

EAST INDIA · COMPLETE TRAVEL GUIDE

Odisha

Temples, tribal art and a quiet coastline — the Jagannath yatra with a beach and a lake thrown in.

BEST MONTHS	FROM AHMEDABAD	IDEAL DURATION	VEG & JAIN FOOD	GOOD FOR
October to February; avoid June–July (Rath Yatra crowds) and Oct–Nov cyclone risk on the coast	Ahmedabad → Bhubaneswar, mostly one-stop via Hyderabad or Kolkata, about 4–5 h; direct IndiGo flights run on some days	3–7 nights	Good in Bhubaneswar and Puri, including pure-veg Jagannath Mahaprasad; thinner in Chandipur/Chilika areas	Pilgrimage groups, Jain families (Udayagiri–Khandagiri), families with seniors, cultural travellers

Odisha is the pilgrimage-plus-culture trip: Bhubaneswar's temple cluster and the Jain caves at Udayagiri–Khandagiri, the Jagannath Temple at Puri, the Sun Temple at Konark, and Chilika Lake for the Irrawaddy dolphins, all within a single compact loop around the state's eastern edge. It suits families doing a temple circuit as much as those wanting a relaxed beach-and-culture week.

For Gujarati travellers the practical picture is mixed but manageable. Ahmedabad–Bhubaneswar has no reliable daily direct flight — expect a one-stop connection most days — but once you land, distances are short: Bhubaneswar to Puri is under 90 minutes, Konark another hour beyond that. Pure-veg and Jain food is available in Bhubaneswar and Puri (including Jagannath Temple's own Mahaprasad kitchen, which is strictly vegetarian), though it thins out once you head to Chandipur or Chilika, so we plan those days with packed meals or advance notice to the hotel.

What to see

Lingaraj Temple, Bhubaneswar

An 11th-century Shiva temple, the largest and most important in the city; non-Hindus are not permitted inside but can view the sanctum from a platform outside the boundary wall.

Udayagiri–Khandagiri Jain caves

2nd-century BCE rock-cut caves carved for Jain monks under King Kharavela, including the Hathigumpha inscription; an important site for Jain pilgrims and open to all, no dress restrictions.

Puri Jagannath Temple

One of the four Char Dham, with the towering 12th-century temple and the daily rhythm of the deity's rituals; entry is restricted to Hindus and the Mahaprasad at Ananda Bazaar is a meal worth planning around.

Mukteshwar and Rajarani Temples

Two of India's finest examples of Kalinga temple architecture, both open to all visitors and a short walk apart — Mukteshwar's carved torana gateway is the most photographed spot in Bhubaneswar.

Dhuli

The hill where Ashoka is believed to have renounced violence after the Kalinga war; a rock edict, the Shanti Stupa built by Japanese Buddhists, and views over the Daya river.

Konark Sun Temple

The 13th-century chariot temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, with its stone wheels and horses carved to represent the sun god's chariot — best seen at sunrise or in the soft light of late afternoon.

Chilika Lake and Satapada dolphins

Asia's largest brackish-water lagoon; a boat from Satapada takes you out to spot Irrawaddy dolphins, migratory birds in winter, and the sandbar at the sea mouth.

Raghurajpur artist village and Pipli appliqué

Raghurajpur is a heritage crafts village of pattachitra painters and palm-leaf artists near Puri; Pipli, on the Bhubaneswar–Puri road, is known for its bright appliqué work used in temple umbrellas and home decor.

Getting there from Ahmedabad

Fly: there is no reliable daily non-stop Ahmedabad–Bhubaneswar flight; IndiGo runs a direct service on some days of the week, otherwise expect one stop via Hyderabad or Kolkata, total travel time 4–5 hours. Check the day-of-week schedule when booking, as direct availability changes seasonally.

Train: the Puri–Ahmedabad (Okha) Express and similar weekly trains take roughly 40–45 hours — a long journey, only worth it for groups who enjoy rail travel or are combining Odisha with other eastern states.

Within Odisha: a private car with driver is the standard way to get around. Roads on the Bhubaneswar–Puri–Konark triangle (the 'Golden Triangle' roads) are good NH-class highways; Chandipur and Simlipal involve narrower state roads and longer drive times.

Getting around. A private AC car with driver covers the whole circuit and is what we book for every group — the Bhubaneswar–Puri–Konark roads are good and distances short (under 2.5 hours between any two points on the triangle). Auto-rickshaws are fine for short hops within Bhubaneswar or Puri town. Odisha's OSRTC buses connect the main towns but are not practical with luggage and elders.

