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THE COMPLETE ODISHA TRAVEL GUIDE

Detailed Itineraries * Temple Timings
Hidden Gems * Curated Experiences
Souvenirs, Memorabilia and Shopping
Must-try Eats * Local Tips & Wisdom

Curated from 30 Years of Experience

www.gangulycabs.com



THE FIRST DHAM

Jagannath Temple, Puri

One of Hinduism's four sacred Char Dhams, the 12th-century Jagannath Temple draws millions to Puri's Grand Road. The Lord of the Universe, His sister Subhadra, and brother Balabhadra reside here in sacred wooden idols — renewed every 12 years in the Nabakalebara ritual.



RITUAL	TIME	STATUS
Mangala Aarti (Dawn Darshan)	5:30 AM	Open to Devotees
Gopal Ballava Puja	8:00 – 9:15 AM	Closed for Darshan
Sakala Dhupa	9:15 – 11:00 AM	Open (Nata Mandir)
Madhyana Dhupa	11:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Open (Jagamohana)
Sandhya Alati	6:00 – 7:00 PM	Open — Best for Visitors
Badasinghar (Night)	8:00 – 9:00 PM	Final Darshan
Temple Closes	~11:30 PM	—

RULES

Dress code: Men — dhoti + uttariya (upper cloth). Women — saree or salwar kameez. No leather goods. Shoes must be deposited at the Lion's Gate.



GANGULY CABS TIP

Arrive before 5:30 AM on weekdays for a calm Mangala Aarti experience. Weekends and Ekadashi days draw enormous crowds. All 4 gates now open — enter via Lion's Gate (East), exit via others.

Entry: Free. No cameras or phones inside. Only Hindus permitted entry.



UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Konark Sun Temple, Konark

Built by King Narasimhadeva I circa 1250 CE, the Sun Temple is conceived as a colossal stone chariot of Surya — 24 intricately carved wheels (sundials precise to the minute), pulled by 7 stone horses. Tagore wrote: 'Here the language of stone surpasses the language of man.'



Open: 6:00 AM – 8:00 PM daily

Indians: ₹40 | **SAARC:** ₹40 | **Foreign:** ₹600

ASI Museum: 10 AM – 5 PM (closed Fri)

Light & Sound Show: 7:30 PM & 8:20 PM (₹70/₹630)

35 km from Puri | 65 km from Bhubaneswar

Konark Dance Festival: 1–5 Dec annually



GANGULY CABS TIP

Arrive at sunrise — the first light illuminates the main entrance exactly as designed 800 years ago. The 12 wheel-pairs double as sundials; ask your Ganguly Cabs driver to explain how to read time from the shadows.



THE CITY OF 700 TEMPLES

Bhubaneswar — The Kalinga Cradle

KEY TEMPLES

Lingaraj Temple (11th c.) — Open 6 AM–9 PM. Non-Hindu view from viewing platform. No entry fee.

Mukteshwar Temple (10th c.) — Open all day. Free entry. Famous for its torana (ornamental arch), often called the "gem of Odishan architecture."

Rajarani Temple (11th c.) — Open 6 AM–6 PM. Entry ₹15 (Indian). Famous for erotic sculpture panels and absence of presiding deity.

Udayagiri & Khandagiri Caves — Open 8 AM–6 PM. Entry ₹15 (Indian). 2nd century BCE Jain rock-cut caves.

Dhuli Giri Peace Pagoda — Open sunrise to sunset. Free. Emperor Ashoka's Kalinga War site; Buddhist stupa with rock edicts.

