

# Orissa (Odisha), India Tribal Tapestry and Textiles

February 3 - 18, 2019

*You'll be the same year after year—except for the  
people you meet, books you read, films you watch,  
places you travel, and new things you do.*

*~ Lomin L. Lee*





This sensitively conceived tour explores Orissa's tribal diversity of 62 indigenous communities. On village-to-village walks, interact with tribal elders and children. Wander markets to meet bartering women adorned with beaded finery. Learn how these isolated tribes' survive off the forests of Eastern Ghats while maintaining their unique traditions and handicrafts. Visit tribal artisans for pottery, textiles, and metalworking. Marvel at generational weavers' exquisite single ikat. After, pause awhile at ancient 13<sup>th</sup>C monuments,



### Past Travellers speak

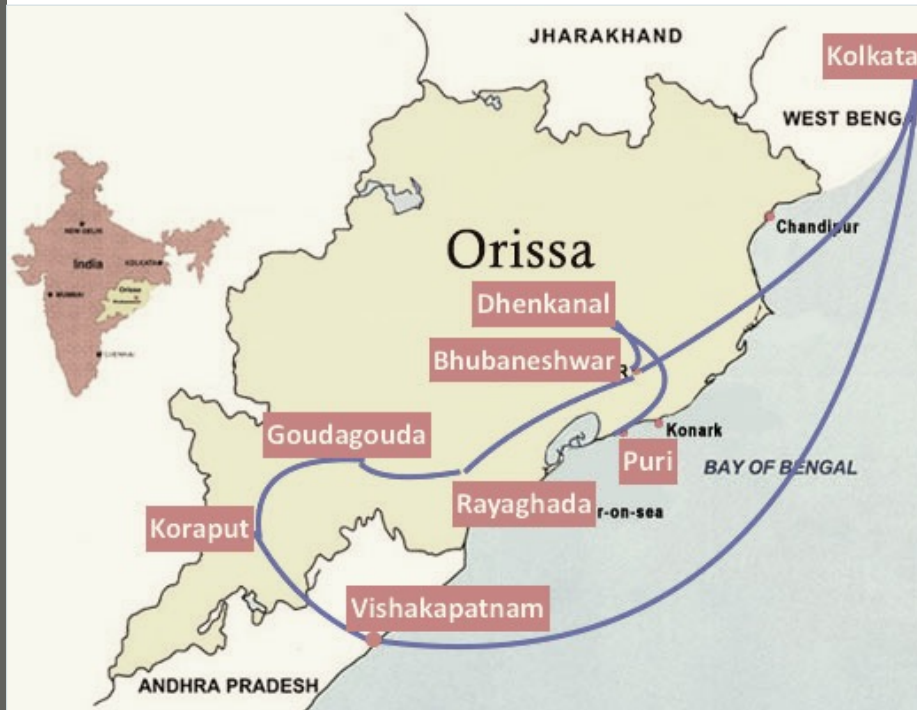
*Combines unparalleled access with social responsibility and cultural sensitivity to achieve everything one could hope for in a specialty group tour: a creatively curated itinerary, meticulous planning, flawless execution and wonderful travel companions.*

– Rekha Karambayya, Ontario

*Shila uses local contacts to arrange 'insider' experiences that the average tourist would either not know about or would not be able to find. She was a wonderful cultural bridge for those who were from different backgrounds.* – Valerie MacDonald

*Definitely delivers above and beyond a traditional tour. It is evident that Shila has done extensive research and planning, as well as scouting out the locations, prior to embarking on a group tour. Over time she has acquired a following of world travellers who sign up repeatedly for her tours. My only concern is that I reserve my spot before it gets full.* – Miriam Baichman





