

Next Adventure® 11-Day Tiger-Tracking Safari

An Exclusive Expedition with Kili McGowan

India: March 6 - 16, 2016

Important Notes Regarding Passports and Visas for US Passport holders:

- Visas for India can now be obtained on arrival using an electronic Tourist Visa on Arrival program. Applicants must complete an application online a minimum of 4 days prior to arrival. The application also requires submission of a scan of the applicant's passport's information page and a scanned passport photograph as well as visa fee payment of US \$60 per person (*not included*). Please review the separate "Visa Information" bulletin for full details. All visa requirements and fees are subject to change.
- Please ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months beyond your travel dates. Also, you must have at least two consecutive/side-by-side blank pages in your passport for visas so check this carefully.

On this safari you explore the fabled jungles of India in search of the Bengal tiger. We are visiting the best tiger reserves in India at the best time of year, so we should enjoy multiple sightings of this charismatic cat. We'll also see a full range of the beautiful animals that share the tiger's world. Herds of deer (cheetal, sambhar, and swamp deer), gaur (impressive bovines larger than American buffalo), wild pigs, and acrobatic langur monkeys are the main prey.

The tiger is the apex predator but it shares the jungle with leopard, dhole (Asian wild dogs), spotted jungle cat, sloth bear, and jackals. Peacocks, rollers, hornbills, and bee-eaters are some of the many colorful tropical bird species. The Indian jungle is alive with the sounds and sights of the wild.

Join Next Adventure owner and Wildlife Safari Expert **Kili McGowan** on a special journey through the jungles of India. We'll have the privilege and thrill of tracking and glimpsing the largest cat in the wild – the Bengal Tiger. This **12-night itinerary** has been designed to experience a wide variety of ecosystems, habitats, activities and wildlife sightings. We'll be traveling under the care of &Beyond India, a leading luxury experiential travel company whose commitment to sustainable responsible travel, community empowerment and conservation is world-renowned. *Note:* For a group of 7-10 travelers, we'll also be joined by naturalist guide Allen Bechky.



Itinerary in Brief

- Day 1** - March 6 – Arrive in **Delhi** (or optional extensions). Dinner and Overnight at **Taj Mahal Hotel**
Day 2-3 - March 7-8 – Fly to Nagpur and drive to **Pench National Park**. Overnight at **Baghvan Lodge**
Day 4-6 - March 9-11 – Drive to **Kanha National Park**. Overnight at **Banjaar Tola Lodge**
Day 7-9 - March 12-14 – Drive to **Bandhavgarh National Park**. Overnight at **Mahua Kothi Lodge**
Day 10 - March 15 – Drive to **Jabalpur** and fly to Delhi. Overnight at **Trident Gurgaon** near airport
Day 11 - March 16 – Departure from **Delhi** or optional extensions

Participation Notes:

The climate in March is pleasant, with cool evenings and mornings, and warm sunny days. Wildlife viewing improves as the month progresses and the landscape dries out, as animals remain close to water sources. **Travellers must be in good health. Although this is an easy-moderate itinerary, in order to fully enjoy the experience, you must be prepared for short walks and climbing in/out of safari vehicles.** Wildlife viewing takes place by vehicle or elephant back over rough and dusty roads. To get the best photographic opportunities, we'll be out for game drives early in the mornings and in the late afternoon.

We'll have plenty of time at midday to relax and enjoy our wonderful camps, but you must also be prepared for several long drives between parks (up to 6 hours) and chaotic local conditions in cities.

While tiger sightings are very reliable, viewing is dependent on variables such as weather and tracking conditions. Due to the nature of the environment and the behaviour of wild animals, it's impossible to guarantee tiger sightings although we'll have very good odds at this time of year!

March 6, 2015

Arrival in New Delhi, India

In accordance with your international air itinerary (*to be arranged and quoted separately*), arrive in New Delhi at any time today. After obtaining your visa on arrival (US \$60 per person, *not included*) at immigration and clearing customs, exit to the International Arrivals area. You'll be met by a representative of &Beyond India Safaris and transferred to our hotel. Our overnight stay at the **Taj Mahal Hotel** in Deluxe Rooms is inclusive of breakfast with rooms available after official check-in time of 14:00 (2:00pm). Dinner and drinks with the group this evening is included in the safari cost.

(*Note: This overnight stay is required to ensure you arrive in time for the early domestic flight the next morning, but you can add extra nights in Delhi to get over jet lag and explore this fascinating capital city. Please see further notes about arrivals and departures at the end of this itinerary.*)

Delhi, the capital of India has fascinating history and a stimulating present. Believed to be the legendary Inderprastha described in the epic "Mahabharata", Delhi has been the seat of a power of a number of dynasties- the Rajputs, the Muslims invaders from the North, the Afghan dynasties followed by Tughlaqs, Sayyids, the Lodis and the Mughals, who continued the imperial line, until British days.

