

**From:** Tamasin Foote [mailto:[tamasinfoote@gmail.com](mailto:tamasinfoote@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** 24 April 2015 19:59

**To:** Bindu

**Subject:** Thank You!!

Dear Bindu,

I am sitting at the airport waiting to check in.

Sadly, my adventures in India have come to an end - at least for now.

We have had an amazing time. I cannot thank you enough for all you have done to make our stay extraordinary. Everything went like clockwork. Vikram our driver was wonderful. We had excellent guides. The hotels were much nicer than anywhere I stay at home. And of, course we loved our time on the Chambal River, Elefantastic, walking through the markets, sitting in our bay window overlooking the lake in Udaipur - we also spent a fabulous afternoon in the pool on the other side of our suite - riding camels across the the dunes followed by a candle lit dinner. The list just goes on and on.

Maybe you would enjoy some of our favorite moments which Tudor and I wrote to my Mom.

Thank you!! Thank you!!

Tammie

Some favorite moments:

Our guest house in Delhi was right next to a mosque so we were familiar with the call to prayer. And in our hotel room in Jaipur, we were graced with at least 5 mosques all calling to prayer at the same time. What a cacophony!!! All pretty much atonal and grating - each singing something different - seemingly deliberate and possibly even competitive discord.

In the wholesale market in Jaipur. It is a rabbit warren of shops - each roughly the size of a single garage with product from floor to ceiling around the sides if not in the center as well. In one alley, small enough so that I could easily touch both sides at the same time, I stopped at a textile shop and asked to see some fabric. While two men were pulling things down and opening them out for me to see, immediately behind me a family of about 8 women were asking to see textiles from the shop across this tiny alley. All the while, a constant stream of people is passing between us - with a crowd on either side. I wish we had a picture.

Just sort of looking at this weird, squishy thing that came out of a mold, steaming, and was slapped down on a tray at a shop right in the street. Being handed a piece of paper with a slice on it that was almost too hot to hold. Popping a bite in my mouth and loving it - slightly gooey texture, warm and sweet

Milk cake (mawa) - wonderful!

Elefantastic - Our elephant was Shaku, age 25 - putting my hands on her trunk and she was talking (massive rumbling) and feeling her settle. Leaning against her head with my arms around her trunk- feeling totally connected with her and feeling the timeless wisdom in her eye.

Out in the sweep of the wide river with the huge sand flats, coming up on our first crocodile. Feeling so connected to the land, the place. That boat trip was the only time we have been away from crowds of people.

Being stunned by how completely the crocodiles were camouflaged. Obviously that's what their skin is designed for. Still it is incredible to see a stony patch sticking up in the river and not even realize it is covered with crocodiles.

Driving back shortly after sunset, through the villages. Everyone is headed home - even the cows.

Small fires everywhere cooking dinner. Such a sense of gathering and the end of the day.

And, once we returned to our hotel, being taken out after dinner to find the civet cat - standing silently, the guide shining his flashlight to catch the eyes and then tracking it moving from tree to tree.

A large shop with textiles from floor to ceiling around the edge. We were invite to sit on a cushioned bench. And show starts - and will not stop! One man talks as fast as he can - non-stop - opening wall hangings, bedcovers, shawls and throwing them out to display them on the floor. Any spark of response inspires a flurry of similar designs and a variety of color choices.

Walking up the ramp at the Agra Fort - feeling very medieval, all fortification, and emerging into the highly ornamented, red sandstone palace. Then through another gate and seeing the white marble - ornamented in even more detail. Realizing that despite the huge size of the overall building the king's quarters are just a couple of quite small, bare stone rooms, at the time richly furnished with rugs - but that's it.

About to cross a major intersection with cars, people, animals, motorcycles, etc.

Coming from all directions, being advised: don't run, don't stop - just keep moving at a steady pace and everything will flow around you. Amazingly it works.

Tamasin Foote, India trip Apr 2015