# Railways And Tourism

## RAIL TOURISM IN INDIA

India is known globally for its varied and rich cultural and historical heritage. The huge and diverse geography of the country is unique in itself and provides an opportunity to tourists-domestic & international to explore the true beauty of the country.

It is rightly said that if one wants to see the real India, one must explore the country by rail. The Indian Railways serves as the true kaleidoscope to witness the lives, culture, philosophy, religion and lifestyle of the Indian people. The Indian Railways offers tourists one of the most convenient and popular modes of transport for travelling in India-tourists are facilitated to explore the length and breadth of India, with its lively markets, geographical splendor & diversity, cuisines, dress styles, languages and an entire gamut of unforgettable experiences. From the Great Indian Plains, the Thar Desert, the Deccan Plateau, the coastal plains to the North Eastern states, a train tour of India provides the real glimpse of the Indian culture and lifestyle.

### Bharat Gaurav Trains

Indian Railways introduced theme- based Tourist Circuit trains under the Bharat Gaurav Trains (BGT) Policy with the objective to showcase India's rich cultural heritage and magnificent historical places through professionals of the tourism sector and other potential service providers. Under the said policy, the State Governments, State Tourist Development Corporations or any other potential service provider may run theme-based tourist circuit trains covering destinations of their choice. The Service Provider offers a comprehensive package with facilities of rail transportation, accommodation, meals, local road transport, sightseeing etc. The maiden Bharat Gaurav Train, viz. Shirdi Yatra, was launched on 14.06.2022 from Coimbatore to Mantralayam and Shirdi & back, covering a total distance of 2880 km.

Ministry of Railways decided to give a concerted thrust to efforts for promotion of domestic tourism through provision of better quality Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) coaches under the Bharat Gaurav Train policy and give approximately 33% concession in the charges due to the Railway, for promotion of rail based tourism under this scheme.

The details of the Bharat Gaurav Train policy can be referred at https://bharatgauravtrains.indianrailways.gov.in/.












### Luxury Tourist Trains

Maharajas' Express – World's Leading Luxury Train




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Maharajas' Express luxury train is owned and operated by the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd (IRCTC), a Govt. of India Enterprise under Ministry of Railways. Maharajas' Express is the flagship luxury train of IRCTC and is the newest luxury train in the country. The train, which commenced operations in 2010, has been a frontrunner and is known for its enriching journey experiences coupled with exquisite facilities onboard.

The 23 carriage long train houses four different types of accommodation viz. Deluxe Cabin, Junior Suite Cabins, Suite and the Presidential Suite, named after various precious gem stones. The train has two restaurants, named Rang Mahal and Mayur Mahal, serving a range of international and Indian delicacies. In addition to the restaurants, there are Lounges in the train.

The train offers four exquisite journey options, covering various princely and culturally rich states of the country:

- **Indian Splendour** (6 Nights/7 Days) starting in Delhi, covering Agra, Ranthambore, Jaipur, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Udaipur and ending in Mumbai.
- **Heritage of India** (6 Nights/7 Days) starting in Mumbai, covering Udaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Jaipur, Ranthambore, Fatehpur Sikri, Agra and ending in Delhi.
- **The Indian Panorama** (6 Nights/7 Days) starting in Delhi, covering Jaipur, Ranthambore, Fatehpur Sikri, Agra, Orchha, Khajuraho, Varanasi and ending in Delhi.
- **Treasures of India** (3 Nights/4 Days) starting in Delhi, covering Agra, Ranthambore and Jaipur and ending in Delhi.

The luxury tourist train operates its scheduled departures during the tourist season every year from September to April whereas interested clients can also book the train around the year on charter as per requirement.

**Website: www.the-maharajas.com**

**Email: maharajas@irctc.com**

**Contact : 91 - 9717635915**

## Palace on Wheels






The Palace on Wheels is a luxury tourist train being operated by Indian Railways in association with Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC). The train comprises of 14 fully air-conditioned saloons with rich décor that evoke the age of Rajput chivalry and are named after former Rajputana states such as Kota, Jaipur, Udaipur, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Alwar, Sirohi, Kishangarh, Bundi, Dungarpur, Bharatpur, Jhalawar and Dholpur. The train has two fine dining restaurants and a lounge car for relaxation.

