

Gujarat-Kutch Textiles and Stepwells

September 26 – October 10, 2022

Optional: Off-beaten-path Rajasthan
October 10 - 16, 2022

"There are some parts of the world that, once visited, get into your heart and won't let go. India is such a place....I had been seeing the world in black & white and, when brought face-to-face with India, experienced everything re-rendered in brilliant technicolour." - Keith Bellows, National Geographic Society



Photo: © Victoria Lautmann,
Vanishing Stepwells

One tour, two spectacular hits

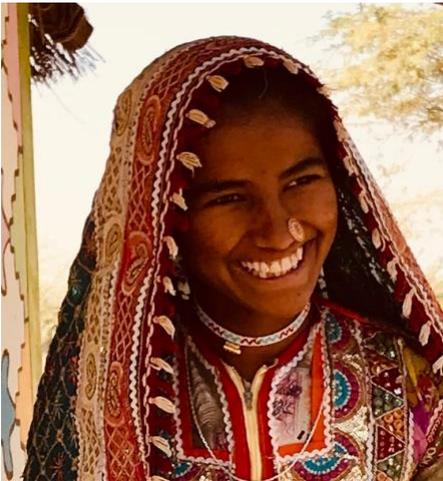
Textiles, Arts & Crafts

Handmade textiles are the warp and weft of India's historical, social, and economic fabric as is its culture of vibrant arts and crafts.

Immerse yourself in the 5000-year-old crucible of rural Gujarat-Kutch. On this sensitively conceived tour, visit artisanal villages, meet award-winning artisans, and engage in celebrated weaving, embroidery, dyeing, and printing techniques that have distinguished India over millennia. Enjoy renowned textile museums with curators. Explore centuries-old arts and crafts. Traverse a hidden India from desert to buzzing cities. Optional: off-the-beaten-path Rajasthan.

Stepwells

Fascinating, yet largely unknown, subterranean stepwells once supplied communities with water, and served as refuges, gathering places, and sacred sites. Strung along ancient Silk Road stops, stepwells were at the confluence of fresh ideas, trends, and trade. As magnificent as any of India's palaces – except underground up to nine storeys deep and lovingly ornamented with sculptures and carvings. Many feature patterns seen today on handwoven textiles. We will trace the history and architecture of stepwells, beginning with the oldest 6th CE and culminating in the grandest 11th CE UNESCO designated Rani ki Vav.



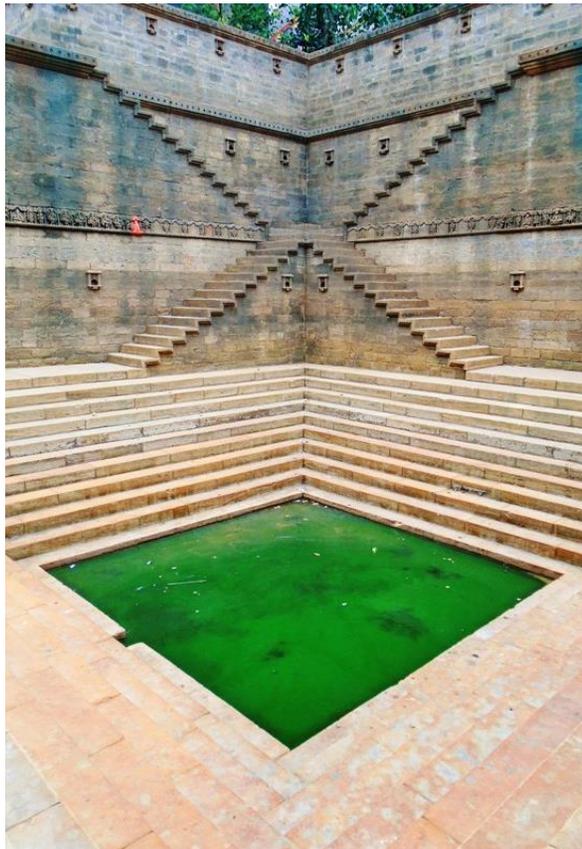
Meghwal tribeswoman



Madha Vav. Photo: © Victoria Lautmann, *Vanishing Stepwells*



Learning the lexicon of embroidery stitches



Why go? Why with us?

- Relatively unexplored part of India
- Stunning diversity of artisanal skills
- Stepwells are only just registering on tourist radars. Go before the crowds do
- Rural communities living as they have done for centuries
- Led by textile and stepwell experts
- Hosted by E.Y.H.O. founder Shila Desai, Canadian-based Gujarati, steeped in the lore of her ancestors
- Deep knowledge and passion for this region. . . we will decipher inside stories and societal context as only people who have grown up in this culture can!



Past Travellers speak...