The old city, built by Shah Jehan in the 17th century, stands today as an epitome of the whole history of Indo-Islamic architecture. New Delhi, designed and constructed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Herbert Baker is a mixture of east and west. The public buildings in red sandstone are in the Mughal style. It has a circular Parliament House and an imposing Central Secretariat in two blocks that stand at the approaches to Rashtrapati Bhawan, the residence of the President of India.



Delhi is today the political, economic and cultural capital of the world's largest democracy and has also become one of the greatest tourist centres of the world.

Optional Activities – Time-Permitting (could also be after the safari)

Sightseeing in Old Delhi: Visit Jamma Mosque and drive through fabled Chandani Chowk, the main area of the old city, the Red Fort, built by the builder of the Taj Mahal – Shah Jehan, and famous for its delicately carved, inlaid and marbled Royal Chambers, Raj Ghat, where the father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi was cremated.

Sightseeing in New Delhi: Visit Humayun's Tomb aptly called predecessor of the Taj Mahal. Drive past Safdarjung's Tomb, the Qutb Minar, 72 meters high and one of the perfect towers of the Persian islam Mosque stands the Iron Pillar which has stood the vagaries of the weather and not rusted over 1500 years. An orientation drive through New Delhi includes the Embassy area, Govt Building and Birla temple.

March 7

Travel to Pench via Nagpur

Early this morning, we check out of our rooms and depart with a packed breakfast. We are chauffeured to Delhi airport for a morning flight to Nagpur.

On arrival, we are met by a driver and transferred by road about 2.5 hrs to **Pench National Park**. A spectacular natural reserve set among typical Central Indian teak jungle, Pench offers a quiet and secluded game viewing experience. Taking its name from the meandering Pench River which intersects the park, the reserve sprawls over a breathtaking landscape of hills, forests and valleys. Coupled with the feeling of having the entire forest to yourself, the gentle, undulating scenery of the Satpura Hills allows for an unforgettable jungle experience.

The mosaic of vegetation, from lush valleys to dry, deciduous forests create a range of habitats for India's exotic wildlife. Flat hilltops known as dadars appear among grassy expanses and riverine forests. A typical Central Indian Teak forest, Pench supports a rich variety of wildlife, including the tiger, leopard, wild dog, gaur, sambar, chital and brilliant wildlife.

On arrival, we check into the **Baghvan Lodge**. With its open rooftop machans and large wooden decks that overlook the shady *nullah* (watercourse), guests at Baghvan are constantly immersed in the sights and sounds of the Indian jungle. Rich birdlife flits through the trees overhanging your machan and monkeys chatter excitedly in the dense foliage. The sandy bed of the dry nullah provides a clear path through the dense jungle for the forest's inhabitants and guests needn't be surprised to find a sambar deer on their doorstep in the morning.



Spend two nights at **Baghvan Lodge**. Accommodation is in an air-conditioned Luxury Suite with ensuite facilities. Our stay is on a fully inclusive basis including scheduled game drives in exclusive jeeps.

This afternoon, we'll enjoy a game drive at Pench National Park returning to the lodge for dinner.

March 8	Pench National Park
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Today, we explore the dense jungles of Pench National Park on early morning and evening game drive by exclusive open 4x4 safari vehicles.

One of the lodge's specially trained naturalists will accompany us, pointing out and explaining details about the fascinating animals and plants of the jungle. Our early morning drive enters the park as dawn breaks over the jungle.

Explore the densely forested parts of the park, where the tiger prefer to hunt, in search of the elusive king of the jungle. On an afternoon drive, the wildlife is settling down for the night or having a final drink at the Pench River. Watch out for the elusive leopard and listen to the calling of jackal getting ready for the hunt.



March 9

Drive to Kanha

Following a morning jungle safari and early lunch, a drive of approximately 4.5 hours takes us to Kanha National Park. Prime tiger wilderness, **Kanha National Park** was one of the first areas to be protected under Project Tiger. Aimed at preserving this magnificent animal, the park remains a renowned conservation area. This picturesque reserve boasts the ideal habitat for both tigers and their prey species. Lush sal and bamboo forests are interspersed with vast grassy meadows known as maidans, while the Banjaar River, which forms the park's south-western border, provides a steady water source for the abundant wildlife.

A huge population of various deer and antelope, including the extremely rare barasingha, supports a large number of predators including tiger, leopard, jackal and wild dog.