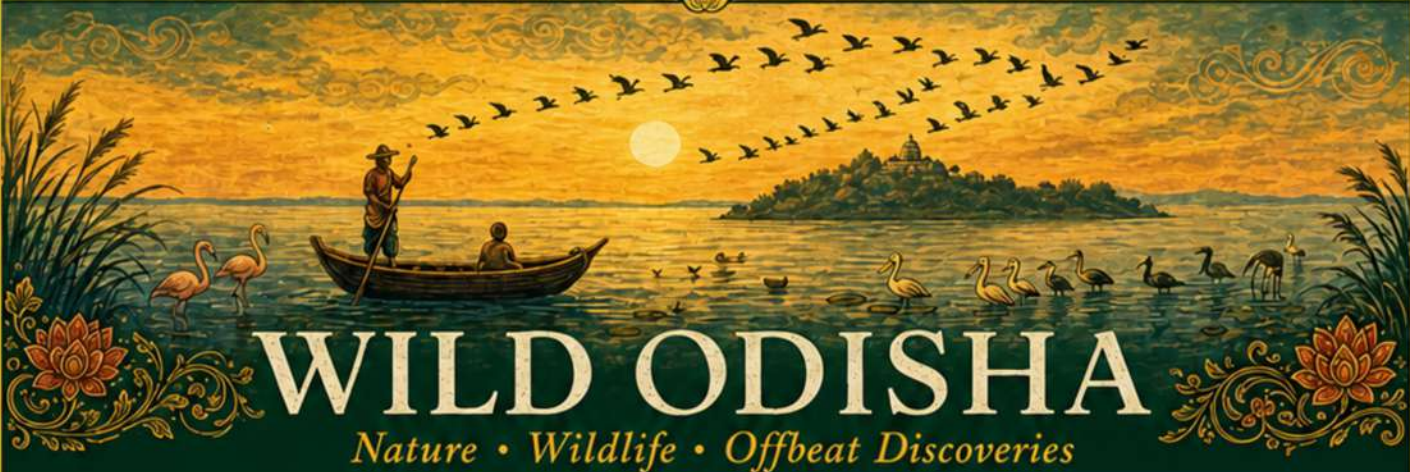
GANGULY CABS LOCAL TIPS

Bhubaneswar to Konark to Puri forms Odisha's Golden Triangle — ideally done as a 3-day circuit.

Lingaraj Temple is best visited at 6 AM on weekdays. The ornate shikhara is lit at night — beautiful from outside.

Ekamra Haat near Bhubaneswar Museum is the best place for authentic Odia handicrafts.





WILD ODISHA

Nature • Wildlife • Offbeat Discoveries

ASIA'S LARGEST BRACKISH WATER LAGOON

Spanning over 1,100 sq km, Chilika Lake is a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance. Every winter (Nov–Feb), over a million migratory birds arrive from Siberia and Central Asia — flamingos, pelicans, bar-headed geese, and sea eagles. Satapada Point is home to the world's largest population of endangered Irrawaddy Dolphins.



HOW TO EXPERIENCE CHILIKA



Dolphin Safari at Satapada



Nalabana Bird Sanctuary
Best: Nov–Feb (peak migration)



Kalijai Island Temple
Sacred island shrine; no entry fee




Honeymoon Island
Serene secluded sandbar; accessible by boat



GANGULY CABS TIP

Book a full-day Chilika excursion from Puri — approx. 50 km to Satapada via Balugaon. Carry binoculars! Early morning boat departures (6–7 AM) give the best dolphin sightings. OTDC and private boats both available at the jetty.



1 Daringbadi — The Kashmir of Odisha
Located 200 km SW of Bhubaneswar in Kandhamal district, Daringbadi is Odisha's only hill station, sitting at 915 m. Coffee plantations, waterfalls, pine forests, and frost in December — utterly unlike coastal Odisha. The Hill View Park and Lover's Point offer sweeping valley vistas.

◆ Best time: Oct–Feb | ◆ Key activity: Trek to Midubanda waterfall




2 Raghurajpur — The Artist's Village
A 30-minute drive from Puri, every household in this 500-year-old heritage village is a working artist's studio. Walls are painted floor to ceiling with Pattachitra art. Watch artisans craft palm-leaf engravings, stone sculptures, cow-dung paintings, and intricate wooden toys. All items available to purchase directly from the artists.

◆ Open all day, no entry fee | ◆ Best time: Morning 9–11 AM



3 Bhitarkanika Mangrove — Where Crocodiles Rule
Odisha's answer to Sundarbans — a labyrinth of tidal creeks and dense mangrove forests in Kendrapara district. Home to the world's largest congregation of saltwater crocodiles (over 1,700), nesting olive ridley sea turtles (Gahirmatha Beach), diverse birds, and irrawaddy dolphins. Entry: ₹50–200. Boat safaris available.

◆ Best time: Oct–Mar | ◆ Avoid: June–Sep (nesting season)



4 Simlipal National Park — Tiger Country
A tiger reserve and biosphere reserve in Mayurbhanj district, Simlipal spans 2,750 sq km of dense sal forest. Home to tigers, elephants, leopards, gharial, and the rare melanistic black tiger unique to Odisha. Joranda and Barehipani waterfalls inside the park are among India's most spectacular.

◆ Open: Nov–June | ◆ Entry: ₹100/person + vehicle charges
◆ Nearest base: Baripada



GANGULY CABS SERVES ALL THESE DESTINATIONS





SOUL OF ODISHA

Culture, Cuisine & Festivals

LOCAL CUISINE GUIDE

The Flavours of Odisha

Odia cuisine is one of India's most underrated culinary traditions — pure, subtly spiced, coconut-kissed, and deeply tied to temple prasad culture. Here are the dishes you must not leave without trying.



