

Orissa (Odisha), India Tribal Tapestry and Textiles

January 28 - February 11, 2020

*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



Photos: Shila Desai



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 and natural dyeing. After, pause awhile at ancient 13thC monuments and stop in at India's most revered temples where the beat of devotion has continued unabated for millennia.



So say travellers on our sold out 2019 tour . . .

A life changing trip in many respects with in depth exposure and unhurried appreciation of the tribal cultures of Orissa. I gained new perspectives on the challenges of India's rapid growth and preserving its cultural heritage. I highly recommend this trip. – Dr. Sharon W., Burlington, ON

Thank you for organizing another superb tour. Poulak was another treasure. His knowledge and passion about Odisha and 'his' people was intoxicating. Truly a SUCCESS! – Anne Alldread, Derbyshire, U.K.

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

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 15 Days (14 Nights) | Jan 28 – Feb 11, 2020

- 1 night Vishakapatnam – India’s high-tech hub
- 1 night Semiliguda – enroute 11thC temple, fish market
- 4 nights Goudagouda Village – charming guest house
- 1 night Baliguda – tribal community visit
- 1 night Gopalpur – beach-side stay, weavers village
- 2 nights Dhenkanal – palace stay, ikat weavers
- 1 night Bhubhaneshwar – UNESCO 13thC temples
- 3 nights Puri – ocean-side, UNESCO Konarak Temple

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

Cost

15 Days, just show up with your suitcase

USD 3850 pp double occupancy/ Add USD 1350 single room

Highlights

- 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
- Tribal dances and ceremonies
- Visit a unique reformist Hindu monastery
- Nuapatna weavers’ colony for single ikat
- Kotpad for natural dyeing on organic cotton
- Generational palm-leaf painting
- Gotipua dance-form
- Al fresco picnic lunches in fields
- And much more . . .

“Why Orissa?”

Orissa is far from the hustle of modernizing India. A trip there is like going back in time, perhaps fifty years, when lifestyles in India were unhurried and communal. In local markets, I was thrilled to interact 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 an ancient pre-Aryan and Dravidian culture. Leaving wifi and gizmos 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



Seemachalan Temple

Day 1: Tuesday Jan 28

Vishakapatnam

Welcome to Vishakapatnam! You will be met on arrival and transferred to our beachside hotel.

- We can advise on best flight options into Vishakapatnam from major Indian arrival points. Please plan on arriving either prior to or on this date.
- Arrivals prior to noon on Jan 28 will require an extra night stay

Relax after your long journey, walk the beach or rest up for the adventures up ahead.

Meals: none



Araku Valley

Day 2: Wednesday Jan 29

Semiliguda

Morning drive out of Vishakapatnam, past beaches which mostly locals frequent on Sundays as a family outing.

Stop by the local fish harbor to witness the bustling and energy of this vibrant market.

Take in ritual worship at 11thC temple Seemanchalam, a revered Shiva temple and pilgrimage site.

Continue on to Semiliguda. Dinner and overnight.

Meals: B, L, D



Gadaba Woman

Day 3: Thursday Jan 30

Goudagouda

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 necklaces and homemade alcohol. Bonda women adorn themselves with copious beaded neckpieces and wear a loincloth. Also meet Gadaba who practise shamanistic rituals. Break for lunch.

Continue on to your charming guesthouse, an initiative that supports community tribal peoples. Overnight at guesthouse.

Meals: B, L, D



Mali tribal woman



LimcaPottery



Kotpad textiles

Day 4: Friday Jan 31

Goudagouda

Today's excursion will take us to the largest weekly market of this area in Kunduli where livestock is traded the old-fashioned way alongside forest produce. You'll spot the local champion farmers: the Mali women with all manner of appetizing fruits and vegetables, many of which will grace your table.

Break for lunch, followed by a walk to Bantalabiri tribal village for a special treat – a tribal Dhemsas dance!

Return to guesthouse and overnight.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 5: Saturday Feb 1

Goudagouda

Morning hike around the peaceful countryside from village to unspoiled village; visit the Paraja, Mali and Kondh tribal communities. The Parajas 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. After a relaxed lunch, explore a nearby potters village. Clay is kneaded by hand and feet, and thrown on an ancient wheel. The kiln's firing hasn't changed in centuries. Overnight at the guesthouse.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 6: Sunday Feb 2

Kotpad

Head out for a day excursion to Kotpad, roughly a 3hr drive. Learn about the local craft of natural cotton dyeing using dyes sources from nearby forests and nature's basket.

After a leisurely lunch, visit the vibrant weekly market at Koraput.

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!

Return to guesthouse and overnight.

Meals: B, L, D

Rural Orissa



Dongria girls



Didayi fisherfolk



Day 7: Monday Feb 3

Baliguda

Bid farewell to your community hosts as we head onwards to Baliguda.

Winding through scenic countryside, stop for a picnic lunch enroute, perhaps under a mango tree within the lowing of a buffalo!

Visit the Desia Kondh tribal community, distinguished by facial tattoos of the elder women. Facial tattoos are believed as a way to identify a kinswoman in the afterlife. Drive on to the hotel for dinner and a relaxing evening.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 8: Tuesday Feb 4

Gopalpur

Descend from the hills into the coastal plains via a traditional weaving village, Padmanavpur, a heritage crafts village where weaving as a livelihood continues for over 200 years through a co-operative. Entire family gets involved in producing cotton saris; on average they produce one sari a day.

Upon arrival at your beachside hotel, stretch your legs on the expansive stretch of serene sand and water or enjoy a beachside sundowner. Evening at leisure.