### Itinerary

New Delhi-Jaipur-Sawai Madhopur-Chittaurgarh-Udaipur-Jaisalmer-Jodhpur-Bharatpur-Agra-New Delhi

**Website:** www.palaceonwheels.rajasthan.gov.in and www.thepalaceonwheels.org

## Golden Chariot




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The Golden Chariot is an attempt to connect some of the important dots which have shaped the history of South India through several centuries. Destinations on the Golden Chariot route have been chosen to showcase the architecture, culture and history of this region. The unique position of the southern peninsula, surrounded by Arabian Sea in West, the Indian Ocean in South and Bay of Bengal in the East saw several dynasties having trade and political linkages with both the West and the East. The Golden Chariot presents a fine balance between a glorious yesterday and an omnipresent tomorrow in the magical land of Karnataka, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry.

The Guest carriages of the Golden Chariot train are named after the dynasties which ruled south India over several centuries. Each guest carriage has four Deluxe cabins with a mix of twins and doubles. The guest cabins are a mix of 13 Double Bed Cabins, 30 Twin Bed Cabins and 1 Cabin for the specially abled. The two restaurants, Ruchi and Nalapaka, serve delectable meals from across the world with an array of Indian options. Arogya, the Spa-cum-Fitness Center combines traditional Ayurvedic Spa therapies with modern workout machines.

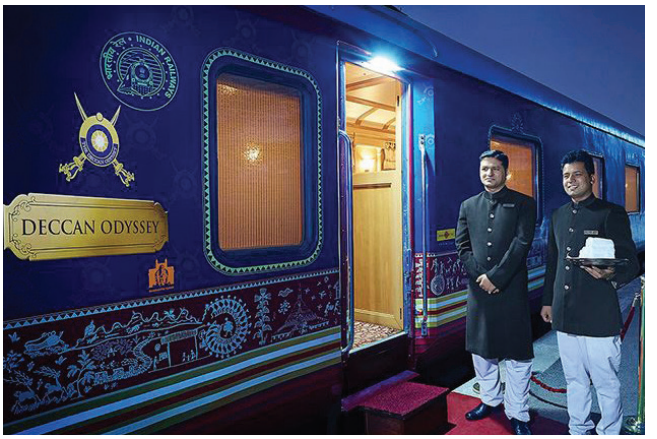
### Itineraries

- **Pride Of Karnataka** (5 Nights / 6 Days) : Starts from Bengaluru - Nanjangud - Mysore - Halebidu - Chikamgaluru - Hospet - Goa – Bengaluru
- **Jewels of South** (5 Nights / 6 Days) : Starts from Bengaluru - Mysore - Kanchipuram - Mahabalipuram - Thanjavur and Chettinad - Cochin - Chertala – Bengaluru
- **Glimpses of Karnataka** (3 Nights / 4 Days) : Starts from Bengaluru - Nanjangud - Mysore - Hospet – Bengaluru

**Website: www.goldenchariot.org**
Email: goldenchariot@irctc.com
Contact: 91 – 8585931021

### Deccan Odyssey

The Deccan Odyssey is a luxury tourist train being operated by Indian Railways in association with Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC). The Deccan Odyssey is more than a mere luxury train cruise. It is a lavishly decorated train that transports its guests on an unforgettable sojourn on different itineraries, covering different parts of the country. The Deccan Odyssey offers accommodation in 40 deluxe cabins in 10 suite coaches. It also has 4 presidential suites in 2 cars, 1 Conference car with business centre, 2 restaurants and a spa with steam, massage, a mini gym and a parlor. Other facilities include channel music, intercom, wall-to-wall carpeting, money exchange / credit card facility, safety & security arrangements, spa, conference equipments.






