

IN & AROUND ODISHA

SRI JAGANNATH TEMPLE, PURI



Puri is majorly known for **Sri Jagannath Puri Temple**. It was King Indradyumna who built the famous temple in the 11th century. It is one of the **historical places in Odisha** which is frequented by millions of devotees as well as tourists all-round the year. While you are in the temple, you can also see the beautiful and

unique Oriya architecture. You can also try visiting the temple during Ratha Yatra.

- **Timing:** 5.30 am to 10 pm
- **Best time to visit :** September to March, June for Ratha Yatra

2. KONARK TEMPLE



Sun Temple, Konark is one of the **famous monuments in Odisha**. Built in the shape of a giant chariot, the temple is dedicated to Sun God. While you are here, you can also visit the archeological museum located inside the temple complex. The temple is believed to be more than 2,000 years old. However, it is well-maintained and you can still admire the

architecture and sculptures. There is an **entry fee** to be paid to enter the temple.

- **Timing:** 6 am to 8 pm
- **Best time to visit:** October to March

3. DHAULI STUPA



If you have interest in history, you surely know the importance of Dhauli and its past. Dhauli is the place where Kalinga War took place in the 3rd century BC between Kalinga kingdom and the Mauryan Empire led by Great Ashoka. It was one of the most intense wars in the history of the country. The war also changed Mauryan King Ashoka,

after which he took Buddhism. You will also be able to see several edicts of King Ashoka in this city. The other attractions that are witnessed by the tourists here are Peace Pagoda, Sadharma vihar monastery, rock cut caves, etc. It is undoubtedly one of the best places to visit in Odisha.

- **Timing:** The opening and closing time for each attraction varies
- **Best time to visit:** July to February

4. BARABATI FORT

Barabati Fort, Cuttack

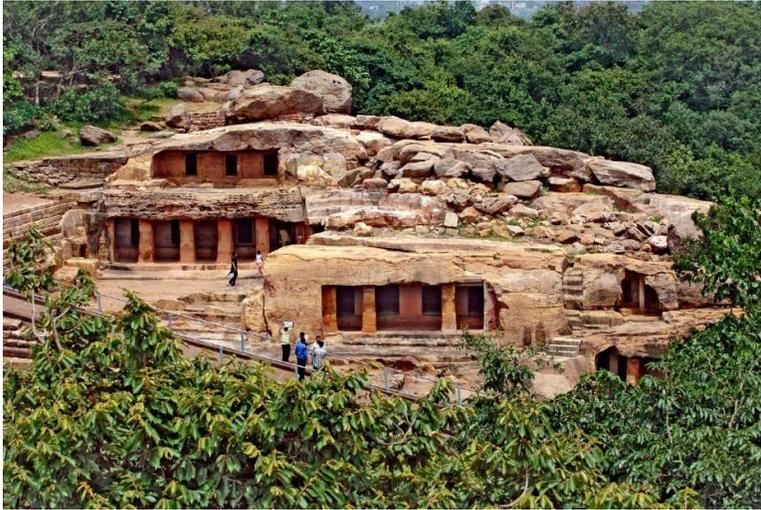


Located at a distance of 8 km from Cuttack, Barabati Fort dates back to 11th century. It was built by Ganga dynasty. It is a nine storeyed palace and was constructed with fortification as a protection from the attacks of the enemies. The carved gates of the fort add beauty to it. You can also have wonderful view of the entire city of Cuttack from

this fort. The fort is spread across an area of 102 acres.

- **Timing:** Sunrise to Sunset
- **Best time to visit:** October to March

5. KHANDAGIRI



Khandagiri Caves are manmade caves which were built in the 2nd century. The figures and inscriptions in the caves are something to witness. These caves were dug during the period of Mahameghavahana Dynasty, King Kharavela. The Jain and Buddhist monks used to meditate in these caves.

- **Timing:** 24X7
- **Best time to visit:** October to March

6. Chausath Yogini Temple



Chausath Yogini Temple is located at a very close proximity to Khandagiri Caves, and was constructed by Queen Hiradevi of Bramha Dynasty in the 9th Century. The main deity worshipped here is Goddess Kali; however, 56 idols of yoginis are placed in each cavity.

- **Timing:** 24X7
- **Best time to visit:** October to March

7. Brahmeshwara Temple



Just like Chausath Yogini Temple, **Brahmeshwara Temple** is also located near Khanddagiri Caves. Dedicated to Lord Shiva, this temple was built in the 11th century. The temple is known for the unique sculptures of Lord Shiva and Goddess Lakshmi in their fierce forms carved on the walls.

- **Timing:** 24X7
- **Best time to visit:** October to March

8. Ananta Vasudeva Temple



Ananta Vasudeva Temple was built in the 13th century during the era of the king Bhanudeva. The idols of Krishna, Balarama and Subhadra are worshipped in this temple. The architecture resembles Lingaraj Temple but the sculptures are more in Vaishnavite style.

