



"The Grand Dame" of Women's Adventure Travel Since 1982

**2014 ~ Celebrating 32 Years!**

#### DATES

January 28 - February 14, 2014

#### COST

\$8,995 twin share on main deck; \$9,995 twin share on upper deck. Includes 10 nights cruise and 4 nights pre- and post- cruise, internal flight from Varanasi - Delhi. Airfare from the U.S. to Kolkata and Delhi to the U.S. is priced separately. (\$1,500 deposit)

Post Tour Extension to Bharatpur, Agra (Taj Mahal) and Delhi: \$1,295

#### RATING

Moderate

#### ACTIVITIES

River Cruising, Architecture, Archeology, Cultural Exploration, Cultural Performances, Natural History, Photography, Sightseeing, Walking, Wildlife Viewing

#### MAIN ATTRACTIONS

- Cruise the Ganges River aboard the Bengal Ganga, built in the style of the historic Clyde steamers and the first river boat to ply the Ganges-Hooghly Waterway between Kolkata and Varanasi, India in over 100 years.
- Explore Mother Teresa's Kolkata (Calcutta), the capital of India for 200 years during the British Raj.
- Experience Varanasi (ancient Benares), India's holiest city, and an important religious center for Hindus, Buddhists, and Jains, where Hindus aspire to cleanse themselves in the holy waters of the Ganges at bathing ghats.

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AdventureWomen is the oldest adventure travel company for active women over 30.

## A RIVER CRUISE ON INDIA'S HOLY GANGES ABOARD THE BENGAL GANGA

No river on earth plays a more important cultural, economic or social role in the lives of more people than the Ganges River in India. The spiritual heart of the Hindu religion, the banks of the Ganges are strewn with India's fascinating cities, culturally-important pilgrimage sites, charming villages, mountains and magical forests. Infused with influences of past rulers and European settlers during the British rule of India, a river cruise on the Ganges will introduce you to one of the most important and glorious rivers in the world.

From high in the mighty Himalayas, India's Ganges River (known as Mother Ganga to Indians) flows 1,500 miles south and east, connecting to the Hooghly River (Bhāgirathi-Hooghly) through Kolkata, India transporting you through areas in East India western visitors have rarely seen. The waterway eventually empties into the Bay of Bengal. The hot summer weather in India and varying water levels on the Ganges limit the river cruising season to only a few months each year.

During our river boat cruise on the Bengal Ganga, traveling upstream from Kolkata (Calcutta) to Simraia, and onward to Varanasi, India, we will experience a vibrant tapestry of varied religious beliefs, historical sagas, diverse flora and fauna, the fascinating cultural traditions of India, brilliant architecture, and incredible landscapes. We will visit metal craftsmen at work in the village Matiari, and ancient centers of learning at Bateshwarthan. We are treated to a tapestry of Muslim and colonial architecture, Hindu culture, Buddhist temples, the daily rituals of Indian village life, and unspoiled countryside all along our river cruise route. We sail through Nalanda, a sanctuary for the Gangetic river dolphin, and marvel at the "Bodhi Tree," where Guatama first attained enlightenment to become Buddha.

In the fall of 2009, Bengal Ganga embarked on her maiden voyage along this historic waterway, the Ganges River. Imported from Myanmar (Burma), she was the first passenger vessel in over 100 years to cruise between Kolkata, India (known as Calcutta when the British maintained their capital here for over 200 years) and Varanasi, known as Benares in ancient times, and considered the most holy city in India.

For experienced river cruise travelers, or any woman looking for an exotic but comfortable travel tour in India, cruising the Ganges provides a rare opportunity. With a crew to passenger ratio of one to two, and with only 28 cabins, there is no better way to travel deep inside India than taking a small ship river cruise on the Ganges on the Bengal Ganga. Aboard our river boat home, in the style of the original luxury steamships, we cruise through a thought-provoking visual kaleidoscope of India. Join AdventureWomen on a once-in-a-lifetime adventure travel vacation in India that opens up an entire civilization's beliefs, lifestyles, and culture as the Mother Ganga guides us to look within and beyond ourselves.