*Very well organized with a good balance of non-textile visits, which gave a fascinating insight to an amazing country plus the extra add-ons like the film in Jaipur, brilliant! **There are so many fabulous memories it would take too long to list but just want to say thank you for an amazing introduction to India.***

– Anne Alldread, Derbyshire, U.K.

*One of the **top events of my life**, exceeding my fondest expectations.* — Marylou S. Washington D.C.

*This was **a trip of a lifetime** and **I am moved beyond words** that I got to experience all we did through your eyes. To so clearly see and have you share your love for India.* – Susan Oher, New York City

*The sights I have seen, the experiences I was honoured to have undertaken will **stay with me forever.***

– Jodie Watkins, Western Australia

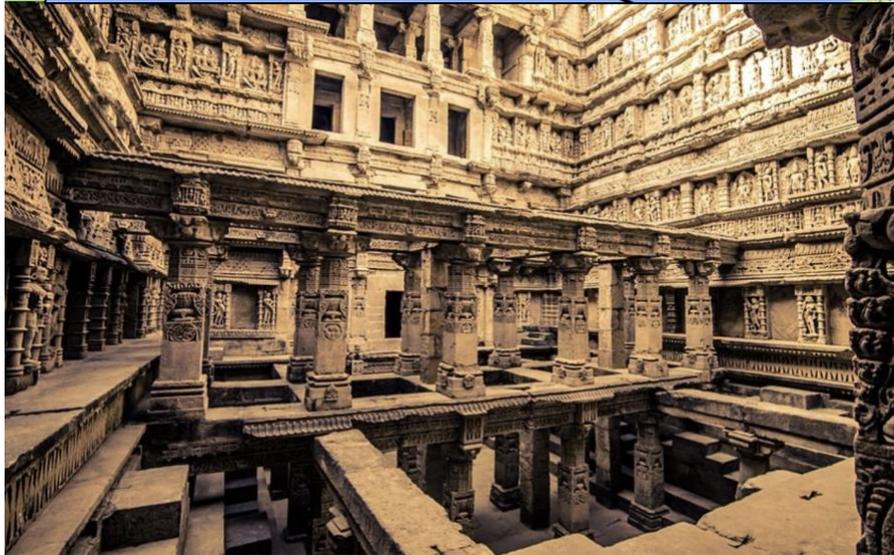
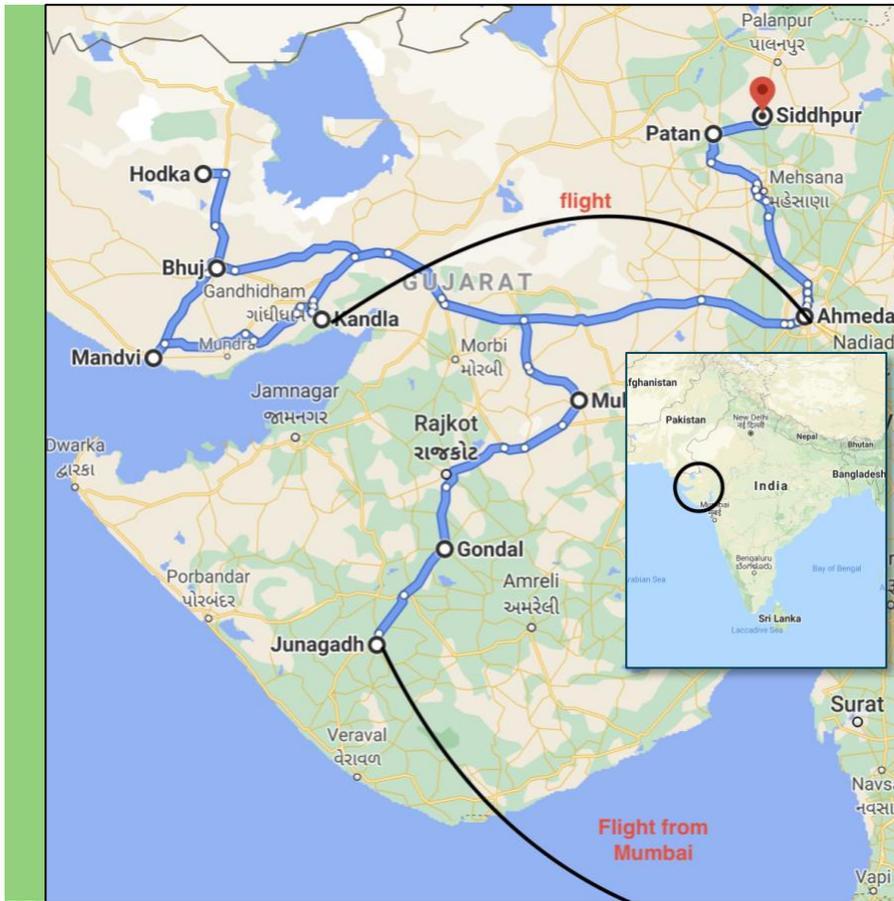


