

5. Kultur, Kunst und Natur in Gujrat – die nordwestliche Schatzkammer Indiens: 15 Tage

Die Halbinsel Gujrat im Westen Indiens ist besonders für Reisende, die gerne abseits des Touristenstromes reisen und das Indien, wie es vielleicht früher einmal war, kennenlernen wollen. Gujrat war bisher vom Tourismus noch weitgehend verschont und wird jetzt erst so langsam entdeckt. Der Bundesstaat Gujrat ist Indiens westlichster Bundesstaat und Geburtsort Mahatma Gandhis. Bekannt ist er auch für seine kilometerlangen Strände, seine heiligen Tempel und seine historischen Städte. Es befinden sich viele religiöse Stätten in Gujrat wie Dwaraka, Somanath und Palitana. Daneben gibt es hier vier Nationalparks und zahlreiche Naturschutzgebiete, die auch Zufluchtsort der letzten asiatischen Löwen sind. Ein solcher Löwe besitzt auch der Zürcher Zoo.

Die Gegend um Bhuj, auch Kutch genannt, ist mit farbenprächtigen Dörfern die Heimat von Stammesgruppen. Man kann erleben, wie viele traditionelle Dörfer und Stämme in ihren unterschiedlichen Trachten und von ihrem Kunsthandwerk leben und ihre kulturelle Vielfalt beibehalten haben. In der trockenen Jahreszeit bildet der Run of Kutch eine Wüste.

In Gujrat befindet sich Porbandar, der Geburtsort Gandhis, der in Rajkot zur Schule ging. In Ahmedabad gründete er seinen ersten Ashram. Die asketischen Regeln Gandhis sind im Staat Gujrat tief verankert, es herrscht gewisse Prohibition (Alkoholverbot) und ein Restaurant, in dem es Fleisch oder Fisch zu essen gibt, ist selten.

Aber auch moderne Architektur existiert in Gujrat. Einige Schweizer studieren dort.





Reiseroute: Zürich - Mumbai - Ahmedabad – Patan – Bajna - Bhuj – Wankaner - Gondal – Jungagarh - Sasan Gir – Somnath – Palitana – Lothal – Vadodara - Mumbai – Zürich

Verlängerung/Verkürzungsmöglichkeit: Es bestehen verschiedene Möglichkeiten. Bitte nehmen Sie Kontakt mit uns auf!

Day 01 Zurich-Mumbai

Meeting assistance on arrival and transfer to Hotel
(Room booked from previous day ensure immediate occupancy upon arrival.)

Day 02 Mumbai-Ahmedabad (morning flight)

After breakfast, in time transfer to airport to board flight to Ahmedabad
Meeting assistance on arrival and transfer to Hotel
Afternoon free for independent activities.

Day 03 Ahmedabad

After breakfast, visit Ahmedabad City : Ahmedabad was founded in the 15th Century by Ahmed shah, the independent Sultan of Gujarat. It is now the capital of the State of Gujarat and a graceful blend of old and new. Short City tour of Ahmedabad. Including, Sabarmati Ashram, established by mahatma Gandhi on the Sabarmati River in 1915.

This was the nerve centre of India's freedom movement. In 1930 Gandhiji began his famous Dandi March from here. .
Hatheesing Jain Temple, Built of pure white marble, it has a paved courtyard surrounded by an imposing row of cloisters containing 52 shrines, each with an



image of a tirthankara, It was designed by Premchand Salat and is dedicated to Dharmanath, the fifteenth Jina or Jain apostle. It was built at a cost of Rs 10 Lakhs, a sum unimaginable in those days.

The HAVELIS (wooden Mansions) of Ahmedabad are a window to the lofty life styles of the rich of early 19th century Ahmedabad. Exquisitely worked wooden facaded Havelis jostle for space in the narrow Pols of walled Ahmedabad. But no sooner do you cross the columned verandahs the Havelis open into the Otlo (courtyards), the divankhanu (formal drawing room), the service areas and other rooms. Jama Mosque, Located in the centre of the old city, this congregational mosque was built by Sultan Ahmed Shah in 1423. Built in yellow sandstone, it combines the best of Hindu and Muslim styles of architecture, standing on 260 pillars supporting 15 domes at varying elevations Shreyas Folk Museum, Exhibiting the finest arts and crafts of Gujarat, Shreyas Folk Museum is situated 2.5km west of Sabarmati. Set in suburbs of Ambavadi in Ahmedabad, the museum has a huge display of textiles and clothing in Gujarat. One of the major attraction of the museum is a complete skeleton of an elephant with a height of about 3.19m. Old coins, weapons, toys, costumes, masks, puppets, musical fountains and animal caparisons also lure foreign tourists. Evening visit Ahmedabad Markets

Day 04 Ahmedabad-Modhera-Patan-Dasada (140 km/4 h)

After early breakfast, drive to Dasada, enroute visiting Modhera and Patan (Full day Visit).

