

Bodhgaya & South India Trip - 21 days

15 November – 5 December 2025

Outline Itinerary

Day 1. Arrive Gaya/Bodhgaya
Day 2. Bodhgaya
Day 3. Bodhgaya
Day 4. Bodhgaya
Day 5. Bodhgaya
Day 6. Gaya - Bhubaneswar - by Train (departs at 12:40PM)
Day 7. Bhubaneswar
Day 8. Bhubaneswar
Day 9. Bhubaneswar
Day 10. Bhubaneswar-Vijaywada by train (departs at. 2155 hr)
Day 11. Arrive Vijayawada by Train (arrive at 10:10 AM)
Day 12. Day trip to Amravati (38km/1hr)
Day 13. Drive to Nagarjuna Sagar (191kms /4.5-5 hr)
Day 14. Nagarjuna Sagar
Day 15. Nagarjuna Sagar – Hyderabad - by Road (153 km/4 h)
Day 16. Arrive Bangalore by Yelhanka Exp (17603) at 9:35AM
Day 17. Bangalore
Day 18. Bangalore - day trip to Byalakuppe Tibetan settlement
Day 19. Bangalore
Day 20. Bangalore
Day 21. Depart Bangalore. (BLR - BKK)

Journey Summary

5 Days in Bodhgaya (North East)
4 days in Odisha (Bhubaneswar South East)
4 days in Andhra Pradesh (South East)
5 days in Bangalore (South East)
3 nights by train
25 HOLY SITES OF PAYING RESPECTS (3 OPTIONAL ONES).

- ◆ MAHA BODHI TEMPLE
- ◆ MAHAKALA CAVE
- ◆ COOL CHARNEL GROUND
- ◆ SUJATA VILLAGE
- ◆ GURPA HILL
- ◆ NEW MONASTERIES AND TEMPLES
- ◆ NALANDA
- ◆ RAJGIR
- ◆ 64 YOGINI TEMPLES
- ◆ 64 YOGINI MUSEUM
- ◆ LALITGIRI
- ◆ RATNAGIRI
- ◆ KHANDAGIRI
- ◆ UNDAVALLI CAVES
- ◆ AMRAVATI STUPA
- ◆ AMRAVATI MUSEUM/HERITAGE SITE
- ◆ AMRAVATI BUDDHA STATUE

- ◆ ETHIPOTHALA WATERFALL (Optional)
- ◆ NAGARJUNA SUGAR DAM
- ◆ NAGARJUNAKONDA MUSEUM
- ◆ BUDDHAVANAM
- ◆ HYDERABAD SITE SEEING (Optional)
- ◆ BENGALORE
- ◆ BYLAKUPPE TIBETAN SETTLEMENT
- ◆ NAMDROLLING MONASTERY OF ZAMDOK PALRI ETC (Optional)

Optional places can be cancelled depending on our capacity. However, if a group of at least two pilgrims wish to visit, this can be arranged.

Detailed Itinerary

International Flights:

TG466 (Thai Airways)

Dep.	Melb	Fri 14 Nov	14:30
Arr.	Bangkok	Fri 14 Nov	19:40

TG461 (Thai Airways)

Dep	Bangkok	Sat 15 Nov	11:00
Arr	Gaya	Sat 15 Nov	12:40

Day 1 – Day 5. 15-20 November. Bodhgaya

Arrive at Gaya airport on 15 Nov. Assistance on arrival and drive to the hotel in Bodhgaya (16 kms)

Things to see in & around Bodhgaya:

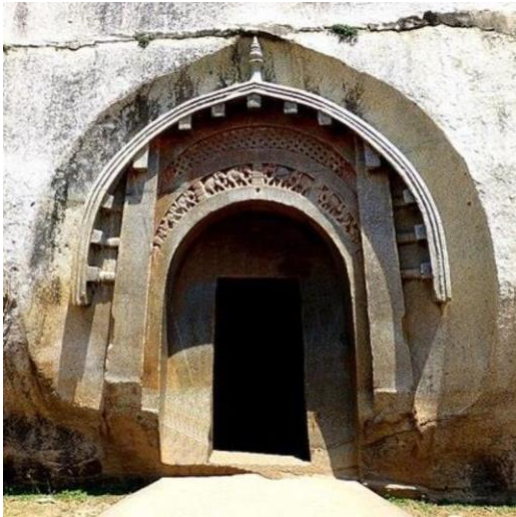
On one of the days, the group can drive to the **Mahakala cave** (45 mins /1hr), visit the ancient charnel ground **Cool Groove** (Dur khrod Silwe Tsal), **Sujata village** where Buddha was offered rice milk by a woman named Sujata. There is a stupa erected here.

Gurpa - The hill, considered to be one of the tallest peaks in the Gangetic plains is located 26 km away from Bodhgaya. It is said to be the site where the Buddha's disciple, Mahākāśyapa, is said to have died while waiting for the future Buddha, Maitreya to arrive on earth. There are about 1400 steps that leads to the summit. At the top of the mountain is a stupa and a Buddhist temple.

