



Odisha(Orissa) Eastern India

FAQs



First time in India?

India has so many incredible sights that it is no exaggeration to call it one of the world's richest cultural travel destinations. A land of dreams and romance, a wonderland of fabulous wealth and poverty, of splendour and rags. India is a country of contrasts and paradoxes, of powerful flavours, of spectacular images and events, of extreme patterns of behaviour. That is what makes this journey so irresistible and powerful. In addition, Indian people are in general openhearted, friendly and will welcome you to share their country.

If you haven't been lucky enough to visit Odisha yet, read on.

India's eastern state of Odisha boasts no less than 62 tribal communities—more than any other state in the country. Each has its own language, culture, and traditions. Concentrated in the hills of the Eastern Ghats and relying on the forest for their livelihood, many tribes are isolated from modern life, while others are fast-assimilating. On this journey, see tribal traditional handicrafts, including terracotta pitchers and sculptures, textiles, appliqués, lacquerware bowls and bracelets, beaded necklaces, bronze figurines, and baskets of woven grass.

Led by thoughtful local guides, you'll interact with these intriguing people during select market visits and gentle village-to-village walks. You'll meet bartering women adorned with beads and bangles, tribal elders, and local artisans, and learn about their disappearing ways of life. En route to these remote areas, you'll stop at some of India's most exquisite and revered temples.

Do I need a Visa for India?

Yes, please visit the website of the nearest Indian Consulate. For e-visas, apply here: <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html> (If link does not work, copy and paste in your browser's search function)

An e-visa gives instant confirmation of 2-month single-entry visas. You will need a valid passport, along with other documentation listed on the website. Apply online minimum 4 days up to 120 days in advance of date of arrival. Example: For application date of 1st Sept arrival date can be from 5th Sept to 2nd Jan.

Past group members have experienced difficulty with the website. Photos are difficult to upload; sessions time-out; payments do not go through right away. But perseverance has unfailingly paid off.

If not going the e-visa route, visit the closest Indian consulate or mail your application in. Click on links below for processing centres:

- [Canada](#)
- [USA](#)
- [U.K.](#)

Visa processing can take 4 to 5 weeks. Please understand that it is your sole responsibility to possess a valid passport and visa prior to embarking on this tour.

What is the Time Zone in India?

India is 10 1/2 hours ahead of the Eastern Standard Time.

What is the weather like in February?

February in a rural area is the best time for travel to Odisha, with weather similar to a

North American spring. You will experience a range of temperatures from 13°C to 28°C. In coastal Odisha, it will be hotter and more humid.

How strenuous is this tour?

If you can walk comfortably at a moderate pace for one-hour stretches, you can do this tour. In addition we have private bus transfers on crowded urban roads. The longest transfer on is 6 hrs with 3-4 breaks for lunch and toilets.

I hear only 5* hotels are good enough for travel in India. Correct?

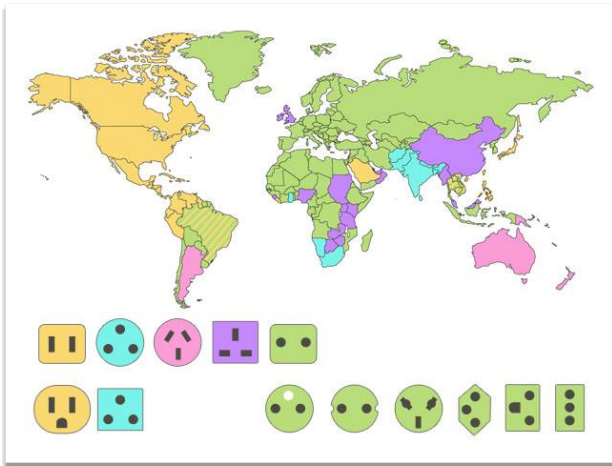
Incorrect. We select accommodations for cultural relevance, comfort, safety, and personal service. In all cases, they are best available. All accommodations are clean, comfortable, and have private bathrooms and western-style toilets. But please be aware that we are going into an untrampled part of India in search of unique rural experiences. 5* is not necessarily available or desirable. Guesthouses are comfortable and basic, balanced by a sumptuous palace stay and 5* in urban areas.

What about clothes and valuables?