## At a glance 16 Days (15 Nights) February 3 – 18, 2019

- 2 nights Kolkata – fly in, fly out, more if you wish!
- 1 night Vishakapatnam – India’s high-tech hub
- 3 nights Koraput – eco resort with tribal village access
- 2 nights Goudagouda Village – charming guest house
- 1 night Rayagada/overnight train Koraput-Bhubaneswar
- 2 nights Dhenkanal – palace stay, ikat weavers
- 3 nights Puri – Indian ocean-side, Konarak Temple
- 1 night Bhubhaneshwar – 13<sup>th</sup>C temples

While we make every effort to stay within the itinerary, occasionally we may substitute according to local conditions and desires of the group

### Cost

16 Days fully escorted

USD 3750 pp double occupancy/ USD 1350 single room

### Highlights

- Several market visits timed to take in a range of Orissa’s tribal peoples whose settlements are off-limits to tourists
- Village to village walks for tribal artisanship and lifestyles
- 3 talks by Shila Desai
  - Orissa’s tribal diversity
  - Understanding Hinduism
  - Textiles of Orissa and neighbouring West Bengal
- Village dances and ceremonies
- Visit to Buddhist monastery
- Nuapatna weavers’ colony
- ... and much more

### “Why Orissa?”

Far from the hustle of modernizing India, to discover Orissa is to go back in time. When I dry-ran this tour, I was thrilled to interact in local markets with the proud indigenous women of India. Matriarchal, sporting shaven heads, exquisite beaded finery and backstrap-woven skirts, the tribal communities of Orissa are living proof of the Gondwanaland phenomenon. Leaving wifi and gadgets behind, I walked village to village through rolling paddy fields, explored unchanged ways of life, and marveled at the creative expression of artistic talents. I stood testimony to fast-disappearing lifestyles. The window of time to explore the lands and culture of Orissa is limited and I want to share, in the most culturally sensitive way, this privilege with my travellers.

~ Shila Desai, conceptualizer



Victoria Memorial

Day 1: Sunday Feb 3

## Kolkata

Welcome to Kolkata! You will be met on arrival and transferred to our hotel in the centre of Kolkata.

- We can advise on best flight options to Kolkata. Please plan on arriving either earlier or on this date.
- We are happy to make pre-trip arrangements if you wish to explore this vibrant city. Options include Victoria Memorial Museum, Park Street, and Flower Market. Please write or call for details.

Relax after your long journey, and rest up for the adventures ahead.

Meals: none



Seemachalan Temple

Day 2: Monday Feb 4

## Vishakapatnam

Morning flight (approx. 2 hrs) to coastal Andhra Pradesh. Vishakapatnam is a high-tech hub and one of India's cleanest cities.

Explore the beach which mostly locals frequent on Sundays as a family outing.

In the late afternoon, take a leisurely ride to attend "arti" or evening rituals at Seemanchalam, a revered Shiva temple and a great pilgrimage site.

Evening, take in a talk by Shila on *Understanding Hinduism*.

Meals: B, D



Mali tribal woman

Day 3: Tuesday Feb 5

## Koraput

After breakfast, drive 5 hours through a picturesque valley and high hills passes into the tribal heart of Orissa. Arrive at our communally-run eco resort, an initiative that attempts to bring sustainable tourism to the indigenous tribes. Receive a warm welcome by the local community. Late afternoon, set off on a short walk to a Mali tribal village to witness their way of life. The Mali are renowned vegetable growers. We may be invited to join the head family for a cup of tea!

Dinner and overnight at eco-resort.

Meals: B, L, D



Day 4: Wednesday Feb 6

### Koraput

Today's excursion will take us to Nandapur weekly tribal market. Walk in and around the market to meet several members of the Paraja and Mali tribal communities. The Paraja are skilled hunters. Women wear saris along with jewellery and hair pins made of silver, aluminum, and brass. Men wear loincloths. The Parajas hold animist beliefs in addition to Hinduism. If you wish, help select fresh vegetables for your dinner at the eco-resort. Afternoon visit to spectacular Duduma waterfall. In the evening enjoy the tribal songs along the bonfire

Meals: B, L, D



Day 5: Thursday Feb 7

### Koraput

An excursion to Ounkadelli weekly market for an encounter with indigenous tribal people. The Bonda are the least accessible and most unchanged of tribes, living in isolated hill villages. They come to market to barter homemade alcohol. Bonda women adorn themselves with copious beaded neckpieces and wear a loincloth. Also meet Gadaba who practise shamanistic rituals. After memorable hours in this market, break for lunch followed by a walk to the Bantalabiri tribal village for a tribal Dhemsa dance. Dinner and overnight eco-resort.

