommodation

During the challenge sector you will be staying mainly in hotels and heritage accommodation. There is one night where you will be staying in a luxury tented camp. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with please let Charity Challenge know in advance.

Single rooms may be available on request and are subject to a single room supplement. Please email Charity Challenge for further information.

Toilets

You will be staying in hotels, guesthouses, or palaces of the Maharaja, with basic but good toilet facilities. Your night at the luxury tented camp will have en suite facilities.

Food & Drink

You will be served a variety of European and Indian food. All meals are healthy, nourishing and plentiful. Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies.

Money

Currency

The currency is the Rupee, abbreviated as Rs. This is a 'closed currency', which means that you cannot import or export Rupees. For up to date currency exchange, go to: <http://www.xe.com/>.

Credit Cards

A growing number of hotels, restaurants and shops in the major cities are beginning to accept credit cards. Credit cards are not the most convenient form of payment or method for withdrawing cash. However, we recommend having a credit card with you in case of emergencies.

ATMs

Please note that ATMs are not always available and that, when they are they, do not always work. It is best to ensure that you have enough cash with you prior to starting the challenge.

How much to bring

You will not need large amounts of money during this challenge. You will only need money for tips, additional food & drink, gifts & souvenirs and for any additional activities. On average, we recommend around £200 in cash, plus a credit card for emergencies. Keep in mind that you will not be able to buy Rupees before entering India, and so you are advised to take a sufficient amount of cash that you can change at the airport or in Delhi.

Tipping: Tipping is personal and at your sole discretion. We recommend approx. US\$10 per person per challenge-day. This should be given to the challenge leader who will distribute it among the support team, including guides, assistant guides, cooks and porters.

Phone and WiFi

During the Rajasthan cycle, phone and WIFI connection will be available for most of challenge.

Emergencies

The event is not run as a race and there is always a large discrepancy in people's cycling abilities. This is allowed for. There will be a staff member at the back of the group at all times to ensure that you are not left behind and can take things at your own pace. In the event of an emergency, all guides and leaders are maintaining contact via radio, and the backup vehicle will not be far away. If somebody is unable to cycle at all, then the guides will arrange evacuation to a vehicle.



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Amazing life changing experience and something I am so glad I participated in considering I was concerned at what I had let myself in for before we embarked! Something I will remember for ever.

Scott Lightfoot

“

This was a fantastic way to get under the skin of India. The entire challenge exceeded expectations.

Martin Standen

“

What an experience! It was truly magical and unforgettable, from beginning to end. Cycling gave us the chance to see the real India: the more we saw it, the more we wanted to see.

Lydia Bright

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Any more questions?

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twitter.com/charitychall