Mahaprasad (Ananda Bazar, Puri)
The sacred 56-dish offering cooked in earthen pots at Jagannath Temple. Rice, dalma, ghanta sabzi, kanika (sweet rice). A divine ritual in itself. Available from 2 PM daily.



Dahi Vada Aloo Dum
Odisha's beloved street breakfast — crisp lentil dumplings smothered in whipped yogurt, tamarind chutney, and spiced potato curry. Eat from roadside cycle vendors in Cuttack or Puri.



Chhena Poda
Odisha's gift to dessert lovers — burnt cottage cheese cake, caramelised and smoke-perfumed. Made in Nayagarh; buy freshly baked near Jagannath Temple in Puri.



Dalma
The everyday soul food — yellow lentils slow-cooked with raw banana, yam, and coconut. Try at Dalma Restaurant, Bhubaneswar (Saheed Nagar) for the authentic version.



Macha Jhola (Fish Curry)
Rohu carp in a mustard-turmeric gravy — simplicity perfected. Best eaten at coastal dhabas in Puri or Konark with steamed rice.

ADDITIONAL STREET FOOD MENTIONS

- Chenna Jhilli (Nimapara)
- Rasabali (Kendrapara)
- Arisa Pitha (rice pancake)
- Kakara Pitha

RECOMMENDED RESTAURANTS

- Wild Grass Resort, Puri**
Best Odia thali in a garden setting
- Panthanivas (OTDC), Puri**
Reliable, authentic, government-run; Odia thali
- BNR Hotel Restaurant, Puri**
Classic heritage dining; colonial-era railway hotel
- Dalma Restaurant, Bhubaneswar**
The definitive Odia vegetarian experience
- Mayfair Heritage (2 States Restaurant), Puri**
Premium Odia cuisine in luxury setting

The Festival Calendar

JAN	FEB	APR	JUN/JUL	AUG	OCT/NOV	DEC
Makar Mela, Sakhigopal (Puri)	Konark Dance Festival (Feb/early)	Dol Purnima (Holi of Puri)	★ RATH YATRA — The world's largest chariot festival, Puri. Lord Jagannath's giant rath pulled by millions. 3 km procession, Grand Road, Puri. (UNESCO recognised)	Janmashtami celebrations, Puri temple	Kumari Puja, Diwali (Puri lit with earthen lamps)	★ Konark Dance Festival (1–5 Dec) — Classical Odissi, Bharatnatyam & more, open-air, temple backdrop
Chandrabhaga Mela, Konark (sea bath & sun worship)	Shivaratri — Lingaraj Temple, Bhubaneswar	Rama Navami				



GANGULY CABS TIP

Rath Yatra attracts over 1 million pilgrims. Book accommodation 6+ months ahead. The Grand Road is closed to vehicles — your Ganguly Cabs driver will know all alternative routes and viewpoints.

Living Heritage



Pattachitra
The ancient scroll painting tradition of Puri district — bold black outlines, natural pigments, intricate mythology scenes. Raghurajpur is its living home. Originals: ₹500–50,000+. Buy directly from artists.



Silver Filigree (Tarakasi)
Cuttack's 500-year-old craft of weaving impossibly fine silver threads into jewellery, idols, and decorative items. Best bought at Cuttack's silversmith lanes or Ekamra Haat, Bhubaneswar.



Sambalpuri Saree & Ikat
Odisha's handloom pride — tie-dye Ikat sarees from Sambalpur woven on pit looms, each saree taking 15–30 days. Look for the GI-tagged "Sambalpuri" label. Also: Bomkai, Khandua, and Pasapali weaves.



ODISSI dance — listed by UNESCO as an Intangible Heritage — traces its roots to the devadasi temple dance traditions of Puri's Jagannath temple. Attend a live performance at Rabindra Mandap, Bhubaneswar or during the Konark Dance Festival.





CURATED BY GANGULY CABS · 30 YEARS OF JOURNEYS
 Every corner of Odisha has something extraordinary
 to bring home — art that breathes, cloth woven with devotion,
 and sweets that carry the taste of temple prasad.



Pattachitra

Where: Raghurajpur Heritage Village (30 min from Puri) and Pipili market
 What it is: India's oldest scroll painting tradition. Natural pigments on treated cloth or palm leaf. Scenes from Jagannath's life, Mahabharata, Ramayana.