Meals: B, L, D



Day 6: Friday Feb 8

### Goudagouda

Bid farewell to your community hosts, and depart for Goudagouda Village. En route visit the largest weekly market of this area at Kunduli for an encounter with the Didayi who are hereditary fisherfolk and weave enormous bamboo baskets. After a leisurely lunch, explore Limca pottery in a Kutia village near Kunduli. Clay is kneaded by hand and feet, and thrown on an ancient wheel. Continue to Kakiriguma and enjoy a peaceful evening at your charming guesthouse, an initiative which supports village people.

Meals: B, L, D



Day 7: Saturday Feb 9

### Goudagouda

Today visit nearby Goudagouda village to see another form of pottery. Walking villages is a wonderful way to acquaint yourself with local tribes and their way of life. You never know if you'll be invited to join in a wedding procession or be a guest at a puberty ceremony! Lunch at guesthouse, followed by an afternoon hike around the peaceful countryside from village to unspoilt village.

Evening, take in a talk by Shila about major tribal groups of Orissa and their unique traditions.

Meals: B, L, D



Day 8: Sunday Feb 10

### Rayagadha/Train

After a peaceful morning proceed to Bissam Cuttack region to visit a tribal Dhokra village. The Dhokra still use a 4000-yr old lost-wax metal casting technique to fashion tribal jewellery and artefacts. After lunch, visit with Dongria Kondh development agency for a demo of exquisite handwoven shawls by the women. Mainly woven by unmarried girls as a token of love for their brothers or betrothed. Drive to Rayagada for dinner and freshen up in a hotel, before departure for the railway station to board an overnight train for Bhubaneswar.

Meals: B, L, D



Day 9: Monday Feb 11

### Dhenkanal

Arrive in Bhubaneswar in the morning and proceed to Dhenkanal, a former principality established in 16<sup>th</sup> C. After days in rural outposts, enjoy being pampered in this lovely palace-fort as guests of the current owners and descendants. Lunch and relax in the palace grounds. Late afternoon drive to Joranda to visit a monastery where monks of the Mahima order conduct an impressive sunset prayer. The Mahima movement rose in mid-1800's to counter caste-based discrimination. Return to palace for dinner.

Meals: B, L, D



Day 10: Tuesday Feb 12

### Dhenkanal

Today is a highlight for textile lovers: a visit to the Nuapatana textile colony to see the various steps involved in producing single ikat fabrics. Starting from silk cocoons, to tie-dyeing individual strands and then hand weaving on traditional looms for sarees and yardage. Meet award-winning master weavers and their families, and marvel at the intricacy of design. Back at the palace, a sumptuous dinner from the royal kitchen awaits, accompanied by a bonfire and conversation with descendants of the Dhenkanal royal family.

Meals: B, L, D



Day 11: Wednesday Feb 13

### Puri

After a leisurely morning, depart for Puri, stopping at Pipili to admire an appliqué specialty of Orissa. Visit the unique sixty-four yogini 9<sup>th</sup> C temple of Hirapur, built in a circular fashion to deify the tantric Goddess Kali. At Hirapur meet a local palm leaf etcher and admire manuscripts that carry on the tradition from Stone Age of writing during humankind's transition from stone to paper. Late afternoon arrival in Puri and transfer to a luxury beach resort. Dinner and overnight.

Meals: B, L, D



Day 12: Thursday Feb 14

### Puri

Morning, explore the holy spiritual city of Puri by an acclaimed Greenrider rickshaw initiative. Ride through medieval bylanes, cremation *ghats*, lively watertank, a local bazaar, with the Jagannath temple as a backdrop.