Gujarat – Kutch

15 Days (14 nights) + Optional 7 days Rajasthan

- 3 nights Gondal – Navlakha Palace, oldest stepwells of Dhank
- 2 nights Muli – Tangalia weaving and Wadhvan stepwells
- 2 nights Bhuj – bandhni tie-dye, Shrujan, Bhujodi weaving
- 1 night Hodko, Salt Desert – Banni villages, Rogan painting, pottery
- 2 nights Mandavi – Arabian Sea, Gharchoda tie-dye, batik
- 3 nights Ahmedabad – Gandhi Ashram, Calico Museum, UNESCO Old City; 2 stepwells, Mata ni Pachedi
- 1 night Patan – UNESCO stepwell, double-ikat weaving. Modhera
- En route: Sidhpur's old Bohra havelis, Palanpur, Modhera Sun Temple
- Optional: 7 days – off-beaten-track Rajasthan: Mt Abu, Udaipur, Bundi, Kota, Jaipur. Please enquire

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



“What I love about this itinerary

Combines the seminal features of this unique land: textiles, arts and crafts, and stepwells. Since cotton was domesticated here 5000 years ago, and the first loom tied, an incredibly rich culture has sprung up around the region's exquisite textiles, arts and crafts. To sustain the population and promote rich Silk Road trade, spectacular engineering feats gave rise to monumental water architecture. Even as interest is rising, stepwells are vanishing before our very eyes. This tour affords unparalleled opportunities to partake in a fast-disappearing India.

~ Shila Desai, conceptualizer



Day 1 Sept 26 **Arrival**

Arrive in Gondal. A stay in a heritage palace for some pampering and down time. Navlakha Palace, local markets, delectable cuisine, including the drying fields of the famous Gondal red chillies.



Day 2-4 Sept 27-28 **Gondal**

Experience the oldest stepwells through a guided visit in Dhank. Khadi weaving, Buddhist caves, Old Palace and Swami Narayan Temple sightseeing, as well as a visit to the forest village of the Madhari tribal communities.



Day 5-6 Sept 29-30 **Muli**

Bastion of the Parmar erstwhile royal family, also boasts exquisite and rare Tangalia weaving as well as intricate bead work. Close by are three delightful stepwells to explore.



Day 7-8 Sept 31-Oct 1 **Bhuj**

Gateway to much-loved Kutch! Charming Bhuj is home to bandhni, Ajrakh blockprinting, and natural dyeing vats, as well as a stunningly beautiful stepwell. Curator visit at LLDC Musuem of Kutch heritage, Rogan painting, and pottery.



Day 9 Oct 2 **Hodko**

The furthest point before Kutch is swallowed by the world's largest salt marsh. Surreal landscape punctuated with colourful villages, held together by an unsullied lifestyle. Visit Banni villages for Mutwa embroidery, lacquer work, and bell-making.



Day 10-11 Oct 3-4 **Mandvi**

Private beach on the Arabian Sea – with a difference. Stunning sunsets, camels, and access to one of the world’s oldest wooden ship building yards. Visit *gharchoda* tie-dye and batik workshops.



Days 12-13-14 Oct 5-6-7 **Ahmedabad**

Fly Kandla to Ahmedabad. Arrival and transfer to beautiful heritage hotel near UNESCO heritage site of Old City, Ahmedabad. Gandhi Ashram. Calico Museum. Adalaj Stepwell. Visit Mata ni Pachedi, a form of textile painting, as well as Asavali weaving.



Day 14 Oct 8 **Modhera Sun Temple**

Enroute to Patan. When the sun’s rays angle just right, an explosion of gold is seen in this skillfully constructed 11th CE temple to the sun god, Surya. Adjoining stepped reservoir is a sight to behold in symmetry and engineering.



Day 14 Oct 9 **Patan and Sidhpur**

Historic town of Sidhpur with colourful if decaying mansions filled with early 20th C Europe architectural detail. Patan, with its famous double ikat weaving and the incomparable UNESCO Rani ki Vav (Queen’s Stepwell)



Day 15 Oct 10 **Departure or Rajasthan**

Transfer back to Ahmedabad for connecting flight to Mumbai and international destination. Or continue your Indian love affair: 7 nights off-beaten-track Rajasthan... little-known forts, palaces, stepwells, Kota weaving, magical Bundi, and outstanding shopping!

