

Tour Name: Ancient Caves, Architecture, Hill & Backwater

Tour Duration: 16 Nights/ 17 Days

Tour Map: <https://tinyurl.com/bdhwvem5>

Tour Overview

Ancient Caves, Architecture, Hill & Backwater Journey invites you on an enchanting exploration spanning from the vibrant metropolis of Mumbai to the tranquil backwaters of Cochin. Immerse yourself in the rich tapestry of India's cultural heritage as you visit iconic landmarks like Mumbai's Gateway of India and Ajanta Caves' ancient Buddhist marvels. Delve into Hyderabad's regal past at Golconda Fort and experience the majestic ruins of Hampi, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Traverse the lush tea estates of Munnar and cruise the serene waters of Alleppey, culminating in Cochin's colonial charm and spice-scented markets. This journey promises an unforgettable blend of history, architecture, and natural beauty across western and southern India.

Tour Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Mumbai

- Arrival in Mumbai and transfer to the hotel for check-in.
- Rest and relax after your journey, with an optional evening exploration of local markets.

Day 2: Mumbai

- Breakfast at the hotel to start your day.
- Visit the iconic Gateway of India, a historical arch overlooking the Arabian Sea, built to commemorate the visit of King George V and Queen Mary.
- Explore the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (formerly Prince of Wales Museum), housing a rich collection of artifacts from ancient India.
- Discover Marine Drive, a picturesque promenade along the Arabian Sea, often referred to as the Queen's Necklace.
- Visit the Hanging Gardens, also known as Pherozeshah Mehta Gardens, offering panoramic views of the city skyline and Arabian Sea.
- Experience the unique Dhobi Ghat, an open-air laundromat where Mumbai's washermen (dhobis) wash and dry clothes in the traditional way.

Day 3: Mumbai - Aurangabad (flight)

- Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before flying to Aurangabad.
- Upon arrival, transfer to the hotel and check-in.

- Visit Bibi Ka Maqbara, often called the "Taj of the Deccan," a mausoleum built in 1679 by Aurangzeb's son in memory of his mother.
- Explore the Aurangabad Caves, rock-cut Buddhist caves dating back to the 6th and 7th centuries, showcasing intricate sculptures and carvings.
- Visit the impressive Daulatabad Fort, known for its formidable defense mechanisms and panoramic views from its hilltop location.

Day 4: Aurangabad - Ajanta - Aurangabad (210kms round)

- After a hearty breakfast, embark on a full-day excursion to Ajanta Caves, a UNESCO World Heritage site renowned for its ancient Buddhist rock-cut caves. These caves, dating back to the 2nd century BCE to about 480 CE, house exquisite murals and sculptures depicting the life of Buddha and various Buddhist legends.
- Explore the impressive frescoes that narrate stories from Jataka tales and showcase the evolution of Buddhist art and architecture in India.
- Return to Aurangabad in the evening, reflecting on the profound artistic and spiritual legacy preserved within the rock-cut caves of Ajanta.

Day 5: Aurangabad - Hyderabad (flight)

- Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before flying to Hyderabad.
- Upon arrival, transfer to the hotel and check-in.
- Evening visit to Charminar, a stunning monument and mosque built in 1591 by Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, offering panoramic views of the city.
- Explore Laad Bazaar, known for its vibrant bangles, pearls, and traditional Hyderabad handiwork.

Day 6: Hyderabad

- Breakfast at the hotel to begin your day.
- Visit Golconda Fort, an ancient fortress known for its acoustics and impressive architecture, with an optional light and sound show in the evening.
- Explore Salar Jung Museum, one of the largest museums in India, showcasing a vast collection of art, artifacts, and antiques from around the world.
- Discover Qutb Shahi Tombs, an impressive necropolis containing the tombs of the ruling kings of the Qutb Shahi dynasty.
- Visit Chowmahalla Palace, once the seat of the Nizams of Hyderabad, renowned for its grand architecture and opulent interiors.
- Explore the historic Mecca Masjid, one of the oldest and largest mosques in India, known for its grandeur and impressive architecture.

