

October 29 - November 12, 2006

Uncommon Journeys, LLC Orissa: India's Wonderful Secret

Imagine a kaleidoscope of resplendent colors, beguiling faces and fascinating lifestyles. Now picture secluded hamlets of mysterious, seldom visited tribes. Add a flourish of medieval art, architecture and dance. You have just imagined Orissa, a world apart from the rest of India, but just as intriguing. Every last traveler on earth should visit Orissa. It is the epitome of an unspoiled land – a gem among exotic travel destinations. But don't take our word for it. Come join us and see for yourself.

Tour Highlights

- Visit isolated Soura, Bonda, Kondh & Gadhaba Tribes
- Feast your eyes on the colorful bounty of the weekly markets
- Attend performances of exotic Odissi and Gotipua dance forms
- Observe craftspeople at work with spectacular weaving, sculpting, painting
- Explore medieval temples, steeped in history & spirituality

Tour price: \$3500

Single supplement: \$460

The tour price, based on a minimum of 4 participants, **includes** 13 nights hotel accommodations, all meals from October 31 through breakfast on November 12, domestic airfare between Calcutta and Bhubaneshwar, ground transportation by motor coach; airport transfers, entrance fees, tips of a group nature and the services of local and photographic guides. The tour price **does not include** international airfare, visa, beverages, tip to local guide and personal expenses.

A deposit of \$500 is required to register and secure a place on the tour. This down payment is fully refundable if notice is given 60 days prior to departure. The balance of the tour cost is due 60 days prior to departure.

Please note: The rewards of travel and photography are even greater when we explore remote, uncharted regions. As such, all hotels are basic, except in Calcutta. One night requires a stay in a hotel without a shower. On that night, each room will have a private bathroom with a squat toilet and cold running tap water. There are also several long driving days and one day of moderate to rugged walking on rocky terrain (about 5 hours), stopping to photograph hamlets along the way.

Passport and Visa Requirement

A passport with six months validity and visa are required to enter India.

Tour Leader

Debbie Jefkin-Elnekave is a travel photographer and tour leader who specializes in remote and exotic cultures. Although Debbie's photographic interests include history, architecture and landscapes, she finds photographing indigenous people to be the most challenging and rewarding. She is equally at home with Ethiopia's Karo, Thailand's Akha, Bolivia's Quechua, Guatemala's Maya or Orissa's Soura. Her extensive travels in Orissa, knowledge of the customs and profound appreciation for the people ensure a very rewarding journey.

Waiver of Liability

Uncommon Journeys, LLC assumes no responsibility for accidents or injury to participants in the Orissa tour. You will be required to read, accept and sign an agreement which releases Uncommon Journeys, LLC from any responsibility of liability.

Uncommon Journeys, LLC
Orissa: India's Wonderful Secret
2006 Itinerary

Day 1: Saturday, October 28 or Sunday, October 29 Depart USA

Day 2: Monday, October 30 Calcutta

Arrive in Calcutta. Dinner on your own.

Day 3: Tuesday, October 31 Calcutta → Bhubaneshwar

Fly to Bhubaneshwar, and prepare to be enchanted. A kaleidoscope of temples, markets, bicycles, tri-shaws and resplendent women in brilliant saris endow this state capital with a singular charm. This afternoon we visit the handicraft markets.

Day 4: Wednesday, November 1 Bhubaneshwar

We begin in Padma Kesnari Pur with an up close look at the “charmed” life of snake handlers. We’ll photograph the daring handlers with several species, including pythons and deadly cobras. The fainthearted needn’t worry...cobras don’t not have an appetite for humans, and we’re too large to be swallowed whole. We also explore medieval temples, including Parasurameshwara and Mukteswara. This evening’s event is a dramatic performance of Odissi, the graceful, fluid, ancient classical dance of Orissa.

Day 5: Thursday, November 2 Bhubaneshwar

Visits to an *ikat* weaving village and a *dokra* metal sculpting village reveal the spectacular heritage of rare and ancient forms of artistry that have captured the appreciation of admirers around the world.

Day 6: Friday, November 3 Bhubaneshwar (Puri)

Magnificent carvings at Konark Sun Temple comprise an eloquent narration of life in 13th century Orissa. We arrive early to capture the splendor in beautiful morning light. This evening’s highlight is a performance by Gotipua acrobats, whose technique originated in the later medieval period.

Day 7: Saturday, November 4 Bhubaneshwar → Baliguda

Today’s 10 hour journey takes us to Orissa’s tribal region, arriving first in Baliguda. The little-known, fascinating, seldom visited tribes are subjects of intense curiosity to anthropologists.

Day 8: Sunday, November 5 Baliguda → Rayagada

Today we’ll walk 5 hours on rugged, rocky terrain, stopping at hamlets along the way to meet members of the Kutia Kondh tribe. The women are readily identifiable by their geometric facial tattoos. These identifying marks ensure that they will recognize each other in the spirit world. This afternoon we drive 5 hours to Rayagada.

Day 9: Monday, November 6 Rayagada

At Puttasingh Market, members of the Longia Soura tribe sell rice, corn, millet and tumeric. Their Manangul Village boasts immaculate adobe dwellings. They practice slash & burn agriculture and shifting cultivation, and believe in polygamy, shamanism and forest deities. Soura women insert increasingly larger balsa wood plugs into their pierced ears, until their lobes are so elastic, they nearly touch their shoulders.

Day 10: Tuesday, November 7 Rayagada

We explore scenes from daily life on the way to Dukum Market, which is attended by members of the Desia Kondh tribe. Our afternoon stops include the Zigidi handicraft village and a charming Desia Kondh hamlet.

Day 11: Wednesday, November 8 Rayagada → Jeypore

You will find this morning well worth another early wake up call. Arriving to Chatikona by 7:30 a.m. promises stunning images of colorful processions of Dongariya Kondh & Desia Kondh women entering the market. Women in brilliant saris are laden with tomatoes, tumeric, eggplant, jackfruit & bananas, balanced gracefully on their heads. This afternoon we drive 3 ½ hours to Jeypore.

Day 12: Thursday, November 9 Jeypore

5:30 a.m. departure for the fascinating Onukudelli market, attended by the Bonda, Gadhaba and Didei tribes. A Bonda woman's costume is a colorful cascade of strands upon strands of tiny yellow, orange and white beads, and a matching scullcap. A brass nose ring and silver ear hoops complete the ensemble. Afternoon finds us at a Gadhaba Village for a unique dance performance that's sure to delight.

Day 13: Friday, November 10 Jeypore → Gopalpur on Sea

Drive 7 hours to Gopalpur on Sea.

Day 14: Saturday, November 11 Gopalpur on Sea → Calcutta

Drive 4 hours to Bhubaneshwar and fly to Calcutta.

Day 15: Sunday, November 12 Calcutta → USA or onward destination