When to go

SEASON	MONTHS	WHAT TO EXPECT
Peak	October – February	Dry and pleasant, 15–28°C; the best months for temple visits and Chilika. December–January can be misty in the morning. Book Puri hotels 4–6 weeks ahead for the Christmas–New Year week.
Hot	March – May	Temperatures climb to 35–40°C inland; the coast is more bearable but humid. Manageable for a short

SEASON	MONTHS	WHAT TO EXPECT
		trip with early starts, less comfortable for seniors on a longer itinerary.
Rath Yatra	June – July (dates shift with the lunar calendar; 2026 dates confirmed closer to the time)	Puri's biggest festival, when the Jagannath deities process on giant chariots – extraordinary to witness but the town is packed for days, hotel rates spike, and darshan inside the temple is suspended during the yatra itself. Only for groups specifically travelling for the festival.
Monsoon / Cyclone	June – September main monsoon; October – November carries cyclone risk on the Odisha coast	Heavy rain June–September; the Bay of Bengal coast (Puri, Chandipur, Gopalpur) sees occasional cyclones in October–November, which can disrupt travel with little notice. We avoid booking coastal nights in this window without a flexible

Permits, rules and packing

No permits are needed anywhere on this circuit. Jagannath Temple in Puri admits only Hindus (a declaration may be asked at the gate); phones, cameras, leather items and footwear are not allowed inside and must be deposited at a counter outside — carry small change and expect a short queue. Lingaraj Temple in Bhubaneswar has a similar restriction, but the sanctum can be viewed from the Alauddin Platform just outside the boundary wall regardless of religion.

What to pack

- Modest, covering clothing for temple visits — no shorts or sleeveless tops at Jagannath or Lingaraj
- Comfortable walking sandals that slip off easily, since footwear is left outside most temples
- Sun hat and sunscreen — Konark and Dhauli have long stretches with little shade
- A light jacket for December–January mornings, especially at Chilika
- Swimwear and a change of clothes for Puri or Chandipur beach
- Hand sanitiser and wet wipes — useful after temple queues and beach visits
- A printed or offline map, since mobile network can be patchy around Chilika and Simlipal

Veg and Jain food

- Odia vegetarian food is mild and rice-based — dalma (lentils with vegetables), khatta (a sweet-sour curry), and kheer are easy for most Gujarati palates; ask hotels to reduce mustard oil if it isn't to your taste.
- Jagannath Temple's Mahaprasad, served at Ananda Bazaar within the temple complex, is prepared without onion or garlic and is strictly vegetarian — a meal worth building the Puri day around, though it is eaten communally and not private catering.
- Bhubaneswar and Puri both have Gujarati and Marwari-run restaurants and a few pure-veg thali places used to groups from Gujarat and Rajasthan; Jain meals (no onion, garlic or root vegetables) can be arranged at most hotels with a day's notice.
- Once you move to Chandipur, Chilika's outer villages, or Simlipal, vegetarian options narrow to basic dal-rice-sabzi at local dhabas — we recommend carrying some familiar snacks for these legs and confirming meal plans with the hotel in advance.

What it costs

Indicative per-person costs on twin sharing for a 5–6 night trip, excluding flights from Ahmedabad, covering private car, hotels, breakfast and dinner. Actual quotes depend on dates, hotel choice and group size; flights vary more here than on most routes because of limited direct connectivity.

VALUE

₹22,000 – 28,000

3★ hotels, shared boat slots at Satapada, economy connecting flights booked 6+ weeks ahead

COMFORT

₹30,000 – 42,000

4★ hotels, private boat at Chilika, flexible flight connections via Hyderabad or Kolkata

PREMIUM

₹48,000 – 65,000

5★ hotels (Mayfair properties in Bhubaneswar and Puri), private car upgrade, direct flight where available

Where the money goes

- Flights are often the single largest cost given limited direct connectivity: an Ahmedabad–Bhubaneswar return runs ₹14,000–22,000 booked early via a one-stop routing, more in Rath Yatra week.
- Chilika boat at Satapada: a shared boat runs ₹500–700 per person for about 2 hours; a private boat for a family group is ₹2,500–4,000 depending on boat size and season.
- Konark Sun Temple entry: ₹40 for Indian nationals; a licensed guide, if wanted, is an additional ₹300–500.
- Puri hotels: a decent 3★ near the temple runs ₹2,500–4,000 per room per night; beachfront 4★/5★ properties run ₹6,000–14,000, higher again in the Christmas–New Year and Rath Yatra weeks.
- Car: an Innova with driver for the circuit runs roughly ₹3,500–4,500 per day including fuel and driver allowance.

