



WILDS OF ORISSA & KOLKATA, (ZCA)

Chennai to Kolkata 14 Days, departing 23rd December 2021



TRIP OVERVIEW

Trip Style: Overlanding
Route: Chennai to Kolkata
Duration: 14 Days
Transport: Overland Expedition Vehicle, Train
Accommodation: Comfortable Hotel 2 nights
 Basic Hotel 5 nights
 Guesthouse 4 nights
Meals: Breakfasts x 11, Lunches x 5, Dinners x 4

Physical Challenge: ● ● ○ ○ ○

Your itinerary may include easy-paced day walks, bike rides, and other activities that are not too strenuous.

Lifestyle Challenge: ● ● ● ○ ○

This trip has a bit of everything. Some areas that you travel through may be physically challenging; for example you may be at altitude some of the time and you may be camping for several nights. The pace of the trip can be tiring at times and some facilities will be basic. However there will also be plenty of time to relax and some comfortable accommodation.



DAILY ITINERARY

Day 1 - Chennai (23rd December 2021)

Meals: Breakfast

Border Information: If you are joining in Chennai, you will most likely enter India in Chennai International Airport (IATA code: MAA).

Today is a free day to explore the sights, sounds and flavours of Chennai. There will be an important group meeting at 6:00pm - please look for a note from your tour leader when you arrive at the hotel giving more details about this meeting.

Please note that many of the options listed below will only be possible for those with extra time in Chennai before the start of your trip with us - please contact the Sales team if you would like to book pre-tour accommodation with us to have extra time exploring Chennai.

**Important note* - if you are joining the trip in Chennai, please make sure that you send us a scan of your Indian visa as soon as you have obtained it. If you plan to take the e-visa option, please make sure you arrange this well in advance and send us a copy of your receipt as soon as possible. If we do not receive this in advance, then we will not have enough time to get your permits for the Odisha Region and you will not be able to visit this area. We will also need these to purchase your train tickets.*

Accommodation: Pandian Hotel A""

Day 2 - Tirupati (24th December 2021)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we start our journey with a drive to the bustling town of Tirupati. In the afternoon there will be an optional visit to the Sri Venkateswara holy temple in the nearby town of Tirumala. (Please note if you wish to visit the temple there is a dress code of Dhoti with upper cloth for men and saree or half-saree with blouse or churidar with pyjama and upper cloth for women. It is also quite difficult to get tickets to visit the temple due to the high numbers of pilgrims visiting the temple during this time, if we can not get any tickets available we will visit Srikalahasteeswara temple instead).

Day 3 - Vijayawada (25th December 2021)

Meals: Breakfast

Leaving Tirupati, we will spend the next few days overlanding through Andhra Pradesh, one of the least developed states in India. This is real off-the-beaten-track overlanding, and we will arrive in the small city of Vijayawada this evening.

Day 4 - Visakhapatnam (26th December 2021)

Meals: Lunch, Dinner

Today we continue our journey and drive through the back roads of Andhra Pradesh. Our final destination tonight is the coastal town of Visakhapatnam.

Day 5 - Odisha Tribal Area (27th December 2021)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we will begin our guided tour through the rarely-visited Odisha Tribal Regions, which we will comprehensively visit over the next 6 days. In these regions the itinerary has to be kept fairly flexible, allowing us the freedom to alter things slightly if we hear of any special events or market days in particular villages. However, we will generally follow the plan below:

This morning we will have an early start from Visakhapatnam to arrive in a small village called Goudaguda in time to visit the Monday markets. Beautiful earthen pottery is skillfully produced in this area and you may even get the chance to try this for yourself.

Day 6 - Odisha Tribal Area (28th December 2021)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we will have a guided walk in the morning through the countryside around Goudaguda, visiting the neighbouring Mahali and Kondh tribal villages.

This evening we will return to our guesthouse in Goudaguda for the night.

