The Real Jungle Book of India
with MSU Alumna Jessica Pociask
Sponsored by the MSU Alumni Association

January 26 - February 8, 2018

$8,088 PER PERSON (USD, double occupancy), $9,889 per person (USD, single occupancy)

Program Includes:
· All accommodations
· All meals
· Activities mentioned in the program
· All land transportation
· Airport and local transfers
· Entrance and local guiding fees
· International tour leader
· Tips, government taxes and levies
· In-country flights
· Bottled water in transport vehicles
· Photography education and assistance

Rudyard Kipling was one of the best story tellers of the 19th century, and his characters from 'The Jungle Book' have captivated generations around the world for years. One of the greatest wildlife encounters on earth is seeing a tiger in the wild, and with less than 3,000 remaining, there has never been a better time to go on an adventure-of-a-lifetime in India. Join MSU alumnae Jessica Pociask on this incredible wildlife safari to see Bagheera, Baloo, Akela, and of course, the majestic and much misunderstood, Shere Khan. Jessica will take you through India's best wildlife parks in search of the very real and incredible animals that inspired Kipling to write his timeless collection of stories about his encounters and observations of leopards, tigers, and bears in the jungle. Set your sights high. This is a trip to be remembered, and you will finish it off with a visit to one of the most beautiful buildings in the world, the Taj Mahal.

Owner & Expedition Leader
Jessica Pociask is a wildlife expert, travel writer, nature photographer and owner of WANT Expeditions, a conservation-oriented adventure company. She received a B.S. in Natural Resource Management from Michigan State University in 2007. Jessica has led more than 100 expeditions in almost 80 countries and has guided trips for several conservation organizations, including the Wildlife Conservation Society, and holds a research position in the Entomology department in the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in Washington D.C.

For more information and to sign up for the tour, call (231) 620-4424 or visit wantexpeditions.com.
Detailed itinerary:

Jan 26 New Delhi/Kaziranga National Park
Arrival at Delhi's international airport. After clearing customs and immigration, our representative will greet you and transfer you to the hotel. Due to flight duration and international flight arrival schedules, no formal activities are scheduled for today. Meals today are not included in your package.

Accommodations: 4 star hotel

Jan 27 New Delhi (B,L,D)
After breakfast at the hotel, join the expert guide on an exploration trip to Delhi. As the city wakes up, head to one of Delhi's most iconic buildings where we will be transported to the time grandeur, and subsequent ruin, of the Mughal empire. Colorful, vibrant, noisy and chaotic are words that best describe what many call Old Delhi, the 7th city of Delhi, which was built by the mighty Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan. From here we visit India's second largest & most aesthetically designed Mosque, the Jama Masjid. Then we walk through streets and markets of this 17th century imperial capital city of the Mughal empire where royalty once resided, and today where you savor fragrances in one of Asia's largest spice markets, be dazzled by the glitter of India's largest jewelry markets, and get a glimpse of the once-glorious Havelis (Royal Mansions) of Old Delhi. With a mix of walking and rickshaw rides, you discover hidden gems while exploring the narrow alleys and 350-yr old markets of the city built at the acme of Mughal Empire, India's most glorious monarchy. Accommodations: 4 star hotel

Jan 28 Kanha National Park (B,L,D)
Following an early breakfast, we'll board a plane and head to Raipur where we will be greeted by our driver, and transferred to our incredible lodge located just outside the gates of Kanha National Park. Kanha provides breathtaking vistas of grassy plains and strands Sal forests. This 366 square mile preserve was set to save two endangered species, the Tiger and the Barasingha, also known as Swamp Deer. The park offers a variety of species including Tigers, Leopards, Cheetal, Gaur, Barking Deer, and Sambhar Deer. After check-in, lunch, and a brief rest, we'll enjoy our first wildlife safari in the park, then gather for the first of many dinners where we will discuss what we've seen, where we've been, and what is still to come. Accommodations: Luxury wildlife lodge

Jan 29 Kanha National Park (B,L,D)
There will be two safaris today in the park to explore and experience all that Kanha has to offer, and following our morning safari, there will be a chance to go on a nature walk, visit a nearby village/school, or participate in a cooking class featuring some of India's most aromatic and sought after spices. This evening, we'll enjoy a wonderful dinner and afterwards we can opt for stargazing, or retire to bed in order save energy for the rest of the trip.