Meals: B, L

Day 9: Wednesday Feb 5

Dhenkanal

A highlight for textile lovers: visit the Nuapatana and Maniabhand textile colonies to see the various steps involved in single ikat weaving. Starting from silk cocoons, to tie-dyeing individual strands and then hand weaving on traditional looms. Meet award-winning master weavers, and marvel at the intricacy of design. Drive on to Dhenkanal, a former principality established in 16thC. After days in rural outposts, enjoy being pampered in this lovely palace-fort as guests of the current owners and royal descendants. Relax in the palace grounds after dinner.

Meals: B, L, D



Day 10: Thursday Feb 6

Dhenkanal

Take a calming morning stroll through surrounding forest, perhaps even spotting a wild elephant. Later, 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. Visit a Dokra village for metal working in millennia-old lost wax casting method.

Back at the palace, a sumptuous dinner from the royal kitchen awaits, accompanied by a bonfire if the weather warrants.

Meals: B, L, D



Day 11: Friday Feb 7

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: 7thC Parashurameshvara Shiva Temple; 10thC Mukteswar Temple's exquisite stone sculptures ; Lingaraj Temple, the largest temple. Explore ancient temples and water tanks nestled in the city's old quarter.

Meals: B



Day 12: Saturday Feb 8

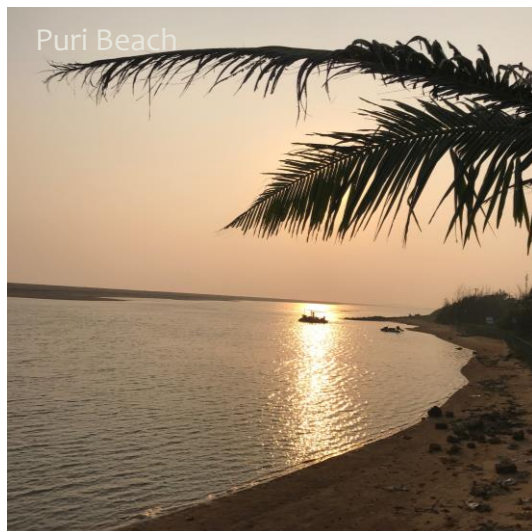
Puri

Morning, transfer to Puri via Raghurajpur artisan village where villagers produce various handicrafts like papier mache, pattchitra painting, stone work, and palm leaf etchings.

Behold a traditional Gotipua folk dance at the village amphitheater under the shade of palm trees. Gotipua was the precursor of the Odissi classical dance form.

Late afternoon arrival in Puri and transfer to a beach hotel. Dinner and overnight.

Meals: B, L



Day 13: Sunday Feb 9

Puri

Unwind on the tranquil waters of Chilika Lake. Take a boat cruise to the nearby island villages, and stroll through surrounding fishing towns. Enjoy a lunch of fresh seafood and relax under the island palms in complete serenity.

Late afternoon 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. You may wish to shop for single ikat yardage and textiles.

Meals: B, L



Day 14: Monday Feb 10

Puri

Explore the holy spiritual city of Puri by a rickshaw initiative. Ride through medieval by-lanes, cremation *ghats*, lively water tank, a local bazaar, with the age-old Jagannath temple as 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."

Meals: B, farewell dinner



Day 15: Tuesday Feb 11

Departure

Transfer to Bhubaneshwar 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. Options include a stay in Kolkata: visit the Victoria Memorial, Park Street, and flower market. Please contact us for details.

Meals: B



INCLUDES

- Conceptualised and organised by E.Y.H.O. Tours owner, Shila Desai
- Expert English-speaking local leader
- Demos by leading textile and handicraft artisans
- 4-5* accommodations in urban areas
- Eco resort/guesthouse in rural areas with private western style bathrooms
- All breakfasts; other meals as indicated
- Lunch with Gotipua artiste family
- All excursions, entry fees, and local taxes
- Private transportation in air conditioned vehicles
- Gratuities for porters and hotel staff

EXCLUDES

- # Travel insurance # International flights # Internal flights
- # Gratuities - a USD100pp tipping kitty for guides and drivers

Why choose E.Y.H.O. ?

Our tours are chock-full of value-added features.

[Click](#) for a line comparison

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

Hans Coco Palms



Denkanal Palace



Chandoori Sai Guest house



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

GETTING THERE

- International flights fly into and out of Delhi (DEL), Mumbai (BOM) or Kolkata (CCU). We can arrange internal flights from any city to starting point in Vishakhapatnam (VTZ), and out of ending point in Bhubaneswar (BBI)
- Since many international flights arrive either late night or early morning, we can arrange a night in a nearby airport hotel with two-way airport transfers
- Should you wish to extend your stay, we can arrange sightseeing according to your interests with private transportation and guides

An idea of internal flight costs and timings (subject to change)

Arrival 28th Jan 2020

BOM-VTZ (approx. USD 100)

05.45–08.50 Spice Jet

09.50–13.40 Air India

DEL-VTZ (approx. USD 100)

05.20–07.35 Indigo

15.00–17.50 Air India

CCU-VTZ (approx. USD 60)

10.30–12.05 Indigo

Departure 11th Feb 2020

BBI-BOM (approx. USD 110)

15.00–17.05 Air India

13.10–15.40 Indigo

BBI-DEL (approx. USD 90)

9.40–12.00 Vistara

18.40–21.00 Indigo

BBI-CCU (approx. USD 50)

11.30–12.40 GoAir

18.15–19.20 Air Asia

One night 3-4* airport hotel stay + two way transfer in Mumbai, Delhi or Kolkata costs approximately USD 200 per room inclusive of breakfast and taxes

[Contact us](#) for more information