Day 7 - Odisha Tribal Area (29th December 2021)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

After breakfast at our guesthouse we will drive to the lively Chatikona Market, which is a weekly highlight for the Dongria Kondh tribe. We will then continue on and travel through the hills to the village of Muniguda, our destination for tonight.

Day 8 - Odisha Tribal Area (30th December 2021)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will continue our journey north driving through a well known Elephant Range. We will then have a chance to stretch our legs and walk into the Desia Kondh indigenous community. They are distinguished by the unique facial tattoos of the women. After a village visit and picnic lunch we will continue to Baliguda.

Day 9 - Odisha Tribal Area (31st December 2021)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we are going to continue on to the fascinating fishing town of Gopalpur, a once major port for the East India Company which has an interesting decaying charm. We will have plenty of free time here to be able to explore this fascinating town.

Day 10 - Puri (1st January 2022)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Our tour of the Odisha tribal areas comes to an end today as we drive on to the small town of Puri.

Puri is one of the holiest pilgrimage places in India, and has a wonderful long sandy beach. On arrival we will explore the old pilgrim route by cycle-rickshaw, taking in ashrams, Hindu monasteries, a palm leaf manuscript library and the awesome Jagannath temple.

Day 11 - Puri (2nd January 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

Our first full day here in Puri, we plan to take a short drive back to visit Chilika Lake and explore the lake by boat and take a walk through some of the surrounding fisherman's villages.

Day 12 - Puri (3rd January 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will begin with a cycle ride through rice paddies and rural hamlets, meeting local craftsmen and women and watching them demonstrate their unique crafts. In the afternoon we will have a guided tour of the UNESCO World Heritage site of the Konark Sun Temple.

Day 13 - Kolkata (4th January 2022)

It will be an early start today as we will travel by train to Kolkata, the largest city in India. We will have free time today and tomorrow to explore this remarkable city, or take an optional photographic tour.

Estimated Journey Time (by train) - 7-8 hours.

Day 14 - Kolkata - End Date (5th January 2022)

Border Information: If finishing your trip in Kolkata, you will most likely exit India at Kolkata Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport (IATA code: CCU).

Today is the end day for passengers finishing their trip in Kolkata. Please note there is no accommodation included on the trip tonight - please contact your sales agent if you are interested in booking extra nights of accommodation in order to fully explore and take part in some of the optional activities listed below.

Accommodation:

ITINERARY DISCLAIMER

The routes, activities and places visited described in these notes are intentions and are meant as a rough guide only. By their very nature, overland itineraries need to be flexible and the regions that we are travelling through are often unpredictable. We intend to follow the planned route but exact night stops and inclusions cannot be guaranteed and it sometimes happens that we decide to make a change to our planned itinerary. This may be for a variety of reasons; climatic, road or bureaucratic conditions may demand it. Changes to the itinerary may occur with little notice so please be prepared for modifications to your trip.

Drive Times

Drive times are listed in the day-to-day itinerary. These are the approximate number of hours that the vehicle will be in motion, and does not include any time taken for coffee or lunch stops, border crossings, photo stops, activities en route, comfort breaks, shopping stops, toilet stops, etc. The times given are approximate estimates only and whilst given with the best of intentions, the drive times are heavily dependent on traffic, road conditions, weather, police roadblocks, and many other factors.

Accommodation and Meals Included

The type of accommodation and included meals are listed for each day of the itinerary. These listings show our intention and on most departures the listings will be accurate. However due to the flexible nature of overland itineraries, climatic, bureaucratic or road conditions may demand changes to our listed intentions or groups may simply decide to amend the plans from time to time.

