

PURI PILGRIMAGE

The holy city of Puri on the coast of Orissa has a history of more than a thousand years. The Jagannath Temple, the presiding deity of Puri is famous world-wide for the Rath Yatra. Puri is also the site of the Govardhana Peetha, one of the four cardinal institutions established by Adi Shankaracharya. Traditionally it has been seen as a holy place to die in or to be cremated and there is a burning ghat (Smasana) called Swargadwar which means gateway to Heaven.

Puri has now become a seaside resort for domestic and international tourists and the annual Puri Beach festival is held in February.

How to reach:

Puri is connected by direct trains from Delhi (1850 km), Kolkata (500 km) and Ranchi (700 km). You can reach Bhubaneswar or Khurda Road (44 km from Puri) by train from Mumbai (1900 km), Chennai (1200 km) and Hyderabad (1100 km).

(For trains: <http://www.indianrail.gov.in/frame.html> or <https://www.irctc.co.in/>)

The Yogoda Satsanga Ashram is about 1 km away from the Puri railway station.

The nearest airport is Bhubaneswar which is about 60 km away.

(For air: Any travel portal like <http://www.yatra.com/> or <http://www.makemytrip.com/>)

Yogoda Satsanga Ashram

Address:

Yogoda Satsanga Dhyana Kendra Puri,
Near Orissa Bakery, Water Works Road, off Chakratirtha (CT) Road, Puri-2
(Turn left at Hotel Parbati Palace on CT Road towards D.A.V. School and then right at Orissa Bakery towards Block Road. The Ashram main gate is about 200 meters on the right side and the 2nd gate is by the right side of compound wall.)

Contact:

Phone: (06752)-233272

Mobile: 09778373452 / 53

Email: ysdk.puri@gmail.com

Office time: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Contact Persons: Mr Mallaiah / Mr Gauri Shankar/ Mr Maheshwar

The Ashram has 2 large rooms with a total capacity of 12-15 devotees.

(You can get all the medicines and essentials on CT road. There are internet cafes and also a SBI ATM (opposite *Sunara Gouranga Temple*) on CT road. The shops on CT road open early morning 6:00 - 7:00 a.m. and close at around 1:00 p.m. Reopen at 5:30 - 6:00 p.m. and close at 10:00-10:30 p.m. The beach is on the other side of CT road and is about 10-12 minutes walk from the ashram. The Ashram has a few cycles which devotees may use.)

Puri and Ashram pics:

<http://s620.photobucket.com/albums/tt284/divinenomad/Puri/>

What to see:

(Our sevaks at the Ashram can guide you and also arrange for transportation to these places)

Half-Day itinerary- I: [Lord Jagannath, Jethia Baba Math, Narendra Pond and Gundicha Temple \(Mausi Maa Mandir\)](#)

Jagannath temple: The celebrated Temple of Lord Jagannath now existent at Puri was constructed by Raja Chodaganga Deva in 12th century A.D. The wooden images of Jagannath (Lord Krishna), Balabhadra and Subhadra were installed in the temple.

This temple has actually four parts:- Bhoga mandap (offerings hall), Nata mandap (dance hall), Jagamohan (assembly hall) and Bada Deula (sanctum) which is about 65 meters (210 feet) tall and at the top is the 'Srichakra' (a eight spoked wheel) or "Nilachakra" of Vishnu.

In front of the main gate called Singha Dwara (Lion Gate) stands a 16 sided monolithic pillar (11 metres high) called Aruna Stambha.

Though the temple is dedicated to the Lord of the Universe, the human relationship is intense. He is woken up every morning and rituals include brushing His teeth. He is daily offered 56 types of food or bhog called Chhapan Bhog. After the daily rituals he is put to sleep at night with Bada Singhara Besha.

(Please note that mobiles and cameras are not allowed in the temple complex. Either leave them at the Ashram itself or at the counter outside the temple. Please be careful of Pandas and also pick pockets and preferably request our Ashram sevaks to arrange for your visit.)

Gundicha mandir : During the Rath Yatra in June-July, the idols are placed in huge wooden chariots and pulled by people along the 3 km Grand Road to the Gundicha Mandir or Mausi Maa Mandir. They rest there for 7 days and are then carried back to the main mandir.

Narendra Pond: The Lord Jagannath (Madan Mohan idol) is taken around in a boat in this pond in summer.

Jethia baba ashram: It is near the pond and across the road is the ashram of his disciple Kuladananda Brahmachari. They are known as Guru-Sishya Ashram. Both places are quiet and you can meditate for some time.

Half-Day itinerary-II: [Spiritual Places in Puri](#)

(The list is not in any particular order of importance but in terms of location from our Puri Ashram)

1. Siddha Bakul Math: This is the place where Haridas Thakur, a disciple of Sri Chaitanya lived and chanted the name of Vishnu 3,00,000 times daily. Sri Chaitanya planted the Bakula twig to shelter his disciple which grew into a large tree in just one day. The hollow bark of the original tree is still preserved and its new offshoots are worshipped.

2. Gaura Gambhira: Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (Gouranga 1486 -1534) was born in Navdeep in West Bengal, and spent the last 18 years of his life in Puri at Gambhira. This is also called Radhakant Math. A new temple is being constructed.

3. Karar Ashram: This is the family land of Swami Sri Yukteswarji. And the Samadhi mandir, where Guruji buried the remains of Yukteswarji, is also in the same premises. (Visiting time is 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.)