Price range: ₹500 (small palm leaf) to ₹50,000+ (large cloth masterwork)
 Tip: Buy directly from the artist's home in Raghurajpur — they sign the work. Avoid mass-printed imitations sold near temple gates.



Talapatachitra (Palm Leaf Engraving)

Where: Raghurajpur; also Puri temple road shops (verify quality)

What it is: Intricate mythological scenes scratched into dried palm leaves with iron stylus — centuries-old manuscript art form. Bookmarks, framed panels, lampshades.
 Price range: ₹100 (bookmarks) to ₹5,000 (framed panels)
 Tip: Rub your finger across a genuine piece — you'll feel the incised lines. Printed fakes feel flat.



Stone & Sand Art

Where: Konark souvenir market; Bhubaneswar stone carving workshops (Bhubaneswar-Puri road)

What it is: Miniature chlorite stone carvings of the Konark Chakra, Jagannath idols, dancing aparas, and Sun God panels — made by hereditary Shilpakara artisan families.
 Price range: ₹200 (small chakra keychain) to ₹15,000+ (detailed wall panel)
 Tip: The Konark Chakra is Odisha's most iconic souvenir — it appears on India's ₹10 note. A quality carved chakra is a lifetime keepsake.



WEARABLE ODISHA Cloth, Thread & Silver



• **Sambalpur Ikat Saree** — Hand-woven in Sambalpur, Bargarh & Sonepur. Each saree takes up to 30 days to weave. The resist-dye Ikat technique produces geometric patterns in rich jewel tones. GI-tagged. Buy at: Utkalika (Bhubaneswar), Boyanika Showroom (Puri), or direct from cooperative weavers. Price: ₹2,000–₹40,000.

• **Bomkai & Khandua Silk Saree** — The sacred Khandua saree is worn by Jagannath deity and gifted at Odia weddings. Deep red/maroon with gold motifs. Buy at: Puri temple market cooperative or Ekamra Haat. Price: ₹3,000–₹25,000.

• **Appliqué (Chandua)** — Vivid patchwork fabric art from Pipili — the roadside village 30 min from Bhubaneswar on the Puri highway. Used for temple canopies, now made into bags, wall hangings, lampshades, and parasols. Price: ₹150–₹5,000.



• **Tarakasi (Silver Filigree)**, Cuttack — Incredibly fine silver wire twisted into lace-like jewellery, idols, and decorative objects. Cuttack has practiced this for 500+ years. Buy at: Silver filigree workshops on Badambadi Road, Cuttack, or at Ekamra Haat, Bhubaneswar. Price: ₹800–₹30,000+.



• **Dokra (Lost-Wax Metal Casting)** — Tribal bell-metal figurines — horses, elephants, tribal dancers, oil lamps — made by Dhokra artisans using a 4,000-year-old casting technique. Distinctive textured finish. Buy at: Ekamra Haat; Crafts Museum, Bhubaneswar. Price: ₹300–₹8,000.



• **Coral & Conch Jewellery** — Traditional Odia bridal jewellery — conch-shell bangles (shankha), coral beads, and gold-plated temple jewellery are sold near Puri temple and Cuttack's jewellery markets. Price: ₹200–₹5,000.

Taste You Can Take Home



Chhena Poda
 The only Indian dessert baked like a cake. Burnt cottage cheese, caramel, cardamom. Vacuum-packed versions available at Puri sweet shops. Best: Bikalananda Kar & Sons, Nimapara.



Khaja
 Layered sugar-syrup pastry — official temple prasad sweet of Puri. Crisp, flaky, endlessly snackable. Buy near Jagannath Temple. ₹100–300/box.



Daringbadi Coffee
 Odisha's secret — hill-grown Arabica from Daringbadi's plantations. Roasted locally, available in small packets from hill market vendors. A rare and meaningful gift.



Chilika Prawn Pickle / Dry Fish
 Sundried prawns, spiced fish pickle, and Chilika crab paste — beloved across Odisha. Buy fresh from Satapoda fish market near Chilika Lake.



Arisa Pitha & Manda Pitha
 Festival rice cakes — sweet, steamed, and hand-pressed into intricate molds. Available at Puri sweet stalls and local markets during Odia festivals (Durga Puja, Raja Parba).

TRUSTED SHOPPING DESTINATIONS



Ekamra Haat, Bhubaneswar
 Odisha's premier state-curated craft market. Fixed prices, government-certified artisans. Near Museum-Kalaniketan. Open daily 10 AM–8 PM.