Rajasthan

Optional



Off Beaten Path Rajasthan Oct 10-16, 2022

7 Days (6 nights)

- 2 nights Mount Abu – beautiful hill station, Jain Temples
- 2 nights Chittorgarh – via Udaipur. Romantic fort. Deepest stepwell
- Kota en route to Bundi – Kota Doria Weaving, painted rooms
- 2 nights Bundi – Bundi gallery with frescos, old town, Rani ki Baori
- Transfer to Jaipur – additional nights can be arranged for a fee. Also visit to Taj Mahal and transfer to Delhi for international flight. Please [enquire](#).

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

Accommodations

Spectacular fort palaces and heritage properties. The only way to do Rajasthan!

- Mt Abu: Ratan Vilas
- Chittorgarh: [Fort Begu](#)
- Bundi: Bundi Vilas

Note: actual choices depend on group size and booking availability but will be of similar grade

Inclusions

- All road transfers by private a/c vehicle
- Excellent English-speaking tour guides
- Art and culture tour leader
- All entrance fees and excursions
- All taxes
- Accommodation with daily breakfast

Not included: tips, meals not indicated, alcoholic beverages. Please add USD 100 for tipping.



Day 1-2 Oct 10-11 **Mount Abu**

Where Rajput kings came to cool off. Gorgeous setting atop the Aravali range, lakes, waterfalls, and spectacular 11th C Jain temples at Dilwana. Guided sightseeing, hiking, and visit to Dhruvdiya Waterfalls. A chance to stretch, inhale, and rejuvenate!



Day 3-4 Oct 12-13 **Chittorgarh**

Via Udaipur. Largest fort in India and Asia. Attacked thrice over 300 years from 1300's by Islamic invaders when Hindu kings fought fiercely to maintain independence. On all three occasions when faced with certain defeat, men fought to their death and women committed mass self-immolation (*jauhar*) rather than submit.



Day 5-6 Oct 14-15 **Kota and Bundi**

Kota is renowned for its Kota Doria weaving. We will visit weaving co-ops before heading to Bundi, famous for its charming blue-washed old town, Taragarh Fort, and miniature art gallery within the Bundi Palace. Our last stepwell will be the spectacular Chand ki Baori.



Day 7 Oct 16 **Jaipur and departure**

Transfer to fabled Pink City of Jaipur and onwards for your international flight, or stay awhile in this royal city to shop, relax, blockprint, and sightsee. We recommend our favourite 28 Kothi as a base, and are happy to arrange your stay. You may also wish to visit the Taj Mahal if you're flying home from Delhi. Please enquire.



Costs

Gujarat <i>Main Tour</i> <i>(min 8 pax) pp</i> <i>double occ</i>	<u>8-9 pax</u>	<u>10-11 pax</u>	<u>12+ pax</u>	\$1330 single supplement
	\$4388	\$4179	\$3980	
Rajasthan <i>Add-on</i> <i>(min 4 pax) pp</i> <i>double occ</i>	<u>4-5 pax</u>	<u>6-8 pax</u>	<u>10+ pax</u>	\$650 single supplement
	\$2122	\$2021	\$ 1925	

Please note:

- you are responsible for personal travel health and cancellation insurance. Under the laws of Ontario and T.I.C.O., E.Y.H.O. is mandated to carry liability insurance. We reserve the right to cancel the tour up to 30 days prior in the event of minimum numbers not being met, in the event of force majeure, and a perceived inability to deliver the tour safely
- Inflation due to pandemic: our tours are unfortunately no exception. We strive to keep costs down, but due to exceptional circumstances, costs may increase by up to 10%.
- Costs vary with group size as detailed above. Costs in registration form are based on average group size.

[For full FAQ's - click here](#)

A sampling of accommodations - heritage boutique/ community-run

"I was so fortunate to have selected E.Y.H.O. Tours"

-Tina Crabtree, Healdsburg, CA

Hodko | [Sham E Sharhad](#)



Muli | [Ambika Niwas Palace](#)



Ahmedabad | [House of MG](#)





INCLUDES – main tour Gujarat-Kutch

- # Led by textile expert of native Gujarati descent, fluent in English and Gujarati
- # Superb English speaking textile guides
- # All group transfers, tours and excursions in private air-conditioned transportation
- # Accommodation on twin sharing basis or single as applicable
- # All breakfasts
- # Lunch or dinner daily
- # Hands on workshops in tie-dye bandhni, blockprinting, and embroidery including materials and instruction. Many demos
- # All monument entrance fees
- # Internal flight Kandla-Ahmedabad
- # Gratuities for porters and hotel staff

EXCLUDES

- # Travel insurance
- # International flights/ all internal flights other than mentioned above
- # Gratuities - \$ 200 pp Gujarat and \$100 pp Rajasthan tipping kitty for guides and drivers

Enquiries

shila@eyhotours.com

Visit

www.eyhotours.com

TICO (Travel Industry of Ontario) accredited

Terms and Conditions

Contracted through Tourism Board of India Member,

accredited since 2005.

Register with deposit of USD 800