Travelling with parents and children

- Jagannath Temple involves a fair walk and security queues in the heat — carry water, keep phones and leather items in the car beforehand to avoid the deposit counter queue, and plan the visit for early morning or early evening rather than midday.
- Udayagiri–Khandagiri involves climbing between cave groups on stone steps; comfortable, non-slip footwear matters more here than at most of the flatter sites on this trip.
- Konark is best visited at sunrise (cooler, better light for photos, fewer crowds) or in the last two hours before closing; midday sun on the open stone complex is hard on seniors and small children.
- The sea at Puri has a strong undertow and lifeguard cover is limited outside the main patrolled stretch — swimming is best kept to ankle-to-knee depth, and children should not go in unsupervised even in shallow water.
- Chilika's dolphin sightings are best in the early morning (7–10 am); an afternoon boat trip is more about the lake scenery and birdlife than reliable dolphin viewing.
- Odisha hotels outside Bhubaneswar and Puri (Chandipur, Chilika-side towns) have fewer international-standard options — book these legs early and confirm hot water and AC directly with the property for older travellers.

Questions families ask us

Can non-Hindus visit the Jagannath Temple in Puri?

No — entry is restricted to Hindus, and a declaration of faith may be asked at the gate. Phones, cameras, leather items (belts, wallets, shoes) are not allowed inside and must be deposited at a counter outside the main entrance. Non-Hindu members of a mixed family can still visit Lingaraj Temple's viewing platform in Bhubaneswar, Konark, and the rest of the circuit without restriction.

When is Rath Yatra and should we plan our trip around it?

Rath Yatra falls on the lunar calendar, typically June or July; exact 2026 dates are confirmed closer to the time. It is spectacular but Puri is extremely crowded for several days, hotel rates rise sharply, and regular darshan inside the temple is suspended during the festival itself — only plan around it if witnessing the chariot procession is the specific goal, not for a standard sightseeing trip.

What is the best time to visit Konark — morning or evening?

Sunrise is ideal: the light is soft for photographs, the stone isn't yet hot underfoot, and the site is quietest. Late afternoon, in the two hours before closing, is the next-best option. Midday sun on the open, largely unshaded complex is uncomfortable, especially for seniors and children.

Is Udayagiri–Khandagiri worth visiting for Jain pilgrims specifically?

Yes — these are among the oldest Jain rock-cut monastic sites in India, carved in the 2nd century BCE under King Kharavela, whose Hathigumpha inscription (in Khandagiri) is a key historical record for Jain history. There's no separate darshan ritual as at an active temple, but it is a meaningful historical and pilgrimage stop that we build into every Bhubaneswar day.

Is it safe to swim at Puri beach?

The sea has a noticeable undertow and lifeguard presence is limited to certain stretches. We advise families to stay in shallow water near the patrolled area and keep children within arm's reach — it's a good beach for a walk and a paddle, less suited to serious swimming.

Is Gujarati or Jain food available in Odisha?

Yes in Bhubaneswar and Puri, where a handful of Gujarati and Marwari-run restaurants and pure-veg thali places cater to groups from Gujarat; most hotels can arrange Jain meals (no onion, garlic, or root vegetables) with a day's notice. Once you move to Chandipur, outer Chilika, or Simlipal, options narrow to simple dal-rice-sabzi at local eateries, so we suggest carrying some snacks for those legs.

Classic Odisha

The standard temple-and-coast loop: two nights in Bhubaneswar for temples and caves, two in Puri for Jagannath darshan and the beach, a day each for Konark and Chilika, and a last night back in Bhubaneswar before the flight home.

5 nights / 6 days Route: **Bhubaneswar – Puri – Konark – Chilika – Bhubaneswar** From **₹26,000** pp, indicative

Day

1

BHUBANESWAR

Arrive and settle in

Land in Bhubaneswar (one-stop from Ahmedabad, usually arriving by early afternoon) and check in. If time allows, an easy first evening at Mukteshwar and Rajarani Temples, both a short walk apart and open till around 6 pm. Rest of the evening free; dinner at the hotel or a nearby pure-veg restaurant.

Stay: **Bhubaneswar** · Meals: **Dinner**

Day

2

BHUBANESWAR

Temples and caves

Morning at Lingaraj Temple — non-Hindus view the sanctum from the Alauddin Platform outside the wall — followed by Mukteshwar and Rajarani if not covered the previous evening. After lunch, Udayagiri–Khandagiri Jain caves (open 8 am–6 pm, small entry fee), an important stop for Jain families. Optional late-afternoon visit to Nandankanan Zoological Park for its white tigers and botanical garden, about 20 km from the city.