**MAIN ATTRACTIONS (con't)**

- Visit Bodh Gaya, the most important Buddhist pilgrimage site in the world, where in 500 B.C. Prince Gautama Siddhartha achieved Enlightenment to become Buddha.
- Relax and enjoy village life in India, the rural scenery, Indian wildlife preserves, and enjoy a river boat cruise through a part of India rarely seen by Western visitors.
- Enjoy the hospitality of one of the world's friendliest peoples in the country considered to be the oldest living culture in the world.

**INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF YOUR RIVER CRUISE IN INDIA**

- 14 Nights /15 Days on Tour (10 nights cruising on the Bengal Ganga / 4 nights in hotels) Upstream on the Ganges River: Calcutta (Kolkata) - Kalna - Matiari - Murshidabad - Jangipur - Farakka - Raj Mahal - Karagola - Bateshwarthan - Sultan-ganj - Munger - Nalanda - Bodhgaya - Varanasi.
- River cruise price includes: 10 nights on the *Bengal Ganga*, with full board meals (Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner) in twin share rooms, on main deck or upper deck. AdventureWomen has reserved 5 cabins on the upper deck/4 cabins on the main deck.

First come, first served.

- Mineral water during meals.
- Sightseeing and excursions as per cruise itinerary.
- Fully escorted trip with English speaking guide (Barbara Batey).
- All entrance fees.
- Transfers by car/mini van/coach as per cruise program.
- All local assistance.

- Pre/post cruise land arrangements, including 4 nights hotel (twin share) and additional activities as per the itinerary.

- First night hotel in Kolkata with full board meals. On arrival in Kolkata, you will be picked up from the airport and transferred to the hotel.
- Hotel in Bodhgaya, with full board meals.

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**HOW TO REGISTER FOR YOUR INDIA CRUISE**

**First**, call (800-804-8686) or email ([trips@adventurewomen.com](mailto:trips@adventurewomen.com)) the AdventureWomen office to determine space availability. As a courtesy, we will hold your space for 5 days while you are completing the registration process, and making personal and travel arrangements.

**Next**, complete and sign the Trip Registration and International OR Domestic Passenger Information forms on our Web site by clicking "Sign Up for this Trip" on the trip page. We can also fax or email them to you. Include, with your forms, the required deposit that can be made by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, or Discover), personal check, money order, or cashier's check. You can also give us your credit card number over the phone. Once we receive **your deposit and BOTH forms**, we will mail you a trip confirmation/information packet verifying your registration.

**Then**, call our travel consultant assigned to your trip, Ciretta Green (1-800-247-3538), to make your airline reservations.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT TRAVELING TO INDIA**

Round-trip airfare from the U.S. to Kolkata (Calcutta), and from Delhi back to the U.S., is **NOT** included in the cost of the total trip package price.

**You will need to arrive in Kolkata (Calcutta) by mid-day on January 30, 2014.** You will be picked up on arrival and transferred to the hotel.

You can plan your **departure for Thursday, February 14 from Delhi to the U.S.** on an evening flight. Our included flight from Varanasi to Delhi on February 14 currently arrives in Delhi at approximately 4:30 p.m. We have the use of hotel dayrooms until 9 p.m., so you can plan your evening departure flight accordingly. You will be transferred to the airport for your international flight.

We suggest you book your round trip international air reservations from the U.S. to India with our travel consultant **EARLY**. Please contact **Ciretta Green at Montana Travel** to make your airline arrangements:

**1-800-247-3538 OR FAX 1-406-586-1959**

**email: [ciretta@mttravel.com](mailto:ciretta@mttravel.com)**

**CANADIAN RESIDENTS, please call 406-587-1188**

**You are free to use your own personal airline agent. Just make sure that you let them know what specific time and date you need to arrive in Kolkata and depart from Delhi.**

**MODERATE RATING, WHAT TO EXPECT**

This is a moderately strenuous program that is at times physically demanding and busy, with considerable walking at some sites. Daily activities can involve up to one mile of walking at a time, at times over rough terrain, and climbing stairs that may not have handrails. Participants should be fit and in active good health.

India is a destination best received with an open mind, a sense of wonderment, and a willingness to embrace the unfamiliar. It is a colorful, crowded, and cacophonous country, meant to be experienced with all of your senses and to reward your intellectual curiosity.