### Itineraries

| Sr. No. | Itinerary Name | Route |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Maharashtra Splendor** | From Chhatarpati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) to Chhatarpati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) via Nasik Road – Aurangabad – Pachora – Kolhapur – Karmali – Madgaon – Sawantvadi. |
| 2 | **Indian Odyssey** | From Delhi to Chhatarpati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) via Agra – Sawai Madhopur – Khatipura –Udaipur (RPZ )- Vishwamitri - Aurangabad |
| 3 | **Indian Sojourn** | From Chhatarpati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) to Delhi via Vadodara - Udaipur - Jodhpur - Agra – Sawai Madhopur - Jaipur |
| 4 | **Heritage Odyssey** | From Delhi to Delhi via Agra – Sawai Madhopur - Udaipur(RPZ) – Jodhpur - Jaisalmer- Jaipur(KWP) |
| 5 | **Cultural Odyssey** | From Delhi to Delhi via Sawai Madhopur – Jaipur - Agra – Gwalior-Orchha – Khajuraho – Varanasi. |

| Sr. No. | Itinerary Name | Route |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | **Maharashtra Wild Trails** | From Chhatarpati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) to Chhatarpati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) via Aurangabad – Ramtek – Warora – Pachora – Nashik Road |
| 7 | **Darjeeling Mail** | From CSMT to SILIGURI via – Vishwamitri – Udaipur – Sawai Madhopur – Kathipura– Tudla - Banaras. |
| 8 | **Darjeeling Mail Return** | From SILIGURI to Chhatarpati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) via Banaras – Tudla – Kathipura – Sawai Madhopur – Udaipur – Vishwamitri |
| 9 | **Darjeeling Mail – Journey (DM-A)** | From Chhatarpati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) to SILIGURI via Udaipur – Jaipur – Delhi – Fatehpur Sikri – Agra – Banaras. |
| 10 | **Darjeeling Mail – Return Journey Additional (DMA-R)** | From SILIGURI to Chhatarpati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) via Banaras – Delhi – Fatehpur Sikri – Agra – Jaipur – Udaipur. |
| 11 | **Maharashtra Splendor** | From Chhatarpati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) to Chhatarpati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) via Nasik Raod – Aurangabad – Pachora – Kolhapur – Karmali – Madgaon– Sawantvadi. |
| 12 | **Golden Tirangle & Ranthambore (RNB)** | From Delhi to Delhi via Delhi Safdarjung – Jaipur- Sawai Madhopur – Agra |
| 13 | **Maharashtra Trail (MT)** | From Chhatarpati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) to Chhatarpati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) via Nasik Road – Ramtek – Aurangabad |

**Website:** www.deccan-odyssey-india.com

### Vistadome Coaches (Glass Top Coaches)

In 2017, Indian Railways introduced indigenously designed glass top coaches (vistadome coaches) with wider windows for boosting tourism. The features of glass top coaches are:

- Electrically controlled opalescence
- 360 degree rotatable push-back ergonomically designed chairs
- Automatic sliding doors
- Multiple television screens
- Wide side doors for Divyangs
- GPS based info system

The base fare of AC Vistadome coaches is 1.1 times of the Executive class (EC) base fare of Shatabdi trains, without catering charges. Reservation charges, GST and any other charges are levied in addition to the basic fare. All passengers are charged at full fare. The minimum chargeable distance is 50 Km. Catering is optional and may be provided by IRCTC to the level of Executive Class in Shatabdi, on payment basis.






### Buddhist Circuit Special Train

IRCTC started the operation of the Buddhist Circuit Special Tourist Train in 2007 and has successfully completed 17 years of its operation. This is a fully air-conditioned train offering a 7 Night and 8 Day package covering all major Buddhist Pilgrim locations in India and Lumbini in Nepal. The major destinations follow the life of Lord Gautam Buddha. The itinerary covers destinations like Bodhgaya, Rajgir, Nalanda, Varanasi, Sarnath, Kushinagar, Lumbini (Nepal), Sravasti and Agra.