Afternoon at 13th-century Konark Sun Temple, a stunning world heritage site. A culmination of Orissan temple architecture, it represents Sun God Surya's chariot with elaborately carved stone wheels led by a team of six horses. The poet Tagore said: "Here the language of stone surpasses the language of man." Drive back to Puri.

Meals: B, L, D



Day 13: Friday Feb 15

## Puri

Free morning on the beach or pool side. Optional (\$): cooking class and lunch at a local restaurant incorporating local vegetables and spices. Afternoon visit to Raghurajpur artisan village where villagers produce various handicrafts like papier mache, pattachitra painting, stone work, and palm leaf etchings.

Evening return to Puri in time to catch the spectacular sunset. Puri is one of the few places where both sunrise and sunset can be observed in full glory. Dinner.

Meals: B, D



Day 14: Saturday Feb 16

## Bhubaneswar

Morning transfer to Bhubaneswar. Built at the crossroads of Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain religions, it is an important pilgrimage point. Of the 7,000 stone temples that once stood here, approximately 500 remain, with graceful towers and finely detailed sculpture work.

Visit in chronological order: 7<sup>th</sup>C Parashurameshvara Shiva Temple; 10<sup>th</sup>C Mukteswar Temple's exquisite stone sculptures; Lingaraj Temple, the largest temple. Evening at Dhauli Peace Pagoda where Emperor Ashoka experienced an inner transformation from war to peace.

Meals: B, L



Day 15: Sunday Feb 17

## Kolkata

Morning, visit Bhubaneswar's excellent tribal heritage museum for a chance to review your experiences in rural Odisha. With interactive displays and dioramas, this museum chronicles traditions, dress, music, arts and crafts of a vanishing tribal diversity.

After lunch in town, and – time permitting – stop to buy ikat fabric, catch a flight (1 hr) to Kolkata.

Arrival and transfer to hotel in city centre.

Meals: B



Day 16: Monday Feb 18

## Departure

Transfer to Kolkata airport for onward journeys.

Thank you for choosing to travel with E.Y.H.O. Tours! We look forward to welcoming you on another superlative unpackaged travel experience.

N.B. We are happy to make pre-trip arrangements if you wish to extend your stay and explore this vibrant city. Options include Victoria Memorial Museum, Park Street, and Flower Market. We can also arrange custom textile tours to Jamdani and Baluchari weaving centres. Please write or call for details.

Meals: B

## Enquiries

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Visit [www.eyhotours.com](http://www.eyhotours.com)

TICO (Travel Industry of Ontario) accredited

## Terms and Conditions

16 day fully escorted tour

Contracted through Tourism Board of India Member, accredited since 2005.

Register with deposit of USD 500

**OUR SMALL GROUP  
HANDCRAFTED TOURS SELL  
OUT QUICKLY . . .**

**Write us today!**

A sampling of accommodations: heritage boutique/ community-run where possible.

## Desia Eco Resort



## Denkanal Palace



## Chandoori Sai Guest house



*“I was so fortunate to have selected E.Y.H.O.Tours” — Tina Crabtree, Healdsburg, CA.*



Why choose E.Y.H.O ?

[Click](#) for comparison with other tours

- Conceptualised, organised, accompanied by E.Y.H.O. Tours owner, Shila Desai
- Expert English-speaking local guides
- 3 evening in-depth lectures by Shila
- 4-5\* accommodations in urban areas
- Eco resort/guesthouse in rural areas with private western style bathrooms
- All breakfasts; other meals as indicated: 11 lunches and 12 dinners
- 02AC class train from Rayagada to Bhubaneswar
- Internal flight Kolkata-Vishakapatnam/ Bhubaneswar-Kolkata
- All excursions, entry fees, local taxes
- Private transportation in air conditioned vehicles

#### EXCLUDES

# Travel insurance

# International flights

# Gratuities - a USD120 pp tipping kitty for guides, drivers, porters, and hotel staff