**WHAT'S INCLUDED (con't)**

- Two nights hotel in Varanasi, with full board meals.
- Use of hotel day rooms in Delhi till 9 p.m. prior to outbound flights to the U.S. Transfer to the airport for your international flight to the U.S.
- All meals, activities, all transport with bottled water included, guided sightseeing and activities as per the itinerary.
- All admission fees for programs, museums, and special events as listed in the itinerary.
- Internal airfare: flight from Varanasi to Delhi on the last day of the trip.
- All government taxes.

**NOT INCLUDED IN YOUR RIVER CRUISE VACATION IN INDIA**

- Post Extension Tour to Bharatpur, Agra (the Taj Mahal) and Delhi.
  - One night accommodation in Delhi, two nights in Bharatpur, and day use of hotel room in Delhi till 9 p.m. before onward flight to the U.S.
  - Transfer to the airport for your international flight to the U.S.
  - Full board meals throughout.
  - Air conditioned transport.
  - Sightseeing per itinerary with English speaking guide with all entrance fees, bottled water, and local assistance.
- Round trip airfare from your hometown to Kolkata, India with departure from Delhi, India.
- All visa and passport costs.
- Alcoholic beverages and items of a personal nature such as excess baggage, travel insurance, passport, laundry, telephone, and anything not mentioned above as included.
- Gratuities for the trip, which add up to a total of approximately \$300 - \$400.
  - As a general guideline, gratuities to the ship's crew are not included in your total cruise price, but we suggest a minimum of \$100 at the end of your cruise.
  - Your Expedition Leader/Main Guide, a minimum of \$200.
  - In the cities of Delhi-Bodh Gaya: guide approx. \$5/person/day; bus drivers approx. \$2/person/day.
  - Other gratuities, if you wish to give them, or if you have questions, can be discussed during the trip with your Expedition Guide.

**YOUR EXPEDITION LEADER & GUIDE FOR YOUR INDIA TOUR**

Barbara Batey is a Tour Manager for Criterion Travel, an educational travel company specializing in tour design for Stanford, Harvard and Yale University, Smithsonian Institute and American Museum of Natural History. Barbara manages, designs and helps co-ordinate ship, train and walking tours in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and Western United States. She was the Tour Manager for the Holy Ganges trip in 2012 with Harvard University.

A native of Washington state, Barbara was raised in the small town of Pullman, home to Washington State University. She graduated from Western Washington University, in Bellingham, with a BS in Biology, minor in Geology.

In 1979, Barbara moved to Big Sky, Montana to work at Lone Mountain Ranch as Program Director. She designed and supervised a Naturalist program, teaching clients about the flora, fauna and geology of the Yellowstone eco system. In the winter months she developed and managed the Nordic program, teaching skiing and guiding specialty ski tours into Yellowstone National Park. In the late 1980s, Barbara met Susan Eckert, President of AdventureWomen, and a few years later she began freelancing as a guide/Naturalist for AdventureWomen. For more than a dozen years, Barbara led numerous trips all over the world for AdventureWomen, sharing her knowledge and enthusiasm of travel and the natural world.

When not traveling the world, Barbara calls Bozeman, Montana home. She works as a Paramedic on a 911 private ambulance crew for the city of Bozeman, Montana.

**VISAS, TRAVEL DOCUMENTS, HEALTH REQUIREMENTS, AND HEALTH INSURANCE**

Citizens of the United States must possess a valid passport and India visa. Citizens of other countries should inquire about requirements for entry. If you do not have a passport, please APPLY NOW! Make sure that your passport is valid for a minimum of 6 months beyond your travel dates, and that you have a minimum of 2 blank facing pages for your visa. When you have your passport photographs taken, you should get extra photos: you will need two passport-size photo when you apply for your India visa, and you should always carry 2-3 EXTRA photos, just in case an emergency arises (i.e. in case your passport/visa is stolen).

You can go online to apply for your India visa here:

<https://indiavisa.travisaoutsourcing.com/homepage>

The maximum period of stay in India is limited to 6 months (180 days). Please note the visa is valid beginning on the day it is issued. So a 6 month visa issued on October 1, 2013 would be valid until April 30, 2014. You should use these dates as guidelines for applying for your India visa.