Utkalika, Bhubaneswar
 State emporium for sarees, handicrafts, and Dokra. Jan Path, opposite hotel Pushpak. Reliable quality benchmark.



Raghurajpur Village, Puri Dist.
 Buy direct from artist families. No middlemen. Bring cash. 30 min from Puri.



Pipili Hata (Market), NH-316
 Appliqué village on the Bhubaneswar-Puri highway. Stop en route; open daily.

Ask your Ganguly Cabs driver — we know which artisans are genuine, which markets are fixed-price, and which stalls to avoid.



SEASONAL GUIDE

When to Visit Odisha

**OCT–NOV***(Post-Monsoon)*

Lush and green.
Festivals everywhere.
Pleasant 22–30°C.
Rath Yatra season
winding down.

**DEC–FEB***(Winter)*

PEAK SEASON.
Cool 15–25°C.
Konark Festival, Chilika
birds, best beach weather.
Book well ahead.

**MAR–MAY***(Summer)*

Hot (30–42°C).
Visit Daringbadi
hill station.
Tribal markets less crowded.
Fewer tourists overall.

**JUN–SEP***(Monsoon)*

Heavy rains.
Waterfalls and forests
stunning. Some roads
difficult. Rath Yatra
typically in June/July.



Curated Journeys — Crafted from 30 Years on Odisha's Roads

**THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE — 3 DAYS**

*Perfect for first-time visitors. Covers Odisha's
three essential heritage landmarks.*

- 📍 Day 1: Arrive Bhubaneswar → Lingaraj Temple (6 AM) → Mukteshwar → Udayagiri Caves → Ekamra Haat
- 📍 Day 2: Bhubaneswar to Konark (1.5 hrs) → Sun Temple at sunrise → ASI Museum → Konark Beach → Drive to Puri
- 📍 Day 3: Jagannath Temple darshan (5:30 AM) → Ananda Bazar prasad → Puri Beach → Raghurajpur Village → Depart



Ganguly Cabs circuit fare:
Ask us for current package rates.

**SOUL & SEA — 5 DAYS**

Temples, Chilika Lake, and coastal tranquility.

- 📍 Day 1–2: Golden Triangle (as above)
- 📍 Day 3: Puri to Satapada → Chilika Dolphin Safari + Kalijai Island → Sunset, Puri Lighthouse
- 📍 Day 4: Puri → Pipili Applique Village → Raghurajpur → Konark Light & Sound Show (7:30 PM)
- 📍 Day 5: Puri morning aarti → Swargadwar Beach → Depart from Bhubaneswar

**WILD ODISHA — 7 DAYS**

Nature, wildlife, and off-the-beaten-path Odisha.

- 📍 Day 1–3: Soul & Sea itinerary
- 📍 Day 4: Bhubaneswar → Dhauli Peace Pagoda → Nandankanan Zoo → overnight Bhubaneswar
- 📍 Day 5: Bhubaneswar → Daringbadi Hill Station (4 hrs) → Pine forests & waterfall
- 📍 Day 6: Daringbadi → Koraput tribal market → overnight Koraput
- 📍 Day 7: Return via scenic Eastern Ghats highway → depart Bhubaneswar

Essential Tips



Always carry cash in smaller denominations — many temple towns, island boats, and rural stalls are cash-only.



Book Jagannath Temple darshan accommodation at SJTA Bhakta Niwas (stayatpurijagannatha.in) months ahead for Rath Yatra.



Non-Hindus cannot enter Jagannath Temple — the best view is from the rooftop of Raghunandan Library across the road.



At Konark, arrive 30 minutes before the Light & Sound Show for the best seats.



Chilika boat operators quote prices in English — negotiate politely; fixed fares are posted at Satapada jetty.



Puri's sacred Mahaprasad at Ananda Bazar is available from 2 PM — eating it is considered a complete spiritual act.



Do not photograph tribal community members without explicit permission — especially in Koraput and Kandhamal.



The Bhubaneswar–Puri highway (NH-316) is excellent. The Puri–Konark coastal road (Marine Drive) is scenic but narrow at points — our drivers know every inch.



Dress conservatively near temples. Lightweight cotton works best Oct–Mar; linen for summer.



Download the MO Bus app for government bus routes in Bhubaneswar–Puri corridor if exploring independently.



Let Ganguly Cabs craft your Odisha story,

From airport transfers to temple tours, multi-day tours to Chilika Safaris - our experienced drivers are your local guides, your storytellers and your trusted companions on Odisha's roads. Happy travels! 😊