Modhera : The sun Temple of Modera is one of the finest example of Indian temple architecture of its period. Built in 1026 A.D. the temple is dedicated to the Sun Goa, Surya and stands high on a plinth overlooking a deep stone- steeped tank.



Every inch of the edifice, both inside and outside is magnificently carved with Gods and Goddesses, birds, beasts and flower.

Patan : Patan has over 100 beautifully carved Jain temples & many attractive traditional carved wooden houses. Rani Ki Vav is the oldest and the grandest stepwell in the state of Gujarat. It is situated at Patan and is believed to have been built during 1022 to 1063 AD. The construction was completed by the widowed queen Udayamati. It is the centre for fine textiles particularly silk patola sarees produced by the characteristic 'ikat' technique.



After visit drive to Dasada, on arrival check into the Hotel.

Day 05 Dasada

After breakfast, morning and Afternoon excursion to The Little Rann of Kutch and Local Villages by Safari : which covers an area of roughly 5,000 square km, is primarily known as the Indian Wild Ass Sanctuary. The sanctuary was established in 1972 as the last natural habitat of the Indian Wild Ass (Equus



Hemionus Khur). One of the three surviving species of the Wild Ass in the world-the other two being Tibet found in Central Asia and in and around Tibet-the Khur is high on the list of endangered species. A safari through the Indian Wild Ass Sanctuary in the Little Rann of Kutch in northwest Gujarat is a unique experience. A

safari through this region gives one a chance to come face to face with a wide variety of birds and other wildlife. FLORA AND FAUNA - The Rann of Kutch is full of dry thorny scrub and there are no large trees. The main vegetation in the region includes many species of grasses that are widely available as the source of food for the wild Asses. The most famous wildlife of the region includes the Indian Wild Ass, as well as the chinkara, desert fox, jackal, desert cat, caracal, nilgai, wolf, blackbuck, and striped hyena. and visit visit Rawari and Bhairwad tribal villages near Dasada.

Day 06 Dasada-Bhuj (268 km/6 h)

After leisurely breakfast drive to Bhuj, enroute visiting Vadiara Rabari and Bharwad embroidery, also visit weavers and other artisans.

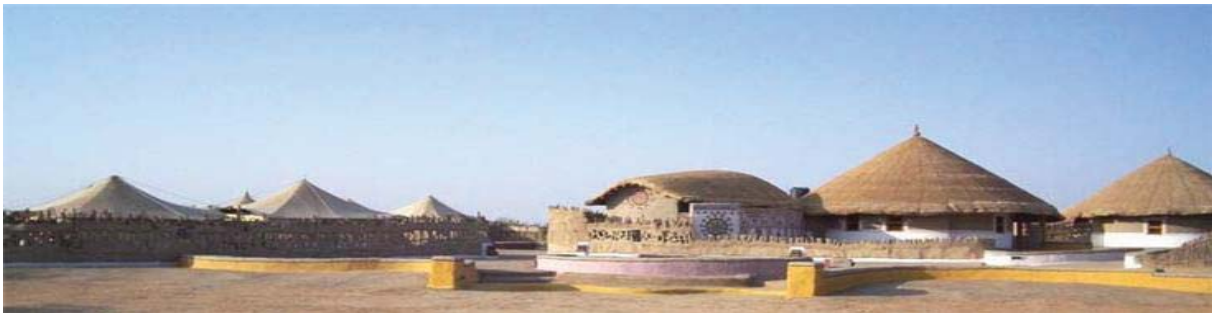
Upon arrival check in at Hotel

Day 07 Bhuj



After breakfast full day excursion to Banny Village north Great Rann of Kutch. Kutch in Gujarat is known to be the second largest district in India and is sparsely populated. It is a dry belt with the Great Rann to the north and the Little Rann to the east. The Great and the Little Rann of Kutch are also the breeding grounds of Flamingo, Pelican & Avocet and home of the rare Indian Wild Ass, which is now a protected species. In Kutch, I found India's some of most exquisite handicrafts like embroidery, tie 'n' die

fabrics, enamelled silverware, etc. It all started, as I couldn't suppress any more my quest to ride to India's westernmost corner. I chose the Greater Rann of Kutch (GRK). It constitutes the northern part of Kutch region and spreads from the Rajasthan-Gujarat Border. Explore the tribal villages, specializing in different forms of handicraft including ahir embroidery, block printing and tie and dye. Colour and eye for design is the keynote of Gujarat handicrafts, and is an expression of their rich traditional heritage and personal artistic talent. Visits continue today to villages to see first hand the production of these treasures. Tie and dye using wool and silk is especially popular.