No special vaccinations are required for travel to India. However, please consult your personal physician, local health department, travel clinic, or immunization center about any vaccinations you may need to update, or others that may be personally recommended for you based on your age, health, and past vaccination history. Hepatitis A and B are present in India,

## LIABILITY FORM AND FINAL PAYMENT

Part of what AdventureWomen, Inc. hopes to foster is the taking of more self-responsibility for our own lives, health, and safety. Please read the Liability Form carefully, sign it, and return it with the remainder of your balance due by:

**OCTOBER 31, 2013.**

## CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS

Notification of cancellations must be received in writing. Full payment is due 90 days prior to departure date, and **\$750 of the registration deposit is non-refundable.**

For cancellations received 60-89 days prior to the trip departure date: 50% of the total trip cost is non-refundable. For cancellations received 1-59 days prior to the trip departure date: 100% of the total trip cost is non-refundable.

You are highly encouraged to purchase trip cancellation insurance to cover emergency situations and trip cancellation. Information is sent to you in your registration packet.

## SWITCHING TRIPS

Before your final balance due date, you may change your deposit to another trip within the same calendar year by paying a \$75 fee to switch. You may not switch your deposit to a trip in another calendar year.

## NO SMOKING POLICY

Beginning in 1995, our trips became smoke free. Please note that there will be no smoking by any participants on Adventure-Women vacations.

as in the rest of the world, so you should talk to your Doctor about this.

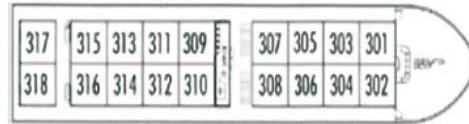
You MUST have your own health insurance and be in very good physical condition to participate in this trip. The trip is rated as Moderate. Trips of this designation offer moderate physical challenges. You should be able to walk/hike from 5-8 miles, in rolling terrain. This trip involves a lot of walking to view temples, ruins, and World Heritage Sites.

## Bengal Ganges

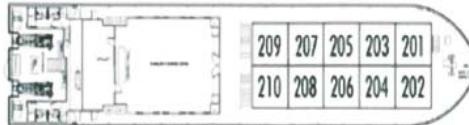
*Built in Myanmar in 2004 as a replica of the colonial "Clyde" steamers, this thoroughly modern ship has 28 outside staterooms (each 168 square feet) over two decks. Fine dining, excellent service and a hospitable and caring management team all help to make a Bengal Ganges experience something very special. The staff to guest ratio is one to two ensuring an excellent level of service and care. Passengers describe life on board as more like being a guest on a private motor yacht than a cruise ship. What you come back to is a floating base of discreet comfort, caring service, and all the good things one looks for in life. Sailing on Bengal Ganges is essentially an outdoor experience. The staterooms are very comfortable and roomy, but most passengers prefer to spend their time sitting outside the Promenade Deck or on the vast Observation Deck above. Unlike many cruise ships, every window can open.*



ELEVATION



UPPER DECK



MAIN DECK

## OUR EXCITING ITINERARY FOR CRUISING INDIA'S HOLY GANGES Aboard the Bengal Ganga

**DAYS 1-2, Tuesday-Wednesday, January 28 – 29, 2014: Depart the U.S.A. to Kolkata (Calcutta), India**

Depart the U.S. on an overnight flight, losing one day in transit due to crossing the International Date Line.

(Meals Enroute)

**DAY 3, Thursday, January 30: Arrive Kolkata**

On arrival in Kolkata you are met and transferred to the Taj Bengal Hotel. The remainder of the day is free for rest before a welcome reception, dinner, and trip orientation.