Day 7: Hyderabad - Vidyanagar/ (flight) Hampi

- After breakfast, fly to Vidyanagar and transfer to Hampi.
- Check-in at your hotel and explore the Virupaksha Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva, and one of the oldest functioning temples in India.

- Visit Hampi Bazaar, an ancient market street lined with traditional shops selling souvenirs and handicrafts.
- See the Monolithic Bull (Nandi), a massive stone sculpture representing the sacred bull of Lord Shiva.
- Explore Achyutaraya Temple, known for its intricate carvings and architecture, dedicated to Lord Tiruvengalanatha, an incarnation of Vishnu.

Day 8: Hampi

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Explore the UNESCO-listed ruins of Vijayanagara Empire, including Hazara Rama Temple, adorned with intricate bas-reliefs depicting scenes from the Ramayana.
- Visit the Royal Enclosure, a fortified area housing several palaces, temples, and administrative buildings.
- Discover Vittala Temple, famous for its stone chariot, musical pillars, and impressive sculptures depicting mythological tales.
- Visit Lotus Mahal, an elegant and symmetrical structure blending Hindu and Islamic architectural styles, used as a pleasure pavilion by the royal women.
- Explore Elephant Stables, a row of domed chambers once used to house royal elephants, showcasing Indo-Islamic architecture.
- Visit Queen's Bath, a striking example of Vijayanagara architecture, featuring an ornate stepped well and a cooling system.

Day 9: Hampi - Hassan (330km)

- Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before departing for Hassan.
- En route, visit the Chennakesava Temple at Belur, renowned for its exquisite Hoysala architecture and intricate stone carvings depicting mythological tales.
- Continue your journey to Hassan and check-in at the hotel.

Day 10: Hassan - Mysore (140km)

- After breakfast, drive to Mysore, the cultural capital of Karnataka.
- Visit the majestic Mysore Palace, a splendid example of Indo-Saracenic architecture and the former residence of the Wodeyar Maharajas.
- Explore Chamundi Hill and Chamundeshwari Temple, dedicated to Goddess Chamundeshwari, offering panoramic views of Mysore city.
- Visit St. Philomena's Church, a neo-Gothic style church known for its stained-glass windows and serene ambiance.
- Spend the evening at Brindavan Gardens, famous for its musical fountain show and beautifully landscaped terraces.

Day 11: Mysore - Ooty (120km)

- Breakfast at the hotel before driving to Ooty, a charming hill station nestled in the Nilgiri Hills.

- Visit the Government Botanical Garden, showcasing a wide variety of exotic plants, ferns, and orchids.
- Explore the Rose Garden, home to thousands of varieties of roses in various colors and fragrances.
- Enjoy a boat ride on Ooty Lake, surrounded by eucalyptus trees and offering serene views of the hills.
- Visit Doddabetta Peak, the highest point in the Nilgiri Mountains, offering breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding landscape.

Day 12: Ooty - Munnar (240kms)

- After breakfast, embark on a scenic drive to Munnar, famous for its tea plantations and picturesque landscapes.
- Check-in at the hotel and relax amidst the tranquil surroundings.

Day 13: Munnar

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Visit the Tea Museum, where you can learn about the history and process of tea production in Munnar.
- Explore Eravikulam National Park, home to the endangered Nilgiri Tahr (mountain goat) and lush green landscapes.
- Visit Mattupetty Dam, a concrete gravity dam built across the Mattupetty Lake, offering boating facilities amidst scenic hills.
- Explore Echo Point, where you can hear your voice reverberate across the hills due to its natural echo phenomenon.
- Visit Kundala Lake, a serene reservoir surrounded by lush green valleys and offering pedal boating facilities.
- Discover Top Station, offering stunning panoramic views of the Western Ghats and the plains of Tamil Nadu on clear days.