A comprehensive packing list will be supplied. Consider layering clothes. Pack a light windbreaker and fleece hoodie, as well as warm socks, toque, and mitts. A hot water bottle comes in handy for warm toes at bedtime. Comfortable closed-toed walking shoes are recommended. Dresses below the knees, and trousers and sleeveless dresses are acceptable. Leave all expensive jewelry and valuables at home.

What is the voltage in India?

The voltage in India is 220 AC with either 2- or 3-pin round plugs. See below. Some hotels carry adaptors.



What are the best international flight options to Odisha?

Since our guests come from all over the world, we'd be happy to advise you individually. Please contact shila@eyhotours.com

I'm flying two long haul flights. What do I carry with me on the plane?

Carry all valuables with you: your passport (keep the photocopy in another bag), travelers' checks, cash, camera and memory cards, phone, and prescription medication. In case of baggage delay, a change of clothes along with chargers, shaving supplies, deodorant, toothbrush and toothpaste, medicines and tissues. All amenities, including toilet paper, are readily available in major urban areas.

Did you mention toilet paper? What the deal with bathrooms?

We stay in the best available heritage/boutique

hotels. Some are community-run and built in local living styles. All have western style bathrooms. However, on road transfers, toilet paper may not be available and toilets may be basic.

How can I call home from India?

India uses 4G, 3G and GSM frequency bands 900/1800. If your phone is an unlocked GSM with multi band, it will usually work with a local SIM card (Make sure to check the frequency band your phone uses for compatibility in India). Local pay-as-you-go data and voice packages are relatively inexpensive. Or ask your service provider to allow International roaming which is usually more expensive. Note: it can take up to 3 business days to activate a local SIM card.

My big fear is getting sick in India.

The main reasons why travelers get sick in India eating unwisely. Safe bottled water is readily available all over India. The food in India is delicious and generally well prepared. Because local Indian fare can include a plethora of well-spiced—but not necessarily “hot” dishes—it's advisable to ease western digestive tracts into the cuisine. If in doubt, rely on grains, rice, and packaged yoghurt until your stomach acclimatizes. ****Only eat foods that have been cooked, and are piping hot upon serving, and eat fruit that can be peeled****. The prices of meals on your own will range from \$3 - \$15, without alcohol.

Don't use ice cubes in drinks. Brushing with bottled water is not necessary. Small quantities of tap water help you adjust to the fauna and flora.

Will drinking water be provided while travelling?

We provide unlimited bottled drinking water while on the road. In interests of reducing plastic waste, please consider bringing your own refillable water bottle. In hotels, normally 2 bottles per room per day are supplied free of charge.

What about the currency?

The “Rupee” is the unit of currency, as in 100 cents = 1 dollar; 100 paise = 1 rupee. The current exchange rate is about 64 rupees = 1 U.S. Dollar. The rupee is a closed currency meaning you cannot bring in above a certain amount (currently Rs 10,000 per person). US \$ are freely exchangeable. Taking out Indian rupees is a punishable offence.

Travelers’ checks are not recommended. ATMs are readily available in major urban areas. Carry smaller denomination bills to use at trip-end so you don’t have to change more than you need. Also carry the equivalent of \$50 in rupees for the first couple of days when you may not access an ATM. Credit cards are widely accepted in urban areas.

What about tipping?

We run a \$120 tipping kitty for drivers, guides, hotel wait staff and porters. You may supplement if you wish. Any unused amounts at the end will be democratically disposed of.

And shopping . . . ?

Odisha and Kolkata are a shopper’s paradise. From clothes to jewelry in gold and silver; artifacts, carpets, rugs, embroidery...the list goes on. Quality and the price vary widely. Be sure to check the quality of what you buy. Bargaining is expected unless shopping at nonprofit co-ops or directly from artisans.

What are the luggage requirements?

Flights within India observe a strictly-enforced rule of 15 kg of checked luggage and 7kg of carry-on. Excess baggage fees run at \$4-5 per kilo. Carry a collapsible bag for your extra shopping.

Do I need any vaccinations?

Shots for hepatitis A/B and typhoid are recommended, in addition to normal ones such as Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Polio. Follow the recommendations of your travel health clinic. You may want to bring Tylenol, Immodium and/or Pepto Bismol, in addition to prescription medications. Keep a list of your medications with their pharmaceutical names and dosage, as most medicines are available in India but often under other names.

Great! How do I sign up?

We’d be delighted to welcome you on board! Please [contact](#) us.