The new rake of Buddhist Circuit Train has international level features like two Dining Cars, Vacuum Bio-toilets, Air Suspension springs, Security lockers, modified 2AC coaches with side seating facility, On-board housekeeping and security, CCTV camera security, Foot massager, Mini library, etc., which have been very well received by tourists. The details and online booking facility of the train are available at IRCTC's Buddhist micro-site "**www.irctcbuddhisttrain.com**".

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## Rail Tour Packages

IRCTC, under Ministry of Railways, offers Rail Tour Packages with confirmed onward and return journey rail tickets apart from other elements of a package, such as road transfers, accommodation, meals and sightseeing at reasonable rates on the basis of itinerary. Rail tour packages are specially designed on the basis of demand of customers as well as popularity of destinations, like Shirdi-Shani Shingnapur, Vaishno Devi, Tirupati, Karnataka, Coorg- Ooty, Ahmedabad, Jyotirlinga, Kanyakumari- Rameshwaram, Varanasi (Kashi Vishwanath), Madhya Pradesh, Gaya/ Bodhgaya, Hyderabad, etc. from various parts of India. The details and booking of these packages are available at the tourism website "**www.irctctourism.com**" or one can visit nearest Tourism Facilitation Centres of IRCTC.

## Travel & Tourism Portal

IRCTC's tourism portal **"www.irctctourism.com"** is a ***"One Stop Travel Shop"*** for all travel requirements of every tourists. Owing to its user friendliness, this portal won the "National Tourism Award" in the year 2008, "Website of the Year" for consecutive three years i.e. 2014, 2015 & 2016 by "Leisure & Travel", MatrixLab and "Indian e-retail award" for consecutive four years from 2015 to 2018 by Franchise India.

The tourism portal of IRCTC is one of the most popular websites among travellers, as it offers varied travel and tourism solutions, such as on-line booking of Bharat Gaurav trains, Luxury trains- Maharajas' Express and Golden Chariot (with micro-sites), Buddhist Circuit Tourist Train (with micro-site), Bus tickets, Air tickets, Tour packages, Hotels, Cruise packages, Medical Tourism, Retiring Room, executive lounge, Heli Yatra, TAG, etc. Some of the packages are also available on enquiry mode and packages are also customised on the basis of requirement of customers. IRCTC has been continuously improving the content of the tourism website for the ease of customers to ensure seamless navigation.

## Online Booking of Charter Trains and coaches

Customers can now book a chartered train or coach on IRCTC's **webpage www.ftr.irctc.co.in**. The user- friendly module includes options like viewing the list of trains on which the chartered coach can be attached, search for availability of trains between preferred destinations without registration, placing a request for chartered train or coach online, making online payment of deposit, provision to print the dossier which contains all mandatory documents to be carried while travelling, etc. While registration is not mandatory for searching availability, PAN Card verified user creation is required for placing a request for chartering. By introduction of this online module, now users can book chartered trains/ coaches from any part of the country. For bookings, one can email at **charter@irctc.com or visit www.ftr.irctc.co.in**.

## Tourism Facilitation Centres

IRCTC has set up Tourism Facilitation Centres in and around various railway stations across the countries that are serving as 'One Stop Shop' to assist railway passengers in availing various tourism products and services. Besides providing detailed information about various rail and non-rail tourism products and services, these facilitation centres book tour packages, airline tickets as well as manage the departures of passengers availing the train tour packages.