Stay: **Bhubaneswar** · Meals: **Breakfast, Dinner**

Day

3

BHUBANESWAR → DHAULI → PURI

Dhuli and Jagannath darshan

Leave after breakfast, stopping at Dhuli (20 km, 30 minutes) to see the Ashokan rock edict and the Shanti Stupa. Continue to Puri (65 km further, about 1.5 hours) and check in by early afternoon. Afternoon darshan at Jagannath Temple — plan for security queues and modest dress — followed by Mahaprasad at Ananda Bazaar inside the temple complex. Evening walk on Puri beach.

Stay: **Puri** · Meals: **Breakfast, Dinner**

Day

4

PURI

Konark and craft villages

Early start to Konark (35 km, 1 hour) to see the Sun Temple in the soft morning light before the crowds and heat build up; allow 1.5–2 hours to walk the full complex. On the return, stop at Raghurajpur artist village to watch pattachitra painters at work, and at Pipli for appliqué work. Back in Puri by late afternoon, free evening on the beach.

Stay: **Puri** · Meals: **Breakfast, Dinner**

Day

5

PURI → SATAPADA → BHUBANESWAR

Chilika dolphins and back

Early departure to Satapada (50 km, 1.5 hours) for a boat ride on Chilika Lake to spot Irrawaddy dolphins (best sightings 7–10 am) and, in winter, migratory birds at the lake's bird sanctuary sections. Return via Bhubaneswar (100 km, 2.5 hours), arriving by evening for a last night before the flight home. Free time for last-minute shopping at Bhubaneswar's Ekamra Haat crafts market.

Stay: **Bhubaneswar** · Meals: **Breakfast, Dinner**

Day
6

BHUBANESWAR → AHMEDABAD

Fly home

Bhubaneswar airport is centrally located, 15–20 minutes from most city hotels. Most Ahmedabad connections route through Hyderabad or Kolkata; check onward connection timing before booking a late checkout.

Stay: — · Meals: **Breakfast**

Included

- + 5 nights in inspected 3★/4★ hotels
- + Private AC vehicle for the whole trip
- + Daily breakfast and veg dinner
- + Chilika boat ride at Satapada
- + Konark Sun Temple entry
- + Airport pickup and drop

Not included

- Flights Ahmedabad–Bhubaneswar
- Lunches on sightseeing days
- Nandankanan Zoo entry
- Travel insurance and GST 5%

STANDARD

₹26,000–32,000

Per person, twin sharing

PREMIUM

₹40,000–52,000

Per person, twin sharing

Per person on twin sharing, indicative for 2026, excluding flights (add ₹12,000–20,000 return depending on route and season). Rath Yatra week (June/July) runs 30–40% higher where hotels are even available.

Relaxed Odisha with Chandipur

The same core circuit at a gentler pace, with two nights added at Chandipur beach — known for its retreating sea — and a half-day in Cuttack, the old silver-filigree capital. Built for families travelling with senior parents or young children who prefer fewer long driving days.

7 nights / 8 days Route: **Bhubaneswar – Puri – Konark – Chilika – Cuttack – Chandipur – Bhubaneswar**

From **₹34,000** pp, indicative

Day

1

BHUBANESWAR

Arrive and settle in

Land in Bhubaneswar, check in, and rest. A short evening visit to Mukteshwar and Rajarani Temples if the flight lands early enough; otherwise a quiet first evening.

Stay: **Bhubaneswar** · Meals: **Dinner**

Day

2

BHUBANESWAR

Temples

A relaxed morning at Lingaraj (viewing platform), Mukteshwar and Rajarani, with breaks between each stop rather than a rushed circuit. Afternoon free at the hotel; those who want more can visit Nandankanan Zoo.

Stay: **Bhubaneswar** · Meals: **Breakfast, Dinner**

Day

3

BHUBANESWAR

Udayagiri–Khandagiri and Dhauli

Morning at Udayagiri–Khandagiri Jain caves, unhurried, with time to read the Hathigumpha inscription plaques. Afternoon at Dhauli for the Ashokan edict and Shanti Stupa, a short and easy outing. Free evening.

Stay: **Bhubaneswar** · Meals: **Breakfast, Dinner**

Day

4

BHUBANESWAR → PURI

To Puri and Jagannath darshan

Drive to Puri (65 km, 1.5–2 hours) after a late breakfast. Check in, rest, and go for afternoon darshan at Jagannath Temple followed by Mahaprasad at Ananda Bazaar. Evening on the beach, away from the crowded main stretch for a quieter walk.