Note: Gurpa, Mahakala cave, Sujata village can be combined for a day tour. One morning can be spent visiting some of the different monasteries in Bodhgaya (Shechen Monastery, Thai monastery, Bhutan monastery, Sakya monastery, etc.).

Rajgir & Nalanda (78 kms/2.5 hr) will be a day trip. On this day, you will drive to Rajgir. Take the ropeway to the Japanese peace pagoda and hike down to **Vulture peak**. Or take the stairs straight to vulture's peak. Spend some time on Vulture's peak reciting the heart sutra. Enroute visit Bamboo groove, probably the first property owned by the Buddha's Sangha. After lunch drive to Nalanda to visit the ruins of the erstwhile great **Nalanda University** where the greats like Nargarjuna, Shantideva, Asanga, Shilabhadra, Dharmapala (just to name a few), studied and later taught there. Also visit Huien Tsang's memorial hall at Nalanda. Huien Tsang was the famous Chinese pilgrim who visited India in the mid seventh century. He studied in Nalanda for 6 years.

It was in Rajgir, on Vulture's peak where Buddha spent many rainy seasons. The Buddha turned the 2nd wheel of Dharma here at Vulture's peak at Rajgir before a small and select group of students. Buddha gave more esoteric teachings in the privacy here. It was here where he taught the famous Mahayana text, the heart sutra.



Barbar cave



Nagarjuna cave

Day 6. 20 November. Gaya - Bhubaneswar by train

Travel on train from Gaya - Bhubaneswar via Rajdhani Express (22824) 13+ hrs

Dep. Gaya 20 Nov 4:13 AM

Arr. Bhubaneswar 20 Nov 17:30

(8 pax Coach A2, 3 Pax Coach A1, 5 pax Coach 1A)

Day 7. 21 November. Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar is the capital of Odisha state of Eastern India. Visit the **Chausath Yogini Temple of Hirapur**, also known as Mahamaya Temple, (20 km outside Bhubaneswar). It devotes to the worship of the yoginis. There is also a museum which houses a lot of artefacts.



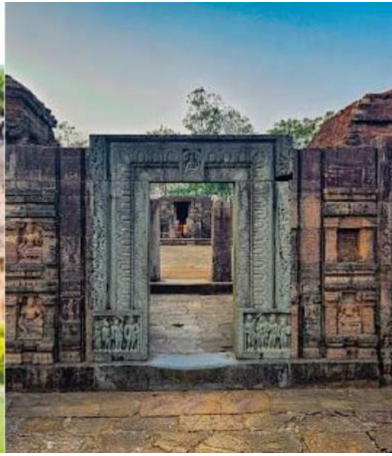
64 Yogini Temple at Hirapur

Day 8. 22 November. Bhubaneswar

Lalitagiri (also known as Nalitagiri) is a major Buddhist complex in the Indian state of Odisha. The complex is home to stupas, 'esoteric' Buddha images, and monasteries (viharas), which is the oldest site in the region. Significant finds at this complex include Buddha's relics. Tantric Buddhism was practiced at this site. Together with the **Ratnagiri** and **Udayagiri** sites a short distance away, Lalitagiri is part of the "Diamond Triangle" of Buddhist sites.



Udaygiri



Ratnagiri



Lalitagiri

Day 9. 23 November. Bhubaneswar

Udayagiri and Khandagiri caves, are partly natural and partly artificial caves of historical and religious importance 3 kms south of the city Bhubaneswar. The caves are situated on two adjacent hills, Udayagiri and Khandagiri. They have a number of finely and ornately carved caves built during the 1st century BCE.

Udayagiri has 18 caves while Khandagiri has 15 caves. It is believed that most of these caves were carved out as residential blocks for Jain monks during the reign of King Kharavela.

Dhauligiri or Dhauli is a hill located on the banks of the river Daya, 8 km south Bhubaneswar.

Dhauligiri is famous for being one of the very few remnants of Mauryan art in the world.

Dhauligiri is the place where the bloody Kalinga War was fought around 261 B.C. and has been immortalised by an Ashokan rock edict erected here.

Stone carving is the ancient practice of sculpting stone into art and utilitarian objects. It is an ancient practice in the Indian state of Odisha. Stone carving is one of the major handicrafts of Odisha.



Udayagri caves

Day 10. 24 November. Bhubaneswar (BBS) – Vijayawada (BZA) - by train

Travel overnight in train (Coromandel Express 12841) 12h 15m

Dep. Bhubaneswar 24 Nov 21:55

Arr. Vijayawada 25 Nov 10:10

(13 pax Coach 1A, 3 pax Coach A2)

Day 11. 25 November. Vijayawada

Arrive Vijayawada at 10:10 AM

After lunch visit **Undavalli caves** (12 kms /30-40mins)

O/N in Vijayawada

Undavalli caves stand out as an impressive blend of Indian and Buddhist architectural styles, making them a truly special treasure trove. The largest cave is five stories high - making it one of India's grandest rock-cut cave complexes. An enigmatic underground passage connects these historic caves to the tranquil Krishna River for further enigmatic wonderment; carvings depict scenes from Hindu mythology as evidence of India's past artistic excellence.