- **Timing:** 6.30 am to 7 pm
- **Best time to visit:** October to March

9. Lingaraja Temple



Lingaraja Temple is million years old and is famous for its architecture and carvings. There are several small temples within this temple which are dedicated to various Gods and Goddesses.

- **Timing:** 6 am to 9 pm
- **Best time to visit:** October to March

10. Rajarani Temple



Rajarani Temple is one of the oldest temples in Odisha, which was constructed in the 11th century. You will be able to see a lot of sculptures which depict various events of Hindi mythology, including the wedding of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. You have to pay Rs 15 as entry fee to

explore this temple.

- **Timing:** 10 am to 5 pm
- **Best time to visit:** October to March

11. NANDANKANAN



Zoological Park

Amidst the natural beauty of natural forest adjacent to Chandaka-Dampara Wildlife Sanctuary, Nandankanan lies in the vicinity of Kanjia lake. This site covers a portion of Krishnanagar and Jujhagarh Demarcated

Protected Forests (DPF) and close to Baranga Railway station on Howrah-Chennai route. Geographically it is located between 20° 23' 08" to 20° 24' 10" North latitude and 85° 48' 09" to 85° 48' 13" East longitude (Survey of India Toposheet No. 73 H/15-NW).

The very name of "Nandankanan", in mythology, delineates the ecstatic but imaginary beauty of the celestial garden. It also indicates the real beautiful spots par excellence on earth, where one can see the panoramic views of nature and appreciate the glamour that exists in the external morphology of plants and animals.

The zoo is enriched with 210 enclosures with at Nandankanan. It has the significance of having both the cages and open moat enclosures. There are 116 cages and 94 open moated enclosures to house all the captive animals of Nandankanan. It has the glory of having 156 species of animals which includes 41 spp. mammals, 83 spp. birds, 26 spp. reptiles and 6 spp. of amphibians. Nandankanan has huge number of animal collections. There are 3004 no animals, including 1175 mammals, 1546 birds, 262 reptiles and 21 amphibians. In these 156 species, 103 are indigenous and 53 are exotic. There are 15 spp of mammals, 120 spp of birds, 15 spp of reptiles, 85 spp of butterflies which are freely move inside the sanctuary.

Nandankanan is the only zoo in India with the credit of having Patas monkey (*Erythrocebus patas*), Eastern Rosella (*Platyercus eximus*) and Open-billed Stork (*Anastomus oscitans*). Besides, it has the glory among the 2 zoos in India having Orang-Utan (others in Kanpur Zoological Park, Uttar Pradesh), Indian Pangolin (others in Jhargram Zoo, West Bengal), Spotted Munia (Others in Sayajibaug Zoo, Gujurat) and Burmese Python (others in Culcatta Snake Park, West Bengal). It is among the three zoos of India having Green-winged Macaws and Cinereous Vulture.

Nandankanan has created its unique place for successful captive breeding of endangered Gharials in 1980. Birth of white tiger from normal coloured tigers has given a special place to Nandankanan over the world as one of the major host zoo for the white tigers. The other significant breeding success of Nandankanan includes Indian pangolin (1971), Mouse deer (1972), Malayan Giant squirrel (1974), Sloth bear (1978), Mugger (1982), Himalayan Black bear (1982), Lion-tailed Macaque (1983), Brow-antlered deer (1984), Salt water crocodile (1985), Indian porcupine (1986), White necked stork (1986), Caiman crocodile (1990), Water monitor lizard (1996), Swamp deer (1998), Chimpanzee (1999), Grey heron (2000) and Siamese crocodile (2010), ratel 2012 and many free living animals including Open billed storks.

It is the host zoo for white tigers. White tigers were born to normal coloured parents in 1980, a unique event in the world. First zoo in the country where endangered Gharials were born in captivity in 1980.

A unique White tiger safari was established in the Zoological Park on 1st October 1991. It is the 1st White tiger safari in India. Wonderful site for wildlife conservation and education where one can experience integration of ex-situ and in-situ conservation of wild fauna and flora.

- Presence of Kanjia Lake-A wetland of National importance (2006).

- Conservation Breeding Centres for Indian Pangolin and White backed vultures.
- Nandankanan has largest enclosures for housing Gharials and Hippopotamus.
- Second Largest heronry for open billed storks (more than 12,000) in Odisha.
- Has Captive Fodder farm (over 33 Acs.) and a Slaughter house to cater the dietary needs of animals housed in the Zoological Park.
- First zoo in the country to become a member of World Association of Zoos & Aquariums (WAZA).

Nandan Kanan is closed on Mondays

12. CHILIKA LAKE



Chilika Lake - Asia's largest brackish water lagoon.

