

## **2N/3D Package of Ahmedabad-Vadodara**

### **Day 1: Ahmedabad**

Arrival in Ahmedabad – a World Heritage City. Check into the hotel and after freshen up, visit:

#### **Gandhi Ashram:**

Mahatma Gandhi, after coming back from South Africa had his first religious retreat built in Ahmedabad's Kochrab area in the year 1915 on 25th May. The ashram was later on shifted to one of the banks of the Sabarmati River on an open tract of land. Gandhiji named the retreat as 'Sabarmati Ashram' as it was located on the bank of the Sabarmati River that passes through Ahmedabad. The date of the shifting is recorded as 17th June 1917. He made this transfer because he had taken a resolve to lead life like a poor, rustic Indian who earned his livelihood through farming and farm-related activities. The ashram served as the nerve-centre for the nation's freedom struggle. It was from this ashram that Mahatma Gandhi launched the Satyagraha movement on 12th March in 1930 and journeyed all the way to Dandi Beach by foot covering a distance of more than 300kms that took about 24 days. Gandhi's office was located in 'Hridaya Kunj' which was actually a cottage that was eventually turned into a museum. Sabarmati Ashram is one of the most important monument in Indian Independence History and today it is the first thing for a tourist visiting Gujarat to visit.

#### **Adalaj Stepwell:**

Adalaj Stepwell near Ahmedabad is one of the most beautiful Step-well in India with a perfect mixture of the Hindu and the Islamic architecture. Originally, it was being constructed by Rana Veer Singh but was completed by Sultan Mahmud Begada of Ahmedabad as he had killed the former to expand his kingdom. The stepwell was completed as the Queen of Veer Singh demanded its completion from Mahmud Begada who had proposed to marry her after his husband's demise. This resulted in the fusion of Indo-Islamic architecture in the stepwell. This 5 storey stepwell is constructed in such a way that sunlight cannot penetrate directly inside the stepwell which results in difference of 5 degrees Celsius in temperature from the normal temperature. The intricate carving on the columns and the windows of the stepwell is a treat to watch for any architectural lover.

#### **Swaminarayan Akshardham:**

One of the two Akshardham of the Bochasanwasi Aksharpurushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS), Akshardham in Gandhinagar was the first to be constructed and completed in 1991. Built in Pink Sandstone, this magnificent structure is a sight to behold. Thousands of people visit it every day for its beauty and also the exhibition halls and the first Spiritual Light and Sound Show in the world 'Sat-chit-anand'. This famous temple was attacked by the terrorists in 2002 where around 30 people lost their lives. The main deity of the temple is Lord Swaminarayan who is considered as an incarnation of Lord Krishna and have a ardent following in the state of Gujarat.

Overnight at Ahmedabad.

### **Day 2: Ahmedabad – Vadodara**

Today morning, proceed towards Vadodara (120 Kms/ 3 Hours). Visit:

#### **Laxmi Vilas Palace:**

One of the biggest residence palaces of the country, the Laxmi Vilas Palace is the official residence of the Princely Gaikwads of Vadodara. Constructed by Maharaja Sayajirao Gaikwad III in 1890 under the supervision of the chief Architect Major Charles Mant, the Laxmi Vilas Palace is 4 times bigger than the Buckingham Palace of England and a sum of GBP 1,80,000 were spent to build this super-imposing structure. The windows of the palace are inlaid with stained Belgium glass, and the walls have complex mosaic ornamentation. Archived within the palace are priceless collections of bronze sculptures, armory items as well as terracotta and marble artworks designed by Fellici. Emerging out of the Durbar, one steps into a quadrangle that has been made in an Italian fashion with water fountains and channels. Landscaping of the palace grounds was done by William Goldring and appears like a green, velvety carpet. The edifice even at the time of its construction in the late 19th century had facilities like elevators and resembles a European manor or country house. The royal descendants of the

Gaekwad dynasty still use the premises as their private residence who's Durbar Hall has a floor built out of Venetian mosaic tiles.

**Sayaji Baug:**

Sayaji Baug, an immensely sprawling garden located in Vadodara with the Vishwamitra River flowing beside the patch is easily one of the city's most popular tourist attractions. Also called Kamati Baug, it is the biggest garden in the western part of India with a total land area exceeding 113 acres. The prime attractions of the garden are the Baroda Museum & Picture Gallery, Sayaji Baug Zoo and Aquarium, Sardar Patel Planetarium, floral clock, and the toy train. The garden is also home to a rich variety of flora comprising of 98 tree species. There are a total of three gates that allow visitors access to the garden. The first gate is situated in close proximity to the railway station and the new bus terminal is also not very far away either. Countless visitors comprising residents of Vadodara as well as tourists and travelers make a trip to the verdant garden for whose upkeep the Vadodara Municipal Corporation is responsible.

Overnight at Vadodara.

**Day 3: Drop**

Today morning, check out and visit:

**Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park:**

Champaner – Pavagadh Archaeological Park is a UNSECO World Heritage Site near Vadodara on the foothills of the Pavagadh Hill. It is located around the historical city of Champaner, a city which was founded by Vanraj Chavda, the most prominent king of the Chavda Dynasty, in the 8th century. He named it after the name of his friend and general Champa, also known later as Champaraj. In the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, it was conquered by the Sultan Mahumud Begada and became the Capital of Gujarat for a brief time. The heritage site is studded with forts with bastions starting from the hills of Pavagadh, and extending into the city of Champaner. The park's landscape includes archaeological, historic and living cultural heritage monuments such as chalcolithic sites, a hill fortress of an early Hindu capital, and remains of the 16th-century capital of the state of Gujarat. There are palaces, entrance gates and arches, mosques, tombs and temples, residential complexes, agricultural structures and water installations such as stepwells and tanks, dating from the 8th to the 14th centuries. It was inscribed as the UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2004, a first in Gujarat State.

Drop as per schedule.