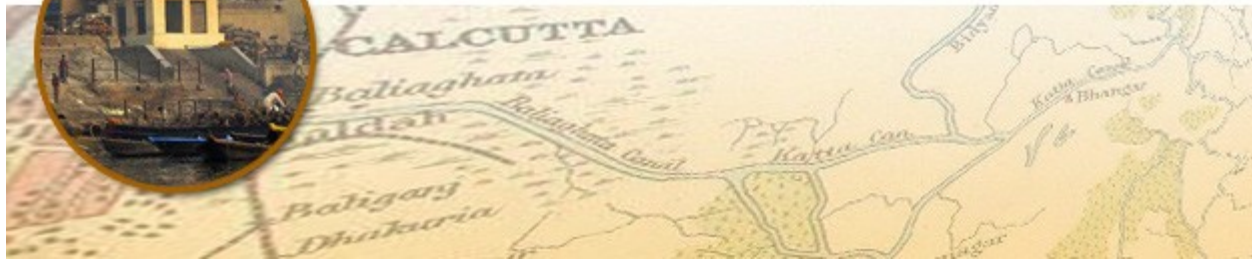




## Kolkata to Varanasi (11N & 12D)



**Embarkation** : Vivada Jetty at Millennium Park, Kolkata  
**Disembarkation** : Varanasi

### Day 1

#### 9:00 AM



*Check-in at the embarkation point - Millennium Park, this is situated in the centre of Kolkata 30 minutes from airport.*

The cruiser sails off

Safety and tour briefing.

#### Afternoon

**Chandannagore - A colony of the French till 1950.**

**Chandannagar Strand:** Walk along this superbly decorated pavement studded with lights surrounded by lush green trees for tour of the other French architecture



**Sacred Heart Church:** The beautiful church stands over for two centuries to mark the beauty of the architecture during the French period

**Museum / Institute of Robert Dupliex.:** Residence of Governor General of the French East India Company now turned into a Museum / Institute of Robert Dupliex. One of the oldest and finest museums of the entire region. It boasts a beautiful collection of French items (e.g cannons used in Anglo - French war, wooden furniture of the 18th century, etc.).

## Day 2



### Morning

#### Kalna/Shantipur (Opposite of Kalna)

Kalna is more popularly known as Ambika Kalna, named after a very popular Deity of Goddess Kali, Maa Ambika. It has numerous historical monuments such as the Rajbari (the palace) and the 108 Shiva temples.

### Afternoon



- **Terrakota Temples: Nava Kailash or 108 Shiv Mandirs**, built in 1809 of terrakota is a beautiful architecture. Others are **Kalna Pratapeshwar Temple & Lalji Temple**
- **RajBari**, the palace
- **Weavers Colony** of fine Bengal cotton known as TANT at Shantipur.



### Late Afternoon

**Mayapur**, the headquarters of ISKCON. Opposite is the quiet village of Nabadwip.

The evening prayers and dance in praise of the lord will be highlight of the visit.

## Day 3



### Morning onwards

#### Whole day tour of Shantiniketan

After early breakfast leave for whole day tour to Shantiniketan. Shantiniketan is built by famous **Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore**, whose vision became what now is a University town ( Vishwa Bharati University ). Its a Home to many Artists, Singers, Painters, Sculptors and numerous artisans. Enroute visit the tribal villages.



### Vishwa Bharati University

- Experience the work/ activities of Artists, Singers, Painters, Sculptors and numerous artisans
- Visit to tribal villages
- Forest

Shantiniketan is about 70 kms from Katwa. The Guest will be taken in airconditioned coaches and will leave about 7.30 am and will arrive by 6 pm. Lunch will be at Shantiniketan.

## Day 4



### Morning

#### Palassy

**Palassy** is the battlefield where the battle between Siraj Ud Daulah, the last independent Nawab of Bengal, and the British East India Company took place.



**Berhampore** was the first Head Quarter of the East India Company and having a long history enriched by the Nawabs, Kings, zamindars and other European colonial forces such as Dutch, Armenians, English and French.



**Murshidabad** is one of the oldest cities of West Bengal and has a rich heritage. The **Nawab Murshid Ali Khan** made Murshidabad the capital city of **Sube Bangla**, comprising of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. It was the last capital of independent Nawabs of Bengal and the first capital of Bengal under the British.

**Nizam Kila (the Fortress of the Nawabs)**, also known as the Hazaarduari Palace (Palace of a Thousand Doors), built by **Duncan McLeod** of the Bengal Engineers in 1837, in the Italianate style.



The **Moti Jhil (Pearl Lake)**, beautiful horseshoe shaped lake, just to the south of the palace.

The **Muradbagh Palace** and the **Khushbagh Cemetery**, where the remains of **Ali Vardi Khan** and **Siraj Ud Daulah** are interred.

## Day 5



### Morning

#### **Farakka**

Sail through Farakka barrage. The **Farakka Barrage** is the longest barrage in the world and has recently been entered into the Guinness Book of World Records. It has 101 gates and it is from here the water is shared between India and Bangladesh.



### Afternoon

#### **Visit to Malda (Gaur)**

Gaur is the first capital of the **Buddhist Pala dynasty**, then it became the seat of the **Hindu Sena dynasty**, and finally the capital of the Muslim Nawabs.

## Day 6



### Morning onwards

#### **Manihari, Khelgoan and Vikramshila**

Manihari is located on the banks of the holy Ganga River where it meets the Kosi River



## Khelgoan

**Vikramshila** is the Buddhist learning centre. It is built by **Bengal King Dharmapala** in 8th Century. The Monastery gradually gained importance and became a centre for Tantric Buddhism.