Accommodations: Luxury tented safari camp

Jan 30 Kanha/Pench National Park (B,L,D)
Today will follow much like yesterday with an early morning wake-up and safari. Then, before lunch, there will be time for visiting the school, a nature walk, or another cooking class. After lunch, we'll head back into the park for an afternoon safari.

Accommodations: Luxury tented safari camp

Jan 31 Kanha/Pench National Park
After lunch, we will hop in our 4x4's and head towards Pench National Park. Surrounded by tall Arjuna Trees and an ancient Banyan rooted on a dry riverbed, our gorgeous lodge boasts tented rooms overlooking the forest. Each luxury tent is designed to feel light and open, allowing guests the optimum view of nature. With the option of rolling up the front panels of the tent, you can immerse yourself in nature while still enjoying the privacy of your own room.

Accommodations: High-end tented safari camp

Feb 1 Pench National Park
Pench National Park, located in the Central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, is the 19th Project Tiger Reserve, and has been one of the best-kept secrets among wildlife enthusiasts who have long been acquainted with and bedazzled by its immensely varied flora and fauna. The backdrop for its precious inhabitants is dominated by a canopy of mixed forest, predominantly teak, and open grassy patches. With its undulating land, the park boasts the highest density of herbivores Cheetal (Spotted Deer) and Sambar than any other Indian park. In addition, we are likely to see Leopard, Tiger, Jungle Cat, Sloth Bear, Wild Boar, Mongoose, and Gaur - a massive, but beautiful, beast of burden resembling an ox. We will enjoy a morning and an afternoon safari to explore the park.

Accommodation: Luxury tented safari camp (B/L/D)

Feb 2 Pench National Park
One of the most affable and endangered animals in Pench is the adorable canine -the Dhole (Indian Wild Dog), and Pench is the best place to see this charismatic and intriguing animal up close and personal. Pench has the distinction of being the one natural area that left the greatest impact on Kipling and his characters in the Jungle Book. Like yesterday, we have two safari drives scheduled.

Accommodation: Luxury wildlife lodge (B/L/D)

Feb 3 Satpura National Park
After breakfast we set off on a morning game drive in Pench and then head to Satpura National Park. Satpura is located in south Hoshangabad district in Madhya Pradesh. The 524 Sq. km Park is the core area of the Pachmarchi Biosphere Reserve that includes Bori wildlife sanctuary to its south-west and Panchmarhi wildlife sanctuary to its north-east. With tall sandstone mountains, narrow gorges, ravines, waterfalls, streams and dense forests near the Mahadev hills in the Pachmarhi plateau, the park also boasts a massive river that when flooded resembles a vast lake. While the majority of wildlife is concentrated in the park, Reni Pani’s seasonal nallah, stretch of teak, rugged hillocks and gauges are an accurate representation of terrain one should expect in the Satpura Tiger Reserve. Its true forest environment coupled with
neighboring patches of agricultural land make our lodge and its surrounding areas a hot bed for animals like Sambhar, Cheetal, Nilgai, Wild Boar, Barking Deer, Black Buck and occasionally for their cunning predator the Leopard. The abundance of Reni Trees (a type of berry after which the lodge and village are named after) and other berry trees, also attract a number of Sloth Bears to Reni Pani. The lodge is also rich with bird life. The ideal conditions Reni Pani offers as a result of the maintenance of a completely natural habitat, attracts several bird species that are native to the locality.

**Accommodation: Luxury wildlife lodge (B/L/D)**

**Feb 4 Satpura National Park**
In true travel fashion, we have saved the best park for last. Satpura is by far the most beautiful and exciting parks to visit in India. Sloth Bears (Baloo) and their cubs are regularly moving through the park. If we are lucky, we can spot them clinging to their mothers as they move about, or simply following behind in true family fashion. Satpura is also a highlight for observing Leopards (Bagheera) regularly moving about the forest, independently stalking, or teaching their cubs the ins and outs of hunting or hiding from predators. We have two safaris scheduled for today, and can take them via 4x4, canoe, or on elephant.