Optional Activities

A selection of optional activities is listed in the day-to-day itinerary. This list is designed to be a helpful guide as to what is commonly available in each location, and is neither an exhaustive list, a guarantee that the activity is available, or an endorsement or recommendation. Certain activities may not be available on your particular visit and it may not be possible to do all the activities listed in the time available at each destination. It is recommended to give yourself extra time in your joining or ending city if you would like to participate in some optional activities there. Prices listed are for entrance only and do not include transport costs to and from the sites or local guides unless indicated. The prices are displayed according to our latest information and in the best faith, but prices do fluctuate due to exchange rates, season, numbers of participants, and simple increases from the operator, and therefore any prices listed are a guide only and cannot be guaranteed. If you partake in any optional activities, you do so at your own risk and it must be clearly understood that your participation is your own decision and does not form part of your contract with Dragoman. You may be required to sign/complete a waiver form or optional activity form for some optional activities. For more information around activity safety and insurance, please see the Essential Information document.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

In the event of a real emergency once you have left your home country, please contact us on our out of office hours number. If you cannot get through on the phone, please leave a message with your name, reference number, contact details and a message with the help that you need and we will get back to you. Please bear in mind that real progress or action may not be possible until normal office hours, depending on the issue.

If your flight is delayed, please inform us as soon as you can and then make your way to the joining hotel as instructed in the Joining Point section of these notes.

Out of hours Number: +44 (0) 7985 106564

A FEW RULES

We expect all group members to act respectfully towards our staff and other group members. Bullying will not be tolerated.

Engaging in commercial or exploitative sexual activities, committing acts of violence or threatening violence towards local people, other group members or any member of our staff is not allowed. Any customer engaging in such activities will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

You must at all times comply with the laws, customs, foreign exchange and drug regulations of all countries visited and conduct yourself in accordance with our responsible travel policy. Any customer found contravening such laws or regulations will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

Although we are aware that in some parts of the world taking, carrying or selling drugs, or carrying weapons may be legal, it is not acceptable for Dragoman customers and our tour leaders have the right to ask you to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price if you are found to be engaging in such activities.

ISSUES ON THE TRIP

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip, it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction. If this is the case please contact our customer relations department on customer-relations@dragoman.co.uk.

You may also choose to provide details in your feedback questionnaire which we ask you to complete at the end of your trip, but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

IMPORTANT NOTES

OVERLANDING LIFESTYLE

Dragoman was founded in 1981, and has had many years of experience of leading overland trips across 4 continents. Overlanding is all about sharing a great travelling experience with like-minded people. On your trip you'll travel in one of Dragoman's purpose-built iconic expedition vehicles on an off-the-beaten-track adventure along rugged roads, experiencing the sights, sounds and smells of the world up-close. Your journey will be overland, sometimes across vast distances, so some long days spent driving are inevitable - but these will be interspersed with breaks of a day or two at a destination or activity.

On an overland journey, you are more than just a passenger and everyone gets involved setting up camp - we supply the tent but it's up to you to pitch it! As part of your trip, you will be assigned a truck job which could be collecting firewood or water, luggage loading, organising food, stores, etc. Like all great adventures, the more you put in the more you'll get out! For more details of how an overlanding trip works, please see the Essential Information document.

SAFETY STANDARDS

We run adventure journeys in off the beaten track areas, which often have poor infrastructure. You should expect that some of these areas do not adhere to 'Western' safety standards. For more information, please see the Essential Information document

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN REMOTE AREAS

We will be travelling to areas in remote locations where medical assistance will not be available, and communications may be sparse. We do not carry satellite phones on our regular trips. Therefore, if you have a medical condition such as a heart condition that would put you at risk, we would suggest that this is not the trip for you. Also, please be aware that should an emergency occur, there is likely to be a considerable delay in accessing medical care, and by joining our trip you accept this risk.

VISAS, HEALTH, INSURANCE & MONEY

Before you travel there are vital things to consider such as:

- Any visas needed for your trip
- Any vaccinations needed (please consult your GP or travel clinic)
- Organising your local payment (the kitty)
- Buying travel insurance (insurance is compulsory to be allowed to join our trips)

For more information on these topics, please see the Essential Information Document.

INDIA NOTES

Please ensure you have an up to date version of these notes. **These notes were printed on the 22nd September 2020**