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| S. No. | Name | Address and Contact Numbers |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Agra** | Platform No.1, Agra Cantt. Railway Station, AGRA-282003. Tel No. – 9305111763, Email id:- satish.kumar@irctc.com |
| 2 | **Bengaluru** | Concourse area, Main Entrance Bangaluru City Railway Station, Near enquiry office, Bangalore – 560025, Karnataka. Tel. No. 080 - 22960013, 8595931292, E-mail id:- tifcsbc@irctc.com |
| 3 | **Chennai** | 9th floor West wing, MMC building Park Town, Chennai Central Railway Station Chennai – 600003 Tamil Nadu Tel No.- 8287932121, 8287931964, Email: tourismmas@irctc.com |
| 4 | **Coimbatore** | Area Office 209, Maruti Towers, Trichy Road, Opp. General Hospital, Coimbatore. Mohan Raj - 9003140655 |
| 5 | **Ektanagar** | Tourist Facilitation Center, Platform no. 1, Ektanagar Railway Station (Kevadia). Email id:- roadi@irctc.com |
| 6 | **Ernakulam** | 1st Floor, Salih Arcade, 40-8194, Convent Road, Kochi-682035. Tel. No.- 8287932082, 0484-2382991, Email id:- tourismkerala@irctc.com |
| 7 | **Hubballi** | IRCTC area office, Near booking office, Hubli Railway Station, Hubballi-580023. Sh. Manjunath- 8595931293, Email Id:- areaofficeubl@irctc.com |
| 8 | **Indore** | Platform No. 1, Opp PRO office, Indore Railway Station, Indore, Madhya Pradesh – 452001. Tel. No.- 8287931729,0731-2522200, Email id:- irctcindortfc@gmail.com, raunaq5619@irctc.com |
| 9 | **Jabalpur** | Near Railway Retiring Room, Platform No 1, Jabalpur Railway Station, Madhya Pradesh – 482001. Tel. No.-Mr Dubey-9321901832, Email id:- irctcjbp@gmail.com |
| 10 | **Kolhapur** | Tourism Information and Facilitation Centre, Platform No.1, Near to Ticket Counter, Shri C. Shahu Maharaj Terminus, Kolhapur Railway Station, Kolhapur – 416001.Vijay Kumbhar- 9321901847, Email Id:- deotourism1@irctc.com |
| 11 | **Kozhikode** | Platform No. 1, Near Food Plaza Kozhikode Railway Station, Kozhikode- 673001, Kerala. Tel No. 9846917096,8287932098, E- mail: tifcclt@irctc.com |
| 12 | **Mangalore** | Platform No 1, Concourse, Mangaluru Central Railway Station. Nihal- 8287932043 |
| 13 | **Madurai** | Platform 1, Madurai Railway junction – 625001, Karnataka.Tel. No. Kalaiselvan- 8287932122, Email id:- tourismmdu@irctc.com |
| 14 | **Mysuru** | Concourse Area, Mysuru Junction, Karnataka. Tel. No. Sh. Imran- 8595931294, 0821 – 2426001, E-mail id:- tifcmys@irctc.com |
| 15 | **Nagpur** | Tourism Information and Facilitation Centre, Main Porch, Nagpur Railway Station, Near inquiry counter, Nagpur – 440021. Amrik singh- 9321901846, Email id:- tfcnagpur@irctc.com |
| 16 | **New Delhi** | Near Cloakroom, Opp to Executive Lounge, Platform No.-16. New Delhi Railway Station, Ajmeri Gate, New Delhi – 110002.Tel. No. - 8287930746 |
| 17 | **Pune** | IRCTC office,1st Floor, Above Station director Office, Pune Railway Station, Pune, Maharashtra – 411001.Tel No:- 8287931707, Email id:- aloksparmar5615@irctc.com |
| 18 | **Raipur** | IRCTC Tourism Facilitation Centre inside Railway reservation building platform no.1 side Raipur. Rajeev -9390112759 |
| 19 | **Thiruvananthapuram** | IRCTC Area Office, 1st Floor, S K Tower, Near Indian Oil Petrol Pump Karamana, Thiruvananthapuram – 695002. Tel No- 8287932042, 8287932095, E-mail: tourismtvc@irctc.com |
| 20 | **Tiruchirapalli** | IRCTC office, Near VIP Entrance, Bharatiyar Salai, Sangaliandalpuram, Tiruchirapalli – 620001, Siva Kumar - 8287932070 |
| 21 | **Vadodara** | Tourist Facilitation Center Concourse Hall, Vadodara Railway station. Platform no 1, Akaash Gupta-702100837, Email –roadi@irctc.com |