**Accommodation: Luxury wildlife lodge (B/L/D)**

**Feb 5 Satpura National Park**
Depending on wildlife movements, we'll have the opportunity for several different safari options in both the morning and afternoon.

**Jeep Safaris:** This is the best way to explore large areas looking for wildlife.

**Boat Safaris:** The Park offers exploring the areas along the river by using boats. Again one has the option of using either a canoe or a motor boat. Boat safaris are excellent if one wants to get close to aquatic birds or sometimes even crocodiles.

**Elephant Safaris:** Exploring the jungles on elephant backs is amazing fun. One gets to actually see areas where there are no man-made or motor tracks. One might also get closer to various animals that don’t feel threatened by elephants. There is also an added advantage of tracking animals through any part of the jungle as one is not limited by jeep tracks or roads.

**Walking Safari:** Exploring the forest on foot is an interesting experience especially if you have a highly skilled naturalist that could really bring alive the lesser fauna such as geckos, butterflies, frogs and birds that one sometimes misses during other safaris.

**Accommodation: Luxury wildlife lodge (B/L/D)**

**Feb 6 Satpura/Bhopal/Agra**
From Satpura, we have a full day transfer to Agra. Agra is famous as being home to one of the Seven Wonders of the world - the Taj Mahal. The architectural splendor of the mausoleums, the fort and the palaces is vivid reminder of the opulence of the legendary Mughal empire, of which Agra was the capital in the 16th and early 17th centuries. While its significance as a political center ended with the transfer of the capital to Delhi in 1634 by Shah Jahan, its architectural wealth has secured its place on the international map. A pleasant town with a comparatively slow pace, Agra is known for its superb inlay work on marble and soapstone by craftsmen who are descendants of those who worked under the Mughals.

**Accommodation: 4-Star Hotel (B/L/D)**

**Feb 7 Agra/Taj Fort/Taj Mahal**
Agra Fort, a massive structure with 70-foot high, 1.5-mile long walls encompassing an astounding collection of well preserved buildings, many of them completed during the reign of Emperor Shah Jahan. The most unusual story about the Taj, is that there might have been two of them. The emperor intended to build a second tomb in black marble, a negative image of the white Taj for Mumtaz. Tragically, before he could begin, he was deposed by his son and imprisoned in the Agra Fort where he remained until his death, spending the rest of his life looking out along the river to the final resting-place of his wife. It is said that Shah Jahan's dying wish was to watch the sun set upon the Taj Mahal, and in true romantic fashion, we'll capture the falling lights on the Taj, before retiring to our hotel and reflecting on our incredible journey during tonight’s farewell dinner.

**Accommodation: 4-Star Hotel (B/L/D)**

**Feb 8 Agra/Taj Mahal/Delhi/Departure**
Little needs to be said about this architectural wonder of the Taj Mahal. Agra Fort is a massive structure with 70-foot high, 1.5-mile long walls encompassing an astounding collection of well preserved buildings, many of them completed during the reign of Emperor Shah Jahan. The most unusual story about the Taj, is that there might have been two of them. The emperor intended to build a second tomb in black marble, a negative image of the white Taj for Mumtaz. Tragically, before he could begin, he was deposed by his son and imprisoned in the Agra Fort where he remained until his death, spending the rest of his life looking out along the river to the final resting-place of his wife. It is said that Shah Jahan's dying wish was to watch the sun set upon the Taj Mahal, and in true romantic fashion, we'll capture the falling lights on the Taj, before retiring to our hotel and reflecting on our incredible journey during tonight's farewell dinner. It is often said that Taj Mahal changes its colors by every minute depending upon angle of sun-rays and sunrise is best timing for taking pictures of this monument under mild sunlight. After returning to our hotel for breakfast, we will then head to Delhi for our departing flights.

**Accommodation: (B/L)**
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For more information and to sign up for the tour, call (231) 620-4424 or visit wantexpeditions.com.