



## nature & wildlife

11 Days • Bhubaneshwar - Puri • €780\*

India is a country of vastly differing scenery and people. Exemplified as much in the mountains, plains, rivers, forests and coastline, as in the countries rich cultural diversity. Orissa is one of India's remotest regions and also one of its most distinctive.

On the west Orissa is bounded by the thickly forested hills of the Eastern Ghats while the east boasts a 500km coastline facing the Bay of Bengal. The hinterland a lush stretch of green paddy fields dotted with ancient Buddhist ruins and tranquil hamlets where traditional crafts flourish.

Nature's paradise revealed. In myriad forms; from flaming red flowers bursting through verdant jungles to majestic mangroves and wandering waterways. Step into forests echoing the trumpet of elephants, drift along perennial rivers, walk along ancient tracks and meet communities that abide

### profile

For nature lover's that like it raw; pure and natural. Plenty of time soaking up varied and distinct natural environments. Be prepared for simplicity in the lap of nature. Orissa is a remote region and lacks many basic facilities of developed countries. Consequently travel can be more physically demanding than your typical tour package. Adapting to basic infrastructure and simple resources are essential. As always in India, those with patience, openness and a healthy spirit of adventure are amply rewarded.

seasons of change and systems of thought aligned with the natural world. Cruise the vast tranquil waters of Asia's largest estuarine lagoon and camp under the stars. Explore the sea swept temple town of Puri, and behold the man-made marvels of ancient India's earliest temples. Discover the pure pleasures of nature at its best; a sublime journey and quite simply a nature lover's delight!

### fast facts

**Support:** Passionate Local Leader throughout

**Activities:** Similipal National Park Entry & Activities, Bhitarkanika National Park Entry & Activities, Mahima rituals, Chilika Lake Boats & Camping, UNESCO World Heritage Konark Sun Temple Entry, Puri Old City by Cycle Rickshaw.

**Accommodation:** Hotel/guesthouse (4 nights), Forest Rest House/Tourist Bungalow (5 nights), Tent Camp (1 nt).

**Transport:** Private transport, cycle rickshaws, cycling, local ferry, bullock cart, pole boat.

**Meals:** 7 Breakfasts, 3 Lunches, 6 Dinners. Please allow approx. €10 per day for additional meals.

**Arrival/Departure:** Bhubaneshwar, the capital of Orissa is well connected to the rest of India by Domestic Airlines and the Indian Railway network. Puri is only a 2 hour drive to the Airport at Bhubaneshwar.

**Tipping:** An essential way of life in India, we will provide you appropriate guidelines.

## itinerary

**Day 1 Arrive Bhubaneshwar**, the lively capital of Orissa since the ancient 'Kalinga' empire boasts settlement stretching back 2000 years. Explore animated medieval temples and broad tree lined avenues to unearth the spirit behind the city.

**Group Meeting:** Travellers are requested to arrive on by Day 1 before 18:00 so we can give you an overview of the exciting things in store and some practical advice on how to make the most of your journey. Please bring your passport and a copy of your insurance policy as we need to verify essential details.

Bhubaneshwar's impressive skyline; the towering spire of the Lingaraja temple, the magnificent Japanese built Peace Pagoda of Dhauli hills and the remarkable temple of Mahavir Jina on Khandagiri hills exemplifies the arrival and evolution of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism during different periods of Orissa's long spiritual odyssey.

### Day 2 Similipal National Park

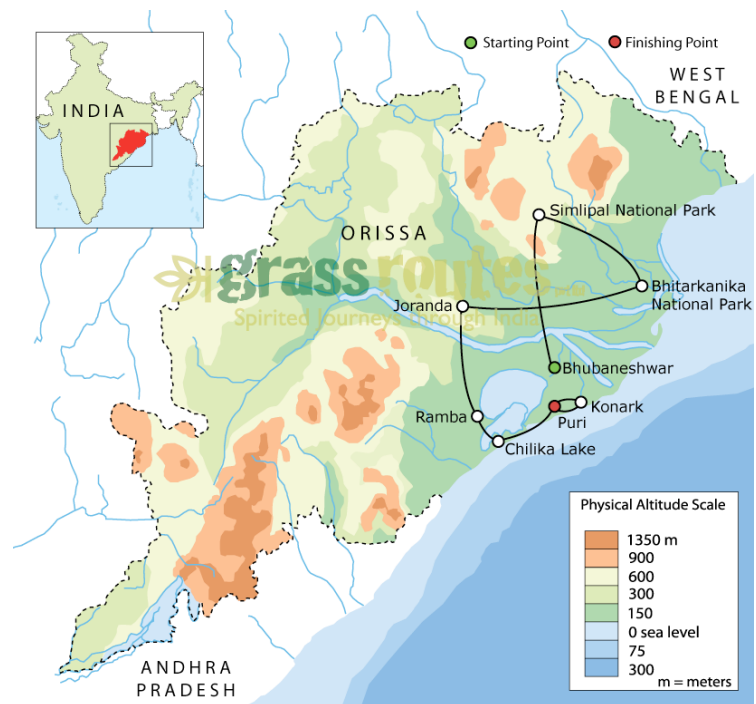
Buckle up and enjoy the ride into the thick forest. Access a unique eco-system of dense sal forests interspersed with rosewood and savannah grasslands. Bounce along dirt tracks and immerse yourself in the wilderness.

### Day 3 Similipal National Park

Delve deeper into the forest. Keep your eyes peeled for elephants, sambar and the elusive tiger. Cross perennial streams, gorges and cascading waterfalls. Munch on a picnic lunch and meet the monkey mad Mankidia community. Learn essential tips to survive in the forest.