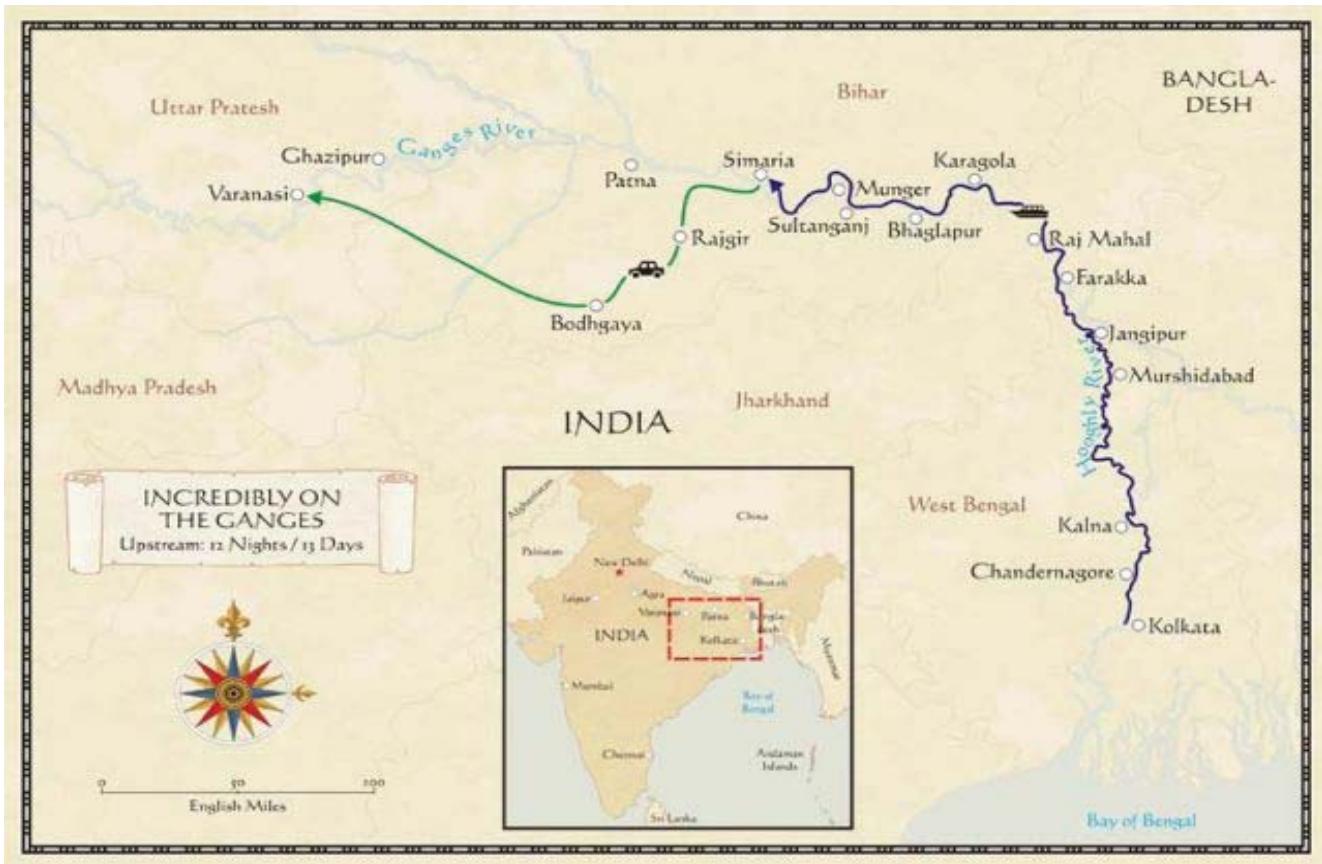
(Welcome Reception and Dinner)

**Overnight: Taj Bengal Hotel**

<http://www.tajhotels.com/Luxury/City-Hotels/Taj-Bengal-Kolkata/Overview.html>

The iconic Taj Bengal Hotel, Kolkata, is a city landmark. It stands apart with its elegant façade, modern architecture, classical atrium designs and an interior with genuine and priceless antiques and art.

Questions? 1-800-804-8686 ~ 1-406-587-3883 (outside the US) ~ [trips@adventurewomen.com](mailto:trips@adventurewomen.com)



#### **DAY 4, Friday, January 31: In Kolkata – Sightseeing / Board the Bengal Ganga/ Sail towards Kalna**

After breakfast we check-out from the hotel and explore British Colonial Kolkata, the capital of British India until 1912. Our tour includes the Writer's Building, once the administrative offices of the British East India Company; the General Post Office, the High Court, Town Hall, Council House, the Reserve Bank of India, and the Raj Bhawan, seat of imperial British power. We'll visit Dalhousie Square and drive past St. John's Church and Victoria Memorial for photo stops.

We'll then drive to the Botanical Garden Jetty and board our boat, the *Bengal Ganga*, and begin our cruise, sailing towards Kalna.