On arrival in Kanha, we check into the **Banjaar Tola Lodge**. Overlooking the lush forests and grassy meadows of Kanha National Park, this camp blends seamlessly with the environment. Admire stunning river views from the privacy of your own veranda or share the experiences of the day on dramatic decks facing the Banjaar River.



We'll spend three nights at &Beyond **Banjaar Tola Lodge**. Accommodation is in a Luxury Tent with ensuite facilities. Our stay is on a fully inclusive basis including scheduled game drives by exclusive jeeps.

March 10 and 11

Kanha National Park

For two full days, we'll explore the sal and bamboo forests of Kanha National Park on early morning and evening game drives in an open 4x4 safari vehicle. Explore the meadows, or maidans, where scores of grazing herbivores attract tiger, leopard and wild dog to the edges of the clearings.

On an afternoon drive, the wildlife is settling down for the night or having a final drink at the Banjaar River or the many perennial streams that run through the park. Watch out for the elusive leopard and listen to the calling of jackal getting ready for the hunt.

Kanha National Park: Kanha is the Indian subcontinent's greatest reserve and tiger country par excellence. The park's sal forests form the core of the Kanha Tiger Reserve, created in 1974 under Project Tiger. This is also where the world's preeminent field biologist, George Schaller, conducted the first-ever scientific study of the tiger from 1963 to 1965. Kanha was the setting of Schaller's book *The Deer and the Tiger*.



Conservationists at Kanha have been in the lead in international efforts to save the tiger for nearly 25 years, and saving the tiger means saving its habitat: sufficient land with the water, grasses, plants, and trees that its prey lives on—in other words, saving the delicate web of an entire ecosystem.

Project Tiger at Kanha has yielded much success, with Kanha's original population of 48 tigers in 1974 now at around 100 individuals. Kanha stretches over 500 square miles and records more than 200 species of birds and about 22 species of mammals.



The variety and abundance of wildlife in Kanha is remarkable. The park is famous for its herds of hard-ground Barasingha—also called swamp deer, a large and beautiful endemic animal with 12-point antlers (it has probably been saved from extinction by careful management in Kanha). We may see herds of the beautiful chital (also called the spotted deer), and sambar, the biggest of the Indian deer. Other commonly seen herbivores include barking deer, wild boar, and the imposing gaur (also called the Indian bison), which is considered the largest wild bovine in the world.



A gaur bull may stand over six feet tall at the shoulder and weigh more than a ton! Kanha is known for its large population of gaur, and this large animal is an important food source for the tiger. Nilgai antelope and the four-horned antelope can also be seen in the higher elevation part of the park, on the Bamni Dadar plateau.

Predators in the park include sloth bear, the common (or golden) jackal, the striped hyena, and the dhole or Indian wild dog (which, like the African wild dog, lives and hunts in packs). Leopards also live in Kanha, and although more easily overlooked than the tiger, they are regularly seen here. Other interesting mammals include the Indian ratel (honey badger), Indian porcupine, and various species of mongooses. Primates are

represented by troops of monkeys of two species—the rhesus macaque and the silver (or common) langur. Kanha's bird life is equally impressive, with more than 200 recorded species.

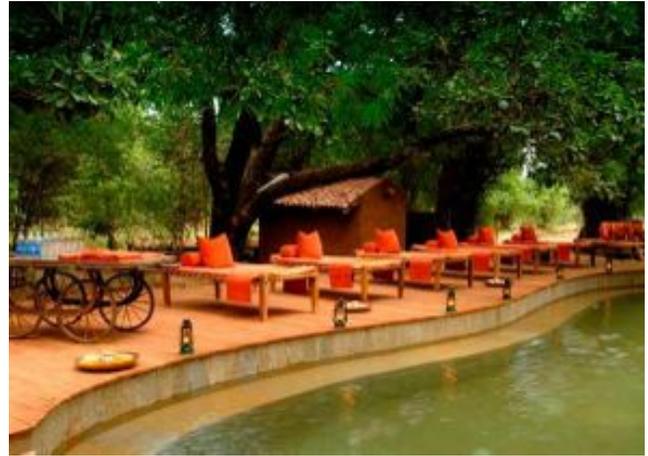
March 12 Drive to Bandhavgarh

Following a morning jungle safari and early lunch, a drive of approximately 6 hours will take us to Bandhavgarh National Park. An essential stop on any serious tiger safari, **Bandhavgarh National Park** is renowned for one of India's highest concentrations of this magnificent animal. A relatively small park with a thriving tiger population, it offers guests a good chance of encountering the king of the jungle, as well as a selection of other exotic wildlife.