Day 14: Munnar - Thekkady (110km)

- After breakfast, drive to Thekkady, a nature lover's paradise known for its wildlife and spice plantations.
- Check-in at the hotel and relax.
- Enjoy a boat ride on Periyar Lake, a reservoir within Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary, where you can spot wildlife such as elephants, deer, and birds.
- Visit Periyar Tiger Reserve, known for its rich biodiversity and conservation efforts.
- Explore spice plantations, learning about various spices like cardamom, pepper, cinnamon, and cloves grown in the region.

Day 15: Thekkady

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Visit a spice plantation for a guided tour, learning about cultivation techniques and medicinal uses of spices.

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- Attend a traditional Kathakali dance performance in the evening, a classical dance form of Kerala known for its elaborate costumes, makeup, and expressive gestures.
- Explore local markets, where you can shop for spices, handicrafts, and souvenirs.

Day 16: Thekkady - Alleppey (135km)

- After breakfast, drive to Alleppey, known as the Venice of the East.
- Board a traditional houseboat for an overnight cruise through the tranquil backwaters of Kerala.
- Experience the serene beauty of Kerala's villages, paddy fields, and coconut groves along the backwaters.
- Enjoy traditional Kerala cuisine prepared onboard by the crew.

Day 17: Alleppey - Cochin (60km)

- Breakfast on the houseboat as you cruise back to Alleppey.
- Disembark from the houseboat and drive to Cochin (Kochi).
- Visit Fort Kochi, known for its colonial architecture, Chinese fishing nets, and St. Francis Church, the oldest European church in India.
- Explore Mattancherry Palace (Dutch Palace), showcasing Kerala murals depicting Hindu temple art, portraits, and exhibits of the Kochi Rajas.
- Visit the Paradesi Synagogue, the oldest active synagogue in the Commonwealth.
- Stroll through Jew Town, known for its antique shops, spice markets, and vibrant cultural blend.

Package Price (USD Per Person Sharing Double/Twin Room)

Valid for Travel: 01 October 2026 – 15 April 2027

Persons	Solo	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3★ Standard	5,095	2,802	2,456	2,578	2,317	2,242	2,103	1,999
4★ Deluxe	6,215	3,323	2,976	3,099	2,837	2,762	2,623	2,519
5★ Luxury	8,857	4,910	4,318	4,440	4,179	4,103	3,965	3,861

Valid for Travel: 16 April 2027 to 15 September 2027

Persons	Solo	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3★ Standard	4,964	2,691	2,345	2,442	2,186	2,130	1,992	1,888
4★ Deluxe	5,769	3,101	2,754	2,852	2,595	2,540	2,401	2,297
5★ Luxury	7,975	4,454	3,862	3,959	3,703	3,647	3,508	3,404

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Single Room Supplement

3★ Standard: USD 761 | 4★ Deluxe: USD 1,362 | 5★ Luxury: USD 2,662

Triple Sharing Discount (Per Person)

3★ Standard: USD 92 | 4★ Deluxe: USD 173 | 5★ Luxury: USD 405

Price Includes:

- Assistance on arrival at airport.
- 16 Nights' accommodation in selected price category hotels.
- Daily breakfast at hotels.
- Private AC car/van for airport transfers, sightseeing, and excursions as per the program.
- English speaking tour guide on sightseeing days (local guide in each city), as per program.
- Monument entrances and activities charges mentioned in the itinerary.
- Bottled drinking water in car.
- Government taxes.

Price Does Not Include:

- Mumbai - Aurangabad - Hyderabad - Vidyanagar flight fare approx INR 15,500 per person in economy class.
- Camera charges at monuments if any.
- Meals other than mentioned in the inclusions.
- Expenses of personal nature like liquor, laundry, tips, telephone, fax, internet etc.
- Gratuities and optional activities.
- Anything not mentioned in inclusions.