Our upstream journey to Kalna will take us through areas where different European settlers had established their respective East Indian Companies, leaving back reminiscence of their settlements during the period of 17th to 19th century. We will continue our cruise through the vast countryside of golden Bengal.

(Breakfast at the hotel, Lunch & Dinner onboard the *Bengal Ganga*)

#### **Overnight sailing towards Kalna on board *Bengal Ganga*.**

#### **DAY 5, Saturday, February 1: Kalna to Matiari**

Early this morning we arrive in Kalna, known as the Temple City for its unique mixture of Bengal temple architecture. We'll take rickshaws to visit the temple town and the enchanting Rajbari complex, which has the highest concentration of temples. On one side of the road lies the Nabakailas Temples. Built in 1809 by the Bardhaman Maharaja, the complex contains 108 'aat – chala', or "eight sloped roofed" Shiva temples arranged in two concentric circles. The outer circle consists of 74 temples of alternate black and white lingams, while the 34 temples of the inner circle have only white lingams. Due to its ingenious planning, all Shiva lingams can be seen from the center of the temple.

**ABOUT ADVENTURE  
TRAVEL TOURS**  
**Please Read Carefully!**

At AdventureWomen, we would like to ensure that all participants understand that our excursions are adventure travel vacations, and not "tours." We define "adventure travel" as travel in which one actively participates, as opposed to a "tour," in which one is more or less a passive observer. AdventureWomen designs and organizes vacations all over the world for women who want to experience an active, out of the ordinary vacation, and meet new friends. Most of all, we want our trips to be fun!

In this spirit, the successful adventure traveler should be a good-natured realist and have a sense of humor! Adventure vacations, by nature, require that participants be self-sufficient, flexible, and able to accept situations as they exist, and not just as they would have preferred or expected them to exist. The constraints of scheduled group traveling also necessitate that each of us be understanding of and sensitive to others. Being on time is important, and contributes to the congeniality, success and well being of both individuals and the group!

*Thank you for choosing to travel with AdventureWomen! If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call, write or email us.*



On the other side of the road lies a walled complex containing the most diversified form of Bengal's temple architecture. The Pratapeshwar Temple, built in 1849, contains terra cotta plaques depicting themes of Hindu epics, the mythical life of Sree Chaitanya, images of Durga, and various aspects of day to day life.

Other temples are the Lalji Temple, built in 1739, the oldest in the complex, and Krishnachandra Temple, built in 1751. The complex also houses the flat roofed temple of Giri Govardhan.

Later we'll cruise past the religious town of Mayapur, headquarters of the Krishna Consciousness Movement, and the birth place of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, born in 1486 AD and considered an incarnation of Lord Krishna. The town is situated on the banks of the confluence of the Ganga and the Jalangi rivers.

(Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner aboard the ship)

**Overnight at Matiari, on board Bengal Ganga**

**DAY 6, Sunday, February 2: Matiari - Murshidabad**

Early this morning, as we approach the village of Matiari, we hear the beating of metal as master craftsmen make the handcrafted brass pots and utensils for which Matiari is known. We'll observe the craftsmen at work, using traditional methods passed down through generations.

Returning to the ship, we cast off and sail past Plassey, well known for the battle that took place in 1757 which changed the history of India. On this battlefield, Robert Clive of the British East India Company defeated the Mogul Nawabs, then rulers of Bengal and their French Allies. This battle established the British East India Company as the ruler of India, and expanded over much of South Asia for the next 190 years.

(Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner aboard the ship)

Questions? 1-800-804-8686 ~ 1-406-587-3883 (outside the US) ~ [trips@adventurewomen.com](mailto:trips@adventurewomen.com)

**Overnight at Murshidabad, on board Bengal Ganga****DAY 7, Monday, February 3: Murshidabad - Jangipur**

We cast off early this morning and arrive at Murshidabad Jetty, where we disembark to visit the Hazarduari Palace, built in the Greek "Doric" style (1824-1838 A.D.) by an English architect, McLeod Duncan. The palace has a wide collection of antiquities, including various weapons, oil paintings by Dutch, French and Italian artists, marble statues, metal objects, porcelain and stucco statues, farmans, rare books, old maps, manuscripts, and land revenue records from the 18th and 19th centuries.

We'll also visit the Katra mosque, built in 1723-24 by Nawab Murshid Quli Khan, whose grave lies below the front staircase. Continue to the temple complex at Baranagar, which is considered a superior example of Bengal terra cotta art.

(Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner aboard the ship)

**Overnight at Jangipur, on board Bengal Ganga****DAY 8, Tuesday, February 4: Jangipur – Farakka**

We depart Jangipur early this morning and enter the Farakka lock gate, where the *Bengal Ganga* cruises through the feeder canal that connects the Hooghly River to the Ganges in West Bengal. Through this connecting canal we enter the Holy Ganges river, *Mother Ganga*. We'll see the Farakka Barrage, which regulates the flow of Ganges water into the delta that is shared by Bangladesh and India, and view vast panoramas all around.

We continue our upstream cruise to Raj Mahal.

(Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner aboard the ship)

**Overnight at Raj Mahal on board Bengal Ganga****Day 9, Wednesday, February 5: Raj Mahal – Karogola**

This morning, before breakfast, we enjoy an early walking tour of the ruins of Raj Mahal. Once known as Akbarnagar, it was founded by the Mogul Emperor Akbar as the capital of Bengal in 1592. Shah Jahan, builder of the Taj Mahal, spent a part of his youth here. On our walk we'll explore the ruins of palaces and mosques, through areas where China Clay is mined.

Returning to the boat we'll have breakfast as we cast off for Karagola, an area rich in bird life, with large flocks of water birds including Common Cranes. We spend the day cruising and, time permitting, explore some of the local villages and towns along the river banks.

(Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner aboard the ship)

**Overnight at Karagola on board Bengal Ganga****Day 10, Thursday, February 6: Karagola – Bateshwarthan**

This afternoon we visit the ruins of Vikramashila University, established by King Dharampala in late 8th or early 9th century A.D.. Vikramashila University was one of the two most important centers of Buddhist learning in India, along with Nalanda University, during the reign of the Pala dynasty. With more than one hundred teachers and one thousand students, Vikramashila was one of the largest Buddhist universities, where subjects like theology, philosophy, grammar, metaphysics and logic were taught.

(Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner aboard the ship)

**Overnight at Bateshwarthan, on board Bengal Ganga****Day 11, Friday, February 7: Bateshwarthan - Sultanganj**

Today we cruise through the Vikramashila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary, established for the protection and conservation of the Ganges river dolphins. The area also supports a rich diversity of other wildlife, many of which are threatened with extinction. These species include the Indian smooth-coated otter, several species of hard and soft shell turtles, and an astounding variety of migratory and resident migratory birds.

We continue sailing and, after lunch visit Sultanganj, where two great granite bluffs are crowned by a mosque and the larger one by the temple of Ghaibinath Siva. Excavations near Sultanpur have yielded ancient relics like stupas, seals, coins, terracotta Hindu and Buddha images.

(Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner aboard the ship)

**Overnight at Sultanganj, on board Bengal Ganga****Day 12, Saturday, February 8: Sultanganj - Munger**

We cast off in the morning and cruise to Munger. In the afternoon we'll visit the Bihar School of Yoga, which lies inside the remains of an 18th century Mogul fort. The Yoga school was established in 1963 by Swami Niranjanananda to preserve and regenerate the total scope of yogic science by combining academic and scientific methodology with a spiritual vision.

(Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner aboard the ship)

**Overnight at Simaria, on board Bengal Ganga****Day 13, Sunday, February 9: Munger - Simaria**

Today is our last full day cruising onboard the *Bengal Ganga*. Our final cruise takes us through the rugged landscape of Bihar, and we'll spend a leisurely day watching wildlife and bird life along the fascinating shores of the river Ganges.

Our 10 night upstream journey on Mother Ganges will come to an end this evening, and it's been an amazing

11 days experiencing fascinating cultural traditions, brilliant architecture, varied tapestries of religious beliefs and historical sagas, diverse flora and fauna, and incredible landscapes. Tonight we celebrate our time on this amazing journey during our Farewell dinner on board the *Bengal Ganga*.

(Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner aboard the ship)

#### **Overnight at Simaria, on board *Bengal Ganga***

#### **Day 14, Monday, February 10: Disembark at Simaria - Drive to Bodhgaya**

This morning we say good-bye to our beautiful ship, the *Bengal Ganga*, and drive to Nalanda University, by some accounts, the oldest seat of learning in India. It contains extraordinary ruins of structures built in the 5th century by the Gupta kings.