## Day 7



## Munger Fort, and 18th century British cemetery

**Munger Fort** is built on a rocky hillock on the south bank of the Ganga River. The fort houses a number of religious and historic monuments such as the Tomb of Pir Shah Nufa (died 1497), Palace of Shah Suja, Tomb of Mulla Muhammad Said (died 1704 AD), the Kashtaharini Ghat on the Ganges River, Chandisthana (an ancient temple) and an 18th century British cemetery



**Sita-Kund** spring, the hot spring which is so called after the well known episode of the Ramayana. According to the local legend, Sita, the consort of Lord Rama, underwent her ordeal of standing on fire at this place; and after she took bath in the spring, its cold water became very hot. The temperature of this varies in a remarkable manner and goes to the highest of 138o F and even above.

## Day 8



## Morning

## Nalanda and Rajgir

**Nalanda** the world famous ancient learning centre in the ancient days. Great scholars of China and other lands came here to study Buddhism and practice ways of faith.



**Archaeological Museum** housing the **Nalanda University seal**, sculptures and other remains found on the site.

**Great Stupa** - The brick-built remains are extensive and include the Great Stupa, with steps, terraces and a few intact votive stupas around it, and the monk's cells.



Whole day tour of the most important Buddhist pilgrimage sites. Rajgir means 'the royal palace', it is here Lord Buddha had delivered many of His sermons over 12 years of stay.

**Shanti Stupa** has been constructed on top of a hill by Japanese Buddhists. Vultures's Peak, the favourite abode of Lord Buddha where he used to give his sermons. Its rocks are shaped like vultures hence its name.



**Cyclopean Walls**, ruins of the ancient walls which provided protection to the ancient city of Rajgir

**Laxmi-Narayan Temple**, main site include parts of the ruined city, caves and places associated with **Ajatsatru** and his father **Bimbisara**, whom he imprisoned and murdered. The pink building by the crowded hot springs is the Laxmi Narayan Temple.

### Afternoon

### **Bodh Gaya and Gaya**



12 kilometres from Gaya, Bodh Gaya is a place of international renown and is one of the four holy spots for Buddhists. It was here that prince Siddhartha found enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree and became the Buddha.

**Mahabodhi Temple** having 25 mtr. Great Buddha Statue in the Japanese Kamakura style, a portion of which is believed to be more than 200 years old.

**Museum** containing rare Buddhist relics.

**Monasteries and Temples** built lately by several Buddhist countries in their architectural style.



Gaya is a centre of Hindu Pilgrims. Vishnu is said to have given Gaya the power to absolve sinners. Pilgrims offer Pindas (funeral cakes) at the ghat along the river here entitles the soul of the departed to a place in heaven and free their ancestors from bondage to earth.

*Sail from Simaria & Barh / Patna while the group is out on excursion.*

*Embarkation at Patna*

## Day 9

### Half day tour of Patna



The modern city of Patna is situated on the southern bank of the Ganges. Ancient Patna, known as **Pataliputra**, was the capital of the **Magadha Empire**. The rich culture and heritage of Bihar is evident from the innumerable ancient monuments, mostly from the Mauryan period.

**Sher Sahi**, the heavy domed built by Afghan ruler **Sher Shah** in 1545, is the oldest mosque in Patna.

**Golghar**, a huge building shaped like a beehive, constructed in 1786 as a granary to store surpluses against possible famines



**Kumrahar Excavations**, the remains of Patliputra, the ancient capital of Ajatasatru (491 -459 BC ), Chandragupta (311-297 BC ) and Ashoka ( 274-237 BC ) have been uncovered.

*Sail from Patna for Buxar.*

Day 10

Ahead of Buxar - SAIDPUR-VARANASI

Day 11

Morning onwards

**Varanasi / Sarnath**



**Sarnath** is the place where Buddha chose to deliver his first sermon on Nirvana.

Sarnath, a number of countries in which Buddhism is a major (or the dominant) religion, among them Thailand, Japan, Tibet, Sri Lanka and Myanmar, have established temples and monasteries in Sarnath in the style that is typical for the respective country.



**Ashokan Pillar** where sculpture of the Mauryan Period carved. The base of the Ashoka pillar in Sarnath which was broken during Turk Islamic invasions, it was originally surmounted by the "Lion Capital of Ashoka" which is presently at display at the Sarnath Museum. This particular Lion Capital of Ashoka, originally atop this pillar in Sarnath has been adopted as the "National Emblem of India".



**Benaras Hindu University** founded in 1916, one of the oldest university, is a Central university which is also the largest residential university in Asia

**Museum** having interesting collection of Buddhist artifacts.

**Das Ashwamedha Ghat** on river Ganges for the soulful Aarti (worshiping the God).

## Day 12



### Varanasi

Commonly known as Benaras and Kashi is probably the oldest city of India and regarded as holy by Hindus, Buddhists and Jains. People often refer to Varanasi as "the city of Temples", "the holy city of India", "the religious capital of India", "the city of lights", and "the city of learning". Whatever be the name, it draws millions to the Banks of River Ganges here and shows the essence of how " Incredible India" is.

#### Early Morning



Boat ride across river Ganges for amazing glimpses of the religious practices and rituals performed by thousands of devotees on the banks of river Ganges.

**Temples:** Durga Temple, Bharat Mata Temple, Tulsi Manas Temple

#### After lunch

Check out

***Note : The time of excursions may vary depending upon the tidal and other environmental conditions.***