Day 08 Bhuj-Wankaner-Gondal (260 km/6 h)

After early breakfast, drive to Gondal, enroute visiting Dhamadka villages to see the textile village, Wankaner

Wankaner : Ranjit Vilas Palace (visit possible Subject availability of the Maharaja) is a very eclectic building, a bold attempt to synthesize various architectural styles. The front and back facades are appropriately designed in response to its location. The receding volumes, on the front, creating a series of terraces culminating in two beautifully designed pavilions with gothic arches. The back facade, on the town side, really establishes the palace as an impressive landmark.



The seven storied central clock tower capped by a Mughal dome and two five storied high bastions, at both the corners, culminate in hexagonal chhatris. The facade has arcades of arched Victorian windows Italianate pillars, Gothic arches and classical parapets. A massive Dutch roof spans the central wing of the palace. A double staircase is the unique feature of the interior of this palace, where the royal ladies could ascend and descend without being seen by men. A similar double staircase at Chateau de Chambord, Loire, France, dating to the Renaissance period, inspired this staircase

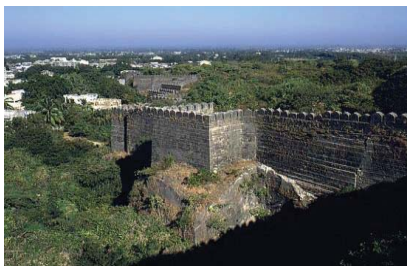
After visit drive to Gondal, on arrival check in at Hotel

Rest of the day free for independent activities.

Day 09 Gondal-Junagarh-Sasan Gir (100 km/2,5 h)

After breakfast, visit Gondal : Gondal, the capital of the former princely State of Gondal, was ruled by the Jadeja Rajput clan, till the independence of India. Visiting the Naulakha Palace built of 17 th cent. By Bhakumbhaji the founder of Gondal. Naulakha Palace. Its magnificent architecture will leave you spellbound and the antique furniture, spiral stairways and the chandelier-lit courtyard would take you back to the royal period. Vintage classic cars collection of the Maharaja of Gondal. The palace also has a museum. The next set of royal relics can be found at the Orchard Palace and Huzoor Palace during Gondal tour.

After visit, drive to Sasangir, enroute visiting Junagadh : Uparkot



Fort, Uparkot, an ancient citadel located on the higher level of the town, was a stronghold of Mauryans and Gupta Empire and is said to have survived 16 sieges in the last 1000 years due to its strategic location and difficult access. The entrance of Uparkot has a fine specimen of Hindu Toran, leading of flat land dotted with archeological sites. The major sites are

Buddhist caves, Baba Pyara Caves (2nd century), Adi-Kadi Vav, Navghan Kuvo and Jami Masjid. The Buddhist caves are fine examples of rock cut architecture with ornamented pillars, carved entrances, water cisterns, chaitya hall, monastic cells for meditation and chaitya windows. Adi-Kadi Vav and Navghan Kuvo were built by the Chudasama Rajputs and unique water structures among the numerous step wells of Gujarat. The Adi-Kadi Vav (15th century) has a long flight of 120 steps leading to water, while the Navghan Kuvo (1026 a.d) is hewn from the soft rock and is 52 meters deep,

After visit drive to Sasangir.

Day 10 Sasan Gir

Morning and afternoon excursion by Jeep safari into the Gir Forest



National Park . Discover the lair of the extremely endangered Asiatic lion in Gir, the small forest reserve that remains his last sanctuary. The Gir Forest National Park and Wildlife



Sanctuary (also known as Sasan-Gir) is the sole home of the pure Asiatic Lions. The Hindi name Gir stands for forest. Measuring about 258 km² for the fully protected area (the National Park) and 1153

km² for the Sanctuary, the area is considered to be one of the most important protected areas in Asia due to its supported species.

