ODYSSEY TRAVELLER

Cultural and History Tour of India | Small Group Tour

Recommended reading for your journey

01

India: A History

John Keay

Fully revised with forty thousand new words that take the reader up to present-day India, John Keay s India: A History spans five millennia in a sweeping narrative that tells the story of the peoples of the subcontinent, from their ancient beginnings in the valley of the Indus to the events in the region today. In charting the evolution of the rich tapestry of cultures, religions, and peoples that comprise the modern nations of Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh, Keay weaves together insights from a variety of scholarly fields to create a rich historical narrative. Wide-ranging and authoritative, India: A History is a compelling epic portrait of one of the world s oldest and most richly diverse civilizations.

02

India: In Word and Image, Revised, Expanded and Updated

Eric Meola (Photographer), Bharati Mukherjee (Introduction)

Gorgeously jaw-dropping, India has been beautifully redesigned with 32 additional pages of glorious photos shot by Eric Meola since India was first published. This revised and expanded version of Eric Meola’s 2008 India takes the reader on a journey through Mumbai, Rajasthan, Agra, Dungarpur, along desert roads, to the Ganges water’s edge, including spectacular ruins, the Taj Mahal, and the Festival of Elephants, capturing the spectacle and vibrant colors of these ancient regions. INDIA is rapidly becoming one of the pre-eminent leaders of the twenty-first century. For more than a decade, Eric Meola has returned repeatedly to India, photographing the people, temples, landscapes, architecture, celebrations, and art of this uniquely exuberant and incredibly diverse country. Meola’s journeys took him from the Himalayas and monasteries in the North to the temples of Tamil Nadu in the South, from the color and pageantry of Rajasthan in the West to the tea plantations of Darjeeling in the East. Over 200 photographs (edited from more than 25,000 images) will fill this beautifully printed, large-format book. The photographs will be accompanied by dozens of essays, stories, and poems by contemporary and classical Indian writers.

03

India

Stanley Wolpert

This new edition brings Stanley Wolpert’s brilliantly succinct and accessible introduction to India completely up to date for a new generation of readers, travelers, and students. In crisp detail, Wolpert gives a panoramic overview of the continent on which the world’s most fascinating ancient civilization gave birth to one of its most complex modern democratic nations. India now includes new sections on the country’s current global economic development, the recent national elections, and on its international relations, including those with Pakistan, China, Sri Lanka, and the United States, India’s new strategic global partner.

04

India: A Sacred Geography

Diana L. Eck

India: A Sacred Geography is the culmination of more than a decade’s work from the renowned Harvard scholar Diana L. Eck. The book explores the sacred places of India, taking the reader on an extraordinary trip through the beliefs and history of this rich and profound place, as well as providing a basic introduction to Hindu religious ideas and how those ideas influence our understanding of the modern sense of "India" as a nation.

05

A Passage to India

E.M. Forster

Among the greatest novels of the twentieth century and the basis for director David Lean s Academy Award-winning film, A Passage to India tells of the clash of cultures in British India after the turn of the century. In exquisite prose, Forster reveals the menace that lurks just beneath the surface of ordinary life, as a common misunderstanding erupts into a devastating affair.

06

The End of Karma: Hope and Fury Among India s Young

Somini Sengupta

A penetrating, personal look at contemporary India-the world s largest democracy at a moment of transition. Somini Sengupta emigrated from Calcutta to California as a young child in 1975. Returning thirty years later as the bureau chief for The New York Times, she found a vastly different country: one defined as much by aspiration and possibility-at least by the illusion of possibility-as it is by the structures of sex and caste. The End of Karma is an exploration of this new India through the lens of young people from different worlds: a woman who becomes a Maoist rebel; a brother charged for the murder of his sister, who had

married the wrong man; a woman who opposes her family and hopes to become a police officer. Driven by aspiration-and thwarted at every step by state and society-they are making new demands on India s democracy for equality of opportunity, dignity for girls, and civil liberties.
Sengupta spotlights these stories of ordinary men and women, weaving together a groundbreaking portrait of a country in turmoil.

07

India: Brief History of a Civilization

Thomas R. Trautmann

India: Brief History of a Civilization, Second Edition, provides a brief overview of a very long period, allowing students to acquire a mental map of the entire history of Indian civilization in a short book. Most comprehensive histories devote a few chapters to the early history of India and an increasing number of pages to the more recent period, giving an impression that early history is mere background and that Indian civilization finds its fulfillment in the nation-state. Thomas R. Trautmann believes that the deep past lives on and is a valuable resource for understanding the present day and for creating a viable future. The result is a book that is short enough to read in a few sittings, but comprehensive in coverage--5,000 years of India in brief.

08

Incarnations: A History of India in Fifty Lives

Sunil Khilnani

For all of India s myths, its sea of stories and moral epics, Indian history remains a curiously unpeopled place. In Incarnations, Sunil Khilnani fills that space, recapturing the human dimension of how the world s largest democracy came to be. His trenchant portraits of emperors, warriors, philosophers, film stars, and corporate titans-some famous, some unjustly forgotten-bring feeling, wry humor, and uncommon insight to dilemmas that extend from ancient times to our own. As he journeys across the country and through its past, Khilnani uncovers more than just history. In rocket launches and ayurvedic call centers, in slum temples and Bollywood studios, in California communes and grimy ports, he examines the continued, and often surprising, relevance of the men and women who have made India-and the world-what it is. We encounter the Buddha, the first human personality ; the ancient Sanskrit linguist who inspires computer programmers today; the wit and guile of India s Machiavelli; and the medieval poets who mocked rituals and caste. In the twentieth century, Khilnani sets Gandhi and other political icons of the independence era next to actresses, photographers, and entrepreneurs. Incarnations is an ideal introduction to India-and a provocative and sophisticated reinterpretation of its history.

