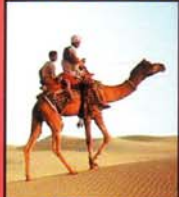


DISCOVER



INDIA

A new travel series that helps expats plan and visit the must-see sights of India

RAJASTHAN

Have a glimpse of the fascinating contrasts of this magnificent region - from the wealthy lifestyles of the Maharajas and their kingdoms to the simple lives in the villages. Feel the pulse of this eclectic region called Rajasthan. The best time to visit is from August-April. Here is a sample itinerary that will help you plan your holiday.



Day 1 & 2: Fly Chennai direct non-stop to Jaipur where you spend 2-nights exploring the colourful bazaars, visiting the iconic Palace of Winds and the Ancient Astronomical Observatory. Ride a caparisoned elephant up the steep ramparts of the Amber Fort of the Rajputs.

Day 3 & 4: Fly to Jodhpur and visit the 15th century Mehrangarh Fort. Drive into the countryside and stay at a charming, family-run fort in the small village of Rohet. Go on a fascinating jeep or horseback safari and explore the lives of artisans - potters and weavers. Also meet the environmentally conscious Bishnoi tribe.

Day 5 & 6: Fly to Udaipur, the impossibly romantic city of Rajasthan. Enjoy a boat ride on Lake Pichola and visit Jagmandir Island Palace, or wander along the lakeshore and admire the breathtaking sunset. Explore the majestic City Palace & Museums for its mosaics, miniatures, mirrorwork and motifs.

Day 7: Take a day trip to Kumbhalgarh, a fantastic fort fulfilling all romantic expectations and vividly summoning up the chivalrous, warlike Rajput era. Built in the 15th century, the fort is perched at a height of 3500 feet. Return to Udaipur and fly home the next day.

This is an advertiser's feature by Ashish Gupta, who runs his own travel company, Milesworth Holidays, an American Express Travel office in Chennai. He offers customised holiday travel planning in India with a specialisation in Southern India.

MILESWORTH
TRAVELS & TOURS PVT LTD.

R M Towers, 108 Chamiers Road, Chennai.
Tel: +91-44-24320522 / 24362557, Fax: +91-44-24342668
E-mail: ashish@milesworth.com, Web: www.milesworth.com

LAUGHTER, EVER AFTER

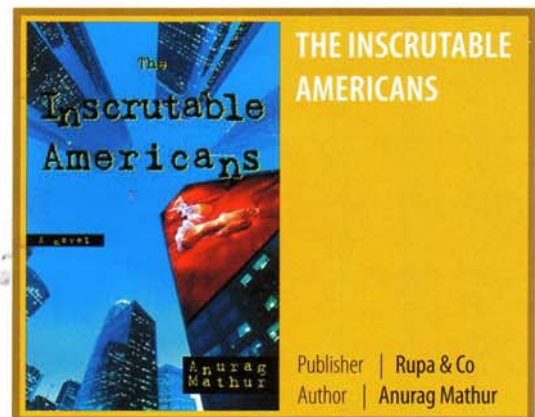
By Praveena Shivram

WHEN Gopal, from the rural town of Jajau, in the central state of Madhya Pradesh, embarks on a journey to the US to pursue a one-year diploma, it launches us into this roller coaster ride of culture shocks, imbalances and an eventual acculturation. Cleverly shrouded in a veneer of humour, this book is erudite about the sensibilities involved in understanding an alien culture. Despite the fact that the story Anurag Mathur narrates in *The Inscrutable Americans* might not hold true for most Indians travelling abroad, certain aspects, subtle they might be, still hold true. Be it for an Indian moving abroad or vice-versa.

With the first "letter" in the book, through which we are introduced to Gopal, Mathur manages to give us a complete background on Gopal, his family, his life and his core Indianness, manifest in his every thought, concern

and behaviour. From his National Hair Oil Factory in Jajau, his interaction with the customs officials, the innate hospitality that is the hallmark of Indian culture, his incessant obsession with Coca Cola ("Coke is Coke") that begins with 37 cokes on his flight from India to the US, and his broken Indian English, the book sets a tone and pace for itself, and the story unfolds thereafter.

Gopal begins with tentative steps into this new world, a world he has only read about in Penthouse letters. Forging new friendships with his fellow Americans (Randy, who makes it his life mission to "devirginise" Gopal), he moves ahead, learning and unlearning on the way. Mathur has a simple style, and it is Gopal's every new experience that makes this an absolute page turner from the word go. Humour at its very best, *The Inscrutable Americans*, is at its heart, a completely honest book.



Odyssey

This book is available at Odyssey, Chennai.
45 & 47, First Main Road, Gandhi Nagar,
Adyar. Tel: +91-44-24402264 / 65
40, Shivani, East Coast Road. Tel: +91-44-42037799
AA-6, New No.75, 2nd Avenue, Near Roundtana,
Anna Nagar. Tel: +91-44-42611473 / 4