Undavalli cave

Day 12. 26 November. Day trip to Amaravati (38km/1 hr)

Things to see in Amaravati:

- Amaravati stupa
- Amaravati Heritage centre & museum
- Amaravati Buddha statute

O/N in Vijayawada

The historical site of Amaravathi (the abode of immortals) was once the capital of the Satavahana dynasty around two millennia ago. **Amaravati stupa** is a ruined Buddhist stupa at the village of Amaravati, Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh. It was possibly founded in the third century BCE in the time of Asoka but there is no decisive evidence for the date of foundation. Art historians regard the art of Amaravati as one of the three major styles or schools of ancient Indian art, the other two being the Mathura style, and the Gandharan style. Largely because of the maritime trading links of the East Indian coast, the Amaravati school or Andhra style of sculpture, seen in a number of sites in the region, had great influence on art in South India, Sri Lanka and South-East Asia.



Ruins of the Stupa

Day 13. 27 November. Nagarjuna Sagar

Drive to Nagarjuna Sagar (191Km /4.5-5 h)

O/N in Nagarjuna Sagar

Day 14. 28 November. Nagarjuna Sagar

Top attractions in the area:

- Ethipothala Waterfalls
- Nagarjuna Sagar Dam
- Nagarjuna Konda Museum
- Buddhavanam

O/N in Nagarjuna Sagar



Nagarjuna Konda



Buddhavanam

Nagarjunakonda is one of India's richest Buddhist sites, and now lies almost entirely under the lake created by the **Nagarjuna Sagar Dam**. With the construction of the dam, the archaeological relics at Nagarjunakonda were submerged, and had to be excavated and transferred to higher land, which has become an island. The site was once the location of a large Buddhist monastic university complex, attracting students from as far as China, Gandhara, Bengal and Sri Lanka. There are ruins of several Mahayana Buddhist and Hindu shrines. The sculptures found at Nagarjunakonda are now mostly removed to various museums in India and abroad. The modern name is after Nagarjuna, a southern Indian master of Mahayana Buddhism who lived in the 2nd century.

Buddhavanam at Nagarjuna Sagar is a prominent Buddhist theme park with multiple facets of Buddhist traditions.

Day 15. 29 November. Hyderabad

Travel from Nagarjuna Sagar to Hyderabad by Road (153 km/4 h)

Afternoon sightseeing in Hyderabad. At night take the train to Bangalore.

The Charminar, a monument (built in 1591) located in Hyderabad, is a symbol of Hyderabad city. The Charminar's long history includes the existence of a mosque on its top floor for more than 425 years.

Golconda Fort is an amazing place to visit if you're in Hyderabad. The fort is massive and full of history, with incredible views from the top. The architecture is impressive, especially the way sound travels — clapping at the main gate can be heard at the top of the fort! It's a bit of a climb, so wear comfortable shoes and carry water. The sunset views from the fort are absolutely worth it, and the evening light and sound show adds a nice touch. Perfect for history lovers, photographers, or just anyone looking for a peaceful and scenic spot to explore.

Train to Bangalore by Yelhanka Exp (17603) (12h30m)

Dep. Kacheguda 29 Nov 21:05
Arr. Yelhanka JN 30 Nov 9:35
(16 pax Coach 1A)

Day 16 – Day 21. 30 November – 5 December. Bangalore

Arrive Bangalore by Yelhanka Exp (17603) at 9:35AM on Day 16, 30 November.

Things to do in Bangalore:

- Bangalore is known for its parks and night life
- Palaces include the 19th century Bangalore palace, the former royal residence modelled after England's Windsor Castle, and Tipu Sultan's Summer Palace, an 18th-century teak structure.
- UB city- Luxury mall in Vittal Mallya Road featuring upscale brands, fine dining, and western-style ambience. A hub for business, shopping and entertainment. - ISKCON temple
- Day trip to Bylakuppe, the little Tibet in India (223 km/5). Bylakuppe is the largest Tibetan settlement in the world outside Tibet.

Things to do in Bylakuppe:

Bylakuppe is actually a group of different settlements. They are located around the main monasteries representing the four schools within Tibetan Buddhism. The monasteries are all separated by a distance of 2-6 kms. The monasteries are Namdroling, Tashi Lunpo, Sera, Sakya and Kagyudog Nalanda Institute.



Namdroling Monastery Golden Temple

Day 21. 5 December. Depart Bangalore. BLR – BKK - MEL Thai Airways TG326 at 13:00

International Flights:**TG326 (Thai Airways)**

Dep.	Bangalore	Fri 5 Dec	13:00
Arr.	Bangkok	Fri 5 Dec	6:00

TG461 (Thai Airways)

Dep	Bangkok	Fri 5 Dec	8:20
Arr	Melbourne	Fri 5 Dec	21:20