09

The Chaos of Empire: The British Raj and the Conquest of India

Jon Wilson

The popular image of the British Raj an era of efficient but officious governors, sycophantic local functionaries, doting amahs, blisteringly hot days and torrid nights chronicled by Forster and Kipling is a glamorous, nostalgic, but entirely fictitious. In this dramatic revisionist history, Jon Wilson upends the carefully sanitized image of unity, order, and success to reveal an empire rooted far more in violence than in virtue, far more in chaos than in control. Through the lives of administrators, soldiers, and subjects both British and Indian The Chaos of Empire traces Britain s imperial rule from the East India Company s first transactions in the 1600s to Indian Independence in 1947. The Raj was the most public demonstration of a state s ability to project power far from home, and its perceived success was used to justify interventions around the world in the years that followed. But the Raj s institutions from law courts to railway lines were designed to protect British power without benefiting the people they ruled. This self-serving and careless governance resulted in an impoverished people and a stifled society, not a glorious Indian empire. Jon Wilson s new portrait of a much-mythologized era finally and convincingly proves that the story of benign British triumph was a carefully concocted fiction, here thoroughly and totally debunked.

10

Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity

Katherine Boo

In this brilliant, breathtaking book by Pulitzer Prize winner Katherine Boo, a bewildering age of global change and inequality is made human through the dramatic story of families striving toward a better life in Annawadi, a makeshift settlement in the shadow of luxury hotels near the Mumbai airport. As India starts to prosper, the residents of Annawadi are electric with hope. Abdul, an enterprising teenager, sees a fortune beyond counting in the recyclable garbage that richer people throw away. Meanwhile Asha, a woman of formidable ambition, has identified a shadier route to the middle class. With a little luck, her beautiful daughter, Annawadi s most-everything girl, might become its first female college graduate. And even the poorest children, like the young thief Kalu, feel themselves inching closer to their dreams. But then Abdul is falsely accused in a shocking tragedy; terror and global recession rock the city; and suppressed tensions over religion, caste, sex, power, and economic envy turn brutal. With intelligence, humor, and deep insight into what connects people to one another in an era of tumultuous change, Behind the Beautiful Forevers, based on years of uncompromising reporting, carries the reader headlong into one of the twenty-first century s hidden worlds and into the hearts of families impossible to forget. Winner of the National Book Award | The PEN/John Kenneth Galbraith Award | The Los Angeles Times Book Prize | The American Academy of Arts and Letters Award | The New York Public Library s Helen Bernstein Book Award

11

Koh-i-Noor: The History of the World s Most Infamous Diamond

William Dalrymple

The first comprehensive and authoritative history of the Koh-i-Noor, arguably the most celebrated and mythologised jewel in the world. On 29 March 1849, the ten-year-old Maharajah of the Punjab was ushered into the magnificent Mirrored Hall at the centre of the great Fort in Lahore. There, in a public ceremony, the frightened but dignified child handed over great swathes of the richest country in India in a formal Act of Submission to a private corporation, the East India Company. He was also compelled to hand over to the British monarch, Queen Victoria, perhaps the single most valuable object on the subcontinent: the celebrated Koh-i Noor diamond. The Mountain of Light. The history of the Koh-i-Noor that was then commissioned by the British may have been one woven together from gossip of Delhi bazaars, but it was to be become the accepted version. Only now is it finally challenged, freeing the diamond from the fog of mythology that has clung to it for so long. The resulting history is one of greed, murder, torture, colonialism and appropriation told through an impressive slice of south and central Asian history. It ends with the jewel in its current controversial setting: in the crown of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. Masterly, powerful and erudite, this is history at its most compelling and invigorating.

12

Connectivity in Motion: Island Hubs in the Indian Ocean World (Palgrave Series in Indian Ocean World Studies)

Burkhard Schnepel (Editor), Edward A. Alpers (Editor)

This original collection brings islands to the fore in a growing body of scholarship on the Indian Ocean, examining them as hubs or points of convergence and divergence in a world of maritime movements and exchanges. Straddling history and anthropology and grounded in the framework of connectivity, the book tackles central themes such as smallness, translocality, and the island factor. It moves to the farthest reaches of the region, with a rich variety of case studies on the Swahili-Comorian world, the Maldives, Indonesia, and more. With remarkable breadth and cohesion, these essays capture the circulations of people, goods, rituals, sociocultural practices, and ideas that constitute the Indian Ocean world. Together, they take up islandness as an explicit empirical and methodological issue as few have done before.

13

Spices in the Indian Ocean World (An Expanding World: The European Impact on World History, 1450 to 1800)

M Pearson

By turns exotic, valuable and of cardinal importance in the development of world trade, spices, as the editor reminds us, are today a mundane accessory in any well-equiped kitchen; in the 15th-18th centuries, the

spice trade from the Indian Ocean to markets all over the world was a major economic enterprise. Setting the scene with extracts from Garcia da Orta's fascinating contemporary Colloquies on the drugs and simples of India [Goa 1563], this collection reviews trade in a wide variety of spices, exploring merchant organisation, transport and marketing as well as detailing the quantitative evidence on the fluctuations in spice trade. The evidence and historical debates concerning the 16th-century revival of the Mediterranean and Red Sea spice trade at this time, are fully represented here

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