The vast and dream like Chilika Lagoon is situated on the east-coast of India. It is the largest brackish Water Lagoon with estuarine character that sprawls along the east coast. It is the largest

wintering ground for migratory waterfowl found anywhere on the Indian sub-continent. It is one of the hotspot of biodiversity in the country, and some rare, vulnerable and endangered species listed in the IUCN Red List of threatened Animals inhabit in the lagoon for atleast part of their life cycle.

Chilika is an integral part of the culture of coastal Odisha. Almost 400 years ago, the saint poet Purshottam Das, a devotee of Lord Jagannath, wrote a poem about Lord Krishna dancing with a milkmaid called Maniki, who had come to sell curds on the banks of the Chilika.

Chilika supports some of the largest congregation of migratory birds in the country, particularly during the winter. Flocks of migratory waterfowl arrive from as far as the Caspian Sea, Lake Baikal, Aral Sea, remote parts of Russia, Kirghiz steppes of Mongolia, Central and South East Asia, Ladakh and the Himalayas, to feed and breed in its fertile waters. In 1989-90 an estimated two million birds visited the Lake.

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13. SAMALESWARI AT SAMBALPUR



Sambalpur is the gateway to the western zone of Orissa. It abounds in prolific rivers, lavish hills, lush green forests and affluent wildlife. It is a beautiful amalgamation of modernity and culture. Holding a significant historical importance, the place also has a flourishing textile and handloom

"The legendary Odisha"

Bhubaneswar, the temple city of India, once known for its architecture and grand temples, is presently a thriving centre for commerce and business.

Bhubaneswar is an ancient city replete with beautiful historic temples which attract pilgrims and tourists from all over the country. The name of the city literally means Lord of the Universe, rightly reflected in the number of temples here and the religious fervor of its locals. This is now a bustling city where the history is beautifully intertwined with its modern and progressive present. Bhubaneswar being the centre for religious tourism has a number of majestic temples-built centuries ago which have still retained their original over all these years. Among them the Lingaraj temple and the Parasurameswara temple are must-visits and attract tourists for all parts of the country.

Puri in Odisha is one of the four must-visit pilgrimage sites for Hindus because of Jagannath Temple that forms the part of Char Dham in India. Puri is a beach city located on the coast of Bay of Bengal which is one of the favourites among people of West Bengal for a short trip.

Konark, in the state of Orissa is renowned world over for the Sun Temple which is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Annual dance festival and its beautiful sandy beaches.

Dhuli is a small town 8 Km away south of Bhubaneswar, located on the bank of river Daya and holds great significance for the followers of lord Buddha. Dhuli is said to be the witness of the reform of Ashoka's character.

Cuttack, referred to as the cultural capital of Odisha, Cuttack is a commercial city with plenty of impressive tourist attractions.

Sambalpur, is the gateway to the western zone of Orissa. It abounds in prolific rivers, lavish hills, lush green forests and affluent wildlife. It is a beautiful amalgamation of modernity and culture. Holding a significant historical importance, the place also has a flourishing textile and handloom.

Rourkela, surrounded by hills and rivers, the city of Rourkela is located in the state of Odisha. Popularly called as the 'Steel City of Odisha' and Ispat Nagar, it is one of the first cities of the country to become commercialized for steel production. Rourkela's natural positioning in the lap of nature.

Daringbadi, is a hilly town in Odisha. Hidden a state famous for beaches and temples, this hill station lies peacefully at an elevation of 3000 feet waiting to be explored. Replete with pine trees, coffee gardens and splendid valleys, Daringbadi is known as the "Kashmir of Odisha". A place where you will love spare moments with the real essence of nature.

Chilika Lake, is the largest internal salt water lake in Asia, it is a paradise on earth for bird watchers and nature lovers. The pear-shaped lake is dotted with a few small islands and has fisheries and salt pans around its shore. The Chilika Lake also houses the most accommodating ecosystems in the world, which means that a wide assortment of flora and fauna can be spotted here. The lake offers a flamboyant display of a myriad of avian charms in all diverse hues and colours, ranging from the white-bellied sea eagles to flamingos, and from golden plovers to sandpiper

Along with the vibrant variety of birds: both native and migratory one, the enthralling lake also offers scenic views of sunrise and sunset and a host of other options to choose from. Attractions such as the Bird Island, Breakfast Island and Honeymoon Island are also frequented by tourists who visit the Chilika Lake. The lake also boasts of being one of the only two sites in the world where the endangered Irrawaddy dolphins can be spotted. The decent and affordable lodges available here are an added cherry on this already delightful cake. Visit this enchanting lake to spend a day in nature's company and experience tranquillity like never before.

Simlipal National Park, Reflecting the natural beauty of an era gone by, Simlipal National Park is in a beautiful and scenic town in Odisha. Situated in Mayurbhanj, it once used to be a hunting ground for the rulers of the province. Simlipal is the largest wildlife sanctuary in India and is also considered as one of the priorities viewing place.

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