Day 11 Sasan Gir-Somnath-Palitana (200 km/4 h)



After Breakfast drive to Palitana via Somnath : It is the seat of the one of the twelve most sacred "Jyotirlingas" of Lord Shiva. Its origin which can be dated back to the Vedic times, the temple was the object of attack by several Muslim invaders. The old temple has been rebuilt after a lapse of about 1000 years. Maintaining the

Day 12 Palitana

After breakfast, full day visit of Palitana - Palitana lies at the foot of the hill of Shatrunjay, The path is climbed through 3950 steps spanning 3.5 km up the Shatrunjaya Hills. Which must be undertaken on foot. One of the chief places of pilgrimage of the Jain faith. Palitana's 863 temples have an intensely mystic appeal. The largest temple is devoted to Adinath, the last of the 25 apostles of the Jain faith. It is the only temple to which non Jains are not permitted entry. Other temples are built around open courtyards around which niches contain identical images of the 24 apostles



Day 13 Palitana-Lothal-Vadodara



After breakfast, drive to Vadodara, enroute visit Lothal: The town derives its name from the Gujarati word Loth which means death. At Lothal, 75 km south of Ahmedabad, the dead past was unearthed in November, 1955 with the discovery of 16 underground tombs, 3 of which have already been examined. In the history of the world, to the names of Mohenjodaro and Harappa (in Pakistan) was now added the name of Lothal. Here excavators discovered the remains of an Aryan civilization, a port-city, harbour, shops and markets, drainage system and 2 glazed earthen mummies-one Assyrian and the other Egyptian. The 10 ft high wall with the 710x166 ft brick structure is another unique creation. The relics have been proved to belong to a civilization existing alongside the Indus Valley Civilization of the past.

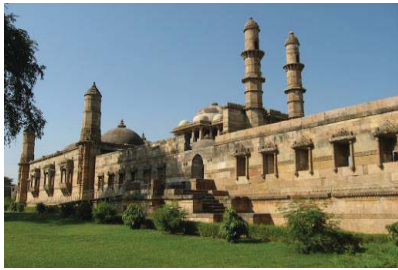
After visit drive to Vadodara, on arrival check in at Hotel

Rest of the day for independent activities.

Day 14 Vadodara-Champaner (Pavagarh)-Vadodara- Mumbai (flight)

Day excursion to Pavagarh and Dabhoj

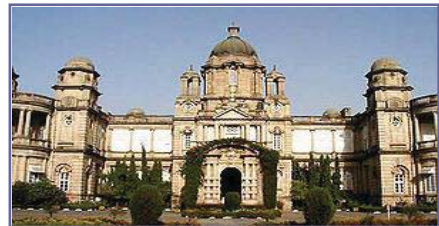
After early breakfast, excursion to visit Champaner is an ancient fortified city, which is located at the foothills of Pavagadh, around 159 km from Ahmedabad. There are two stories about the origin of the name of this town. Some believe that is named after Champaraj who was the founder of the city, while others believe that the town was named after the champa tree that is found here. The town has a rich historical culture and was a major trade center dealing in fine silk, woven and dyed textile,



and sword manufacturing. But its decline started after attacks by the Mughal Emperor Humayun in 1535 AD. The entire landscape of Champaner has many ruins of fort walls, tombs, gardens, arches, pillars and wells. It has been named the Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park, and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Pavagarh Fort

- 4 kms south east of Champaner, another well known and ancient fort of Gujarat dominates the skyline and can be seen from miles away. Spread over a large area, the fort rises in three stages: first, the rained part, second, the palace and middle fort and, finally, the upper fort with Jain and Hindu temples (important places of pilgrimage). The temple at the summit had its spire replaced by a shrine to the Muslim saint, Sadan Shah. Jami Masjid - This large, ornate mosque built in 1523 is a typical example of Gujarati architecture. Supported by 172 pillars, its minars rise upto 100 feet. Among its other special features are the oriel windows, and the central dome with beautifully carved balconies between the tiers. The unique fusion of Islamic and Jain traditions in this monument is extremely attractive.

Afternoon visit Vadodara : (also known as Baroda) the City of Palaces has often been called the cultural capital of Gujarat and is filled with relics of it's princely past. Vadodara passed through the hands of the Guptas, Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas, Solankis, the Sultans of Delhi and the Mughals before passing on to the Marathas. It is a graceful city of palaces, parks, temples,



and museums. Places to visit are: Nazarbaug Palace - Built in old classical style, the Gaekwads used the palace on ceremonial occasions. Lakshmi Vilas Palace - The Royal Family's residence is an extravagant building in

Indo- Saracenic style. Pratap Vilas Palace - Built as the residence of the royal family, this is a magnificent building in the Indo - Sarcenic style, housing a collection of old armory and sculptures in bronze, marble and terra cotta. The Baroda museum and art gallery and the Maharaja Fateh Singh Museum boast of an excellent art collection of works by Indian artists and European Masters, of Mughal miniatures and valuable palm leaf manuscripts of Buddhist and Jain origin.

Late afternoon flight to Mumbai and than to Zurich.

Day 15 Mumbai-Zurich