4. Govardhan Peeth math: This is one of the four cardinal places established by Adi Shankaracharya. There is a stone bed which Sri Shankaracharya is supposed to have used when he was staying in Puri. The Peeth is one of the 51 Shakti-Peethas where the naval-part of Bhagavati Sati fell (access to this mandir may be restricted). The Shankaracharya of Puri inaugurates the "Ratha Yatra".

5. Guru Dham: This is the Place where Bhupendranath Sanyal, a disciple of Lahiri Mahasaya lived. There is a small temple with a marble statue of Lahiri Mahasaya and Sanyal Mahasaya and his wife to either side. You can request the care taker to show Sanyal Mahasaya's room.

6. Tota Gopinath: This idol of lord Krishna in the Lotus Posture, was uncovered by Sri Chaitanya. This is one of the places where Sri Chaitanya is supposed to have merged in the infinite.

7. Sri Loknath Temple: This is said to be the place where Lord Shiva hid himself from Shani, under a pond. The real Shiva Linga is under water and is uncovered for a few minutes, a few days before Maha Shivratri. This place also has Pandas.

8. Girnari Bant: Also known as Advait Brahma Ashram, this is the Samadhi of Sri Totapuri Maharaj (one of the Gurus of Sri Ramkrishna). Sri Totapuri is believed to have lived for more than 300 years and spent the last 40 years of his life at this place. There is a banyan tree in side of the samadhi place where Totapuriji used to meditate.

This is a quiet and uplifting place, and one can meditate here for some time. It is the farthest in this itinerary and is about 8 kms away from our Ashram.

(There is a gentleman who sometimes comes to our Ashram and he had met Totapuriji before he passed away in 1961.)

For pics of some of these places: http://s620.photobucket.com/albums/tt284/divinenomad/Puri_Spirit/

Half-Day itinerary- III: Konark , Ramchandi, Chandrabhaga

Konark is about 35 km from Puri and about 65 km from Bhubaneswar.

It is the site of the 13th-century Sun Temple, declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1984.

The word 'Konark' is a combination of two words 'Kona' and 'Arka'. 'Kona' means 'Corner' and 'Arka' means 'Sun'. The Sun temple built by King Narasimhadeva I (AD 1236-1264) of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty, is a masterpiece of Orissa's medieval architecture.

The entire complex was designed in the form of a huge chariot of Surya, the sun god, drawn by seven (days of week) spirited horses on twelve (months in a year) pairs of exquisitely decorated wheels (8ft in diameter).

At the entrance of the temple is the *Nata Mandir (dancing Hall)*. The main sanctum *Deul* which was 70m (229 ft. high) was constructed along with the *Jagmohan* (audience hall) (40m or 128 ft. high) having elaborate external projections. The main sanctum which enshrined the presiding deity has fallen off. The Audience Hall survives in its entirety, but only small portions of the Dancing Hall (Naty Mandir) and the Dining Hall (Bhoga-Mandap) have survived the vagaries of time.

The three chlorite idols of the Sun god on the three sides of the main mandir depict the rising (young), mid-day (middle-aged) and the setting (aged) sun.

The rays of the rising sun reach the Jagmohan through one of the three entrances of the Nata Mandir according to the time of the year.

You can hire a guide accredited by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and it can take about one to one and a half hours. The Sun Temple Museum (closed on Fridays) is nearby and run by the ASI.

The Aruna Stambha (11 metres high) with the idol of Arun (the charioteer of the Sun God) on top of it, which stands in front of the main gate of the Jagannath Temple, stood in front of the Sun Temple at Konark and was brought to Puri during the 18th century.

The temple was built near the sea but now the sea is about 3 km away. You can see it at the Chandrabhaga beach which is on the way.

Goddess 'Ramachandi' is situated 7 kms before Konark on the river mouth of Kushabhadra river. Ramachandi is popularly believed to be the presiding deity of Konark.

For Konark & Ramchandi pics:

<http://s620.photobucket.com/albums/tt284/divinenomad/Konark/>

Full day itinerary: Chilka Lake, Alarnath Temple

It is the largest brackish water lake in Asia. Its length is about 65 km and its area varies from 750 sq km in Summer to about 1150 sq km in the Rainy season. The lake is very shallow and the maximum depth is only about 4m (13 ft).

Satapada: Located on the eastern shore of the lake is about 50 km from Puri. You can see the Irrawady dolphins in this area, and many species of migratory birds visit the lake in winter. It is located near the confluence of the Lake with the Bay of Bengal

Boats are available at Satapada at fixed tariff (table may not be exact).

hours	Rate (Rs)
1.5	500
2.5	800
3.5	1000
4.5	1300
6	1700

Alarnath temple: Alarnath temple in Brahmagiri is around 25 km from Puri on the way to Satapada. Lord Brahma worshipped Lord Vishnu here and there is a four armed idol of Vishnu holding *shankha*, *chakra*, *gada*, and *padma* (conch shell, disk, club, and lotus)

Sri Chaitanya stayed at Alarnath during the two weeks period when Lord Jagannatha rests after suffering from fever due to the annual bathing festival (Snana Purnima). When Sri Chaitanya lay down in front of Lord Alar nath, the stone below Sri Chaitanya melted from his blissful touch. The stone is preserved in an adjacent temple.

For Chilka & Alarnath pics:

<http://s620.photobucket.com/albums/tt284/divinenomad/Chilka/>