Stay: **Puri** · Meals: **Breakfast, Dinner**

Day

5

PURI

Konark and villages, free afternoon

Morning trip to Konark Sun Temple, timed for the cooler hours, followed by Raghurajpur artist village and Pipli on the way back. Afternoon is kept free for the beach or hotel pool — no evening activity planned, useful for seniors who prefer to rest after a morning out.

Stay: **Puri** · Meals: **Breakfast, Dinner**

Day
6

PURI → CHILIKA → CUTTACK → CHANDIPUR

Dolphins, old city, and the sea road

Early boat ride at Satapada for the Chilika dolphins, then a drive north via Cuttack (about 2.5 hours from Satapada) for a short stop at the Barabati Fort ruins and the silver-filigree market, and lunch. Continue to Chandipur (90 km further, 2 hours), reaching by evening — this is a long travel day, best broken with a proper lunch stop in Cuttack.

Stay: Chandipur · Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day
7

CHANDIPUR → BHUBANESWAR

The retreating sea, then back

Morning at Chandipur beach, where the sea retreats nearly 5 km at low tide — check tide timing the evening before, as the effect is only visible at low tide. Late morning drive back to Bhubaneswar (100 km, 2.5 hours) for a last night and time for shopping at Ekamra Haat.

Stay: Bhubaneswar · Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day
8

BHUBANESWAR → AHMEDABAD

Fly home

Airport is 15–20 minutes from most city hotels; check your connection timing via Hyderabad or Kolkata before planning a late checkout.

Stay: — · Meals: Breakfast

Included

- + 7 nights in inspected 3★/4★ hotels
- + Private AC vehicle for the whole trip
- + Daily breakfast and veg dinner
- + Chilika boat ride at Satapada
- + Konark Sun Temple entry
- + Airport pickup and drop

Not included

- Flights Ahmedabad–Bhubaneswar
- Lunches on sightseeing days
- Nandankanan Zoo entry
- Travel insurance and GST 5%

STANDARD

₹34,000–42,000

Per person, twin sharing

PREMIUM

₹52,000–68,000

Per person, twin sharing

Per person on twin sharing, indicative for 2026, excluding flights. Chandipur has fewer hotel options than Puri, so premium-band rooms should be booked well ahead.

Bhubaneswar–Puri–Konark Short Break

A long-weekend version covering the essential three: Bhubaneswar's temples and caves, Jagannath darshan at Puri, and Konark's Sun Temple, without Chilika or the further-out beaches.

3 nights / 4 days		Route: Bhubaneswar – Puri – Konark – Bhubaneswar	From ₹18,000 pp, indicative
Day 1	BHUBANESWAR Temples and caves	Land in Bhubaneswar, check in, and head straight out for Lingaraj Temple (viewing platform for non-Hindus), Mukteshwar and Rajarani Temples. After lunch, Udayagiri–Khandagiri Jain caves. Evening free. Stay: Bhubaneswar · Meals: Dinner	
Day 2	BHUBANESWAR → DHAULI → PURI Dhuli and Jagannath darshan	Morning stop at Dhuli for the Ashokan edict and Shanti Stupa, then drive to Puri (65 km, 1.5 hours) and check in. Afternoon darshan at Jagannath Temple and Mahaprasad at Ananda Bazaar. Evening walk on Puri beach. Stay: Puri · Meals: Breakfast, Dinner	
Day 3	PURI → KONARK → PURI Sun Temple and craft villages	Early departure to Konark (35 km, 1 hour) to beat the heat and crowds. On the return, stop at Raghurajpur artist village and Pipli for appliqué shopping. Back in Puri by early afternoon; rest of the day free on the beach. Stay: Puri · Meals: Breakfast, Dinner	
Day 4	PURI → BHUBANESWAR → AHMEDABAD Fly home	Drive back to Bhubaneswar (65 km, 1.5–2 hours) in time for the flight; keep at least 3.5 hours between arrival at the airport and departure given the one-stop connection most routes need. Stay: — · Meals: Breakfast	

Included

- + 3 nights: hotel in Bhubaneswar and hotel in Puri
- + Private AC vehicle for the whole trip
- + Breakfast and dinner daily
- + Konark Sun Temple entry
- + Airport pickup and drop

Not included

- Flights Ahmedabad–Bhubaneswar
- Lunches
- Nandankanan Zoo entry
- Travel insurance and GST 5%

STANDARD

₹18,000–22,000

Per person, twin sharing

PREMIUM

₹28,000–36,000

Per person, twin sharing

Per person on twin sharing, indicative for 2026, excluding flights. Best value version of the trip; works well as a weekend extension to a Bhubaneswar business visit.

Want this booked properly?

Send this PDF to us on WhatsApp with your dates and the number of travellers. Hotel names and a firm price within 24 hours.

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