### Day 4 Bhitarkanika National Park

From terra firma to the fluctuating tides and mysterious mangrove forests of Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary and National Park. A unique ecosystem designated a **Ramsar Wetland of International Importance** and second only to the Sundarban's as the largest mangrove forest in India. Glide through the extensive network of creeks and rivers. Admire the tangled root systems emerge and submerge the waters edge. Keep you hands out of the water, the saltwater crocodile bites!



### Day 5 Bhitarkanika National Park

Plunge further into the majestic mangroves weaving through the maze of waterways. Gaze at the diverse bird life among the treetops and hold your breath for a chance to spot the Royal Bengal Tiger. Stretch your legs around a local community village and hear their tales of survival from a vastly uninhabited environment.

### Day 6 Joranda

Join the saffron clad Mahima Babas at their hilltop ashram. Learn about their philosophy, a synthesis of Buddhism and Hinduism and how they apply this in everyday living. Draw inspiration from the Mahima Baba's gentle relationship with nature and society. Take part in their evening rituals and enjoy a communal diner on palm leaf plates.

### Day 7 Chilika Lake

Cross the almighty River Mahanadi and cruise close to the coast. Catch the sea breeze from an elevated hillock overlooking Chilika Lake, another **Ramsar Wetland of International Importance**. Watch the sun sink into the expansive waters of Asia's largest estuarine lagoon.

### Day 8 Chilika Lake

Stretch out on a boat and unwind on Chilika's tranquil waters. Spot rare migratory birds & playful Irrawaddy dolphins. Stroll through fishing villages, bask in the tropical sun and take a swim in the Bay of Bengal. Camp among Casuarina pines on a narrow strip of sand separating the sea from the lake. Feast on fresh seafood caught before your very eyes and settle your eyes on the starlight sky.

### Day 9 Puri

Leave the sun kissed waters behind and soak up the traditional temple culture of Puri. Wander through the medieval by-lanes of the old city, sample the local take on cheesecake and stroll through the evening beach market.

### Day 10 Puri

Bicycle through unchartered back roads and weave through a patchwork of sublime palm fringed paddies. Behold the irrepressible **UNESCO World Heritage** site at Konark. Marvel at the intricate carving and blush at the erotic imagery. Conceived as a giant solar chariot and executed to perfection, this is one of India's most sublime monuments.

### Day 11 Depart Puri

You are free to depart or stay on and enjoy the relaxed ambience. We can book Additional Accommodation and a Transfer to the airport for you, please let us know at the time of booking.



## practical information

### passports and visas

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and obtain your own visa in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. Further country specific information is available at [Indian Missions Abroad](#).

### vaccinations and health

Recommended vaccinations are Typhoid, TB, Polio, Tetanus and a vaccination against Hepatitis A. India is a malarial area and you should appropriate precautions. Consult your Doctor or Vaccination centre for up to date information.

### travel insurance

A comprehensive travel insurance policy is compulsory to join this trip. Travellers are required to show possession of such at the Group Meeting. We recommend you consult your travel agent or check out [World Nomads](#).

### additional accommodation

Additional Accommodation before or after your Grass Routes journey is available on request. We associate with premier properties to suit all budgets. Notify us your requirements at the time of booking and we'll get back to you with a quote.

### airport transfers

Airport Transfers by private airconditioned vehicles are available on request. Please provide flight arrival details at the time of booking or at least 2 weeks prior to departure.

### extra expenses

Small expenses encountered along the way (excluding meals mentioned earlier in Fast Facts) include camera fees, tipping and shopping.

## practical information

### joining point

#### Hotel Royale Mid Town

52 – 52 Janpath

Bhubaneshwar, ORISSA

Tel: +91 674 2536138 - 141

A comfortable, efficient modern hotel located in the heart of bustling Bhubaneshwar. Set amidst wide central avenues, the hotel is close to a variety of restaurants, markets and naturally temples.

### finishing point

#### Hotel Gandhara

Chakra Tirtha Rd

Puri, ORISSA

Tel: +91 6752 224117, 224623

Simple, spotless and popular hotel in close proximity to tourist amenities. Set in a beautiful garden atmosphere, a friendly home away from home.

### domestic connections

Orissa is well connected to the rest of India by train (consult the world's largest rail network [Indian Railways](#)) and plane. Domestic air travel has gathered momentum in recent years and its now easy to cross the country. [MakeMyTrip](#) and [ClearTrip](#) are both useful resources for booking online flights or choose from any of the domestic airlines below:

[Air India](#)   [Deccan\\*](#)   [GoAir \\*](#)   [Indian](#)   [Indigo](#)  
[Jet Airways](#)   [JetLite\\*](#)   [Kingfisher\\*](#)   [Paramount](#)   [Spice Jet](#)

\* Regular scheduled services to and from Bhubaneshwar, the capital of Orissa, just 2 hours drive to/from Puri.

### booking options

Book online by going to our website. Select your journey and click the 'Book This Journey' button. You will be directed to our online Booking Request Form. Specify your preferred date to join a group departure or request a private departure on the dates of your choice. Fill up the particulars and make a note of any special requirements. After completing the Booking Request Form you will receive confirmation and invoice by email. On receipt of your deposit your place on the requested journey is reserved.

### payment options

We use the online payment systems of PayPal to ensure your credit card details are secure and trusted. We can also accept cheque and direct deposit payments.

### credo for grass routes travellers

I am grateful for the opportunity to travel and experience the world and affirm my personal responsibility to:

- Journey with an open mind & gentle heart
- Accept with grace and gratitude the diversity I encounter
- Revere and protect the natural environment that sustains all life
- Appreciate all culture I discover
- Respect and thank my hosts for their welcome
- Offer my hand in friendship to everyone I meet



Cruising Chilika Lake