Hotels used or similar for 3 nights' accommodation

3 Star Hotels

- Bhubaneswar x 1 night: Hotel Hindusthan International/ Swosti Grand
- Bhitarkanika x 2 nights: Sand Pebbles Bhitarkanika Jungle Resorts/ Nature Camp Bhitarkanika Retreat

4 Star Hotels

- Bhubaneswar x 1 night: Fortune Park Sishmo/ Lemon Tree Premier

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- Bhitarkanika x 2 nights: Sand Pebbles Bhitarkanika Jungle Resorts/ Nature Camp Bhitarkanika Retreat

5 Star Hotels

- Bhubaneswar x 1 night: Mayfair Lagoon/ Trident Hotel
- Bhitarkanika x 2 nights: Sand Pebbles Bhitarkanika Jungle Resorts/ Nature Camp Bhitarkanika Retreat

Payment Policy:

- Deposit of 25% of the package cost at the time of booking.
- Deposit of 50% of the package cost, 30 days prior to arrival date
- Deposit of 100% of the package cost, 10 days prior to arrival date

Cancellation policy:

- Note: Written cancellation will be accepted on all working days, except Sundays. Any cancellation sent on Sundays will be considered on the next working day (Monday).
- X-mas and New Year Period (20 Dec to 05 Jan): The payment is non-refundable during this period.
- After Trip Commencement: If you cancel the trip after it has commenced, the refund will be limited to the amount we are able to recover from hoteliers/contractors. We are not responsible for refunds on unused hotel accommodations, chartered transportation, or missed meals.
- 61 days or more before the tour: No cancellation charges.
- Between 60 to 30 days before the tour: Cancellation charges equal to 20% of the full tour booking value.
- Between 30 to 15 days before the tour: Cancellation charges equal to 50% of the full tour booking value.
- Within 5 days before the tour or no show: Cancellation charges equal to 90% of the full tour booking value.

Our Liabilities & Limitations:

- Price Changes: After the finalization of the tour/service cost, if there are any hikes in entrance fees, taxes, fuel costs, or guide charges by the Government of India, these will be charged as extra.
- Role as Agent: Agora Voyages acts only as an agent for hotels, airlines, transporters, railways, and contractors providing services. All receipts, contracts, and tickets issued by us are subject to terms and conditions of the service providers.
- Itinerary Changes: All itineraries are sample itineraries intended to provide a general idea. We reserve the right to change the schedule based on factors such as weather, road conditions, or the physical ability of participants to ensure safety, comfort, and well-being.
- Rate Modifications: Our rates are based on negotiated rates with hotels and airlines. If the rates are modified by these service providers, we reserve the right to adjust the quoted rates accordingly. Hotel bookings are based on usual check-in and check-out times, unless otherwise indicated.

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- **Liability Disclaimer:** We are not responsible for delays, alterations, or expenses incurred due to natural hazards, flight cancellations, accidents, weather, sickness, political closures, or any unforeseen incidents.
- **Damage, Loss, or Injury:** We are not responsible for any loss, injury, or damage to persons, property, or otherwise, caused by acts of God, fire, accidents, machinery breakdowns, political disturbances, theft, epidemics, or other factors beyond our control.
- **Insurance:** We do not offer insurance for accidents, sickness, theft, or other unforeseen circumstances. We recommend travelers arrange for insurance in their home country. All personal property and baggage are at the client's risk at all times.
- **Unforeseen Circumstances:** We are not responsible for costs arising from landslides, roadblocks, bad weather, or similar unforeseen circumstances.

Tipping

- Tipping is not included in our price. It is optional but often expected in the travel industry. There is no limit on the amount you can tip, though the average guideline is around \$10-15 per day for guides, drivers, and other crew members.

Trip Comments

- After your trip, we would love to hear your experience. Any photos, suggestions, or feedback will be greatly appreciated. While we strive to make every trip perfect, we acknowledge that there is always room for improvement. Your comments, whether positive or constructive, are invaluable to us.