Cradled between the picturesque Vindhya and Satpura mountain ranges, Bandhavgarh boasts a breathtaking mixture of dense green valleys and rocky hills. Tropical forests and woodlands are interspersed with flat grasslands and serene waterholes.

On arrival, we check in to the **Mahua Kothi Lodge**. Guests in search of an authentic jungle experience won't be disappointed at this Jungle Lodge, where just 12 kutiyas scattered around an original homestead disappear into the bamboo fronds.

Given over to natural forest, the vast grounds create a park-like atmosphere that guests are free to explore on bicycles invitingly parked in the private courtyards of their jungle suites.



We'll spend three nights at &Beyond **Mahua Kothi Jungle Lodge**. Accommodation is in an air-conditioned Luxury Cottage with ensuite facilities. Our stay is on a fully inclusive basis including game drives in private jeeps.

March 13 and 14	Bandhavgarh National Park
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For two full days, we explore the dense jungles of Bandhavgarh National Park on early morning and afternoon game drives in an open 4x4 safari vehicle.

Bandavgarh National Park: Bandavgarh was the former hunting preserve of the Maharaja of Rewa. The famous White Tigers, now major attractions around the world's zoos, were first discovered in Rewa, not far from here. The terrain is broken, with rocky hill ranges, running roughly east-west, interspersed with grassy swamps and majestic forested valleys.



The park is dominated by the ancient Bandavgarh Fort, located on a plateau and reached after a steep climb. The fort is now in ruins, its monuments and tanks being gradually reclaimed by the forest, thus providing additional shelter for wildlife.

Much of the park is covered in Sal forest, replaced by mixed forests in the higher elevations of the hills. There are extensive stands of bamboo and grasslands.

Generally the forests are less dense here, with less undergrowth than in North India, thus offering better sightings of wildlife, notably mammals, including the daylight sightings of tigers in the grassy "maidans". 40+ igers are estimated to live in the park. The park also has numerous ancient caves and rock shelters, with shrines and inscriptions. About 240 species of birds are known from the Tala area, including the Brown Fish Owl, Grey-headed Fishing Eagle, Malabar Pied Hornbill and Shahin Falcon.

March 15

Fly to Delhi via Jabalpur

Following a morning jungle safari and early lunch, a drive of approximately 4 hours will take us to Jabalpur Airport to board an evening flight back to Delhi.

On arrival in Delhi, you will be met and transferred to the **Trident Gurgaon Hotel** for our final night together as a group. Accommodation is in a Superior Garden View Room with ensuite facilities. Our stay is on a bed and breakfast basis, but we'll have a group dinner that is included in the safari cost.



Day 13

Departure

This morning after breakfast and check-out (rooms available until noon), guests are chauffeured to the Delhi International Airport to connect with onward flights (*to be arranged and quoted separately*). Say farewell to India and board your international flight back to the US or continue on an optional extension within the country...

Safari Costs continued on the next page...

Safari Costs

Exclusive Safari Cost:

10 guests: \$10,995 per person

8 guests: \$11,395 per person

6 guests: \$11,550 per person

4 guests: \$11,895 per person

Should our group include single guests, prices will be adjusted accordingly for groups of 5, 7, and 9. We'll do our best to match single guests willing to share, but please inquire about the Single Room Supplement. Domestic airfares, included in the safari cost, are subject to change as are any increased park fees.

Safari cost includes:

- 2 nights in New Delhi on an accommodation and breakfast basis
- Group dinner on arrival night
- 8-night safari including 2 nights Baghvan, 3 nights Banjaar Tola, and 3 nights Mahua Kothi
- All safari activities described in the itinerary
- All meals on safari
- All drinks on safari (excluding premium imported brands and champagne)
- Laundry service on safari
- Gratuities to safari camp staff and local naturalist guides
- Road transfers and domestic economy airfares as described in the itinerary
- Safari escorted by naturalist Allen Bechky and photographer/safari specialist Kili McGowan

Safari cost does not include:

- International airfare to/from New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport and airport taxes
- Visas
- Lunch and dinner in Delhi on the departure day, if required
- Activities, excursions or extra nights in Delhi
- Comprehensive travel insurance policy including cancellation and emergency medical/evacuation coverage.

Arrivals, Departures and Extensions

This itinerary has been designed to coordinate with international air itineraries. However, you might elect to add nights in Delhi at the beginning or end of the trip. Should you be available and interested in potential safari extensions, we are offering a "Rajasthan and Taj Mahal Extension" staying at luxurious palaces, or a "Wildlife Safari in Satpura, Velavadar and Gir" to extend your wildlife viewing opportunities. Either would be a very nice complement to the core experience so please call us to discuss the scheduled and custom options.