After lunch we'll visit Bodhgaya, one of the most important and sacred Buddhist pilgrimage centers in the world. Here, under the "Bodhi Tree," Gautama attained supreme knowledge to become Buddha, the Enlightened One.

(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

#### **Overnight: Hotel Royal Residency or Similar, Bodhgaya**

[http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel\\_Review-g424922-d1116074-Reviews-The\\_Royal\\_Residency-Bodh\\_Gaya\\_Bihar.html](http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g424922-d1116074-Reviews-The_Royal_Residency-Bodh_Gaya_Bihar.html)

#### **Day 15, Tuesday, February 11: Bodhgaya - Varanasi**

After breakfast we drive to Varanasi, the holiest town for Hindus, and check in at our hotel. The rest of the day is free.

(Breakfast at hotel in Bodhgaya; Packed Lunch en route; Dinner at hotel in Varanasi)

#### **Overnight at The Taj Gateway Hotel, Ganges, Varanasi or similar**

[http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel\\_Review-g297685-df304796-Reviews-The\\_Gateway\\_Hotel\\_Ganges\\_Varanasi-Varanasi\\_Uttar\\_Pradesh.html](http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g297685-df304796-Reviews-The_Gateway_Hotel_Ganges_Varanasi-Varanasi_Uttar_Pradesh.html)

This Taj hotel is set among 40 acres of lush green gardens, just 45 minutes from the airport. It is a veritable haven of peace and tranquility in this crowded and ancient temple city.

#### **Day 16, Wednesday, February 12: Sightseeing in Varanasi**

An early morning small boat ride takes us on the Ganges River to view the sunrise, before returning to the hotel for breakfast. After breakfast we visit the ruins and museum at Sarnath, where Lord Buddha gave his first sermon after attaining enlightenment in Bodhgaya. The Archeological Museum of Sarnath contains a large collection of sculptures that bear testimony to the fervent artistic and religious activity that went on here for more

than a thousand years. Return to the hotel for lunch.

This evening we'll experience Varanasi's colorful and fascinating street life during a rickshaw ride through the city. Continue on foot to the riverside bathing steps known as *ghats* to witness the religious ritual of *aarti* on the Ganges, in which light from wicks soaked in *ghee* (purified butter) is offered to one or more deities.

After the *aarti* ceremony we celebrate in style with dinner and a cultural program. Only vegetarian food is served here because we are in the vicinity of temples. (Breakfast & Lunch at hotel with a Farewell Dinner at Raja Ghat)

#### **Overnight at The Taj Gateway Hotel, Ganges, or Similar**

[http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel\\_Review-g297685-df304796-Reviews-The\\_Gateway\\_Hotel\\_Ganges\\_Varanasi-Varanasi\\_Uttar\\_Pradesh.html](http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g297685-df304796-Reviews-The_Gateway_Hotel_Ganges_Varanasi-Varanasi_Uttar_Pradesh.html)

#### **Day 17, Thursday, February 13: Fly Varanasi - Delhi**

This morning is free until our afternoon transfer to the airport for our flight to Delhi. On arrival in Delhi, we are transferred to an airport hotel for use of dayrooms and dinner. Transfer to the international airport is included, based on the time of your outbound flight.

(Breakfast & Early Lunch at hotel in Varanasi; Dinner at hotel in Delhi)



**Dayrooms: Hotel Radisson Blu or similar, in Delhi till 21:00 hrs (9 p.m.)**

<http://www.rasiddonblu.com/hotel-newdelhi>

**OPTIONAL EXTENSION TO THE TAJ MAHAL AND MORE**

For many, no visit to India is complete without seeing the unbelievably beautiful Taj Mahal. If you who wish to extend your adventure and visit the Taj Mahal and the Bird Sanctuary at Bharatpur (UNESCO designated World Heritage Natural site), the following is our schedule:

**Thursday, February 13: Fly from Varanasi to Delhi with Overnight**

After flying to Delhi from Varanasi, transfer to your hotel and overnight.

(Breakfast & Early Lunch at hotel in Varanasi; Dinner at hotel)

**Overnight at Radisson Hotel or similar**

<http://www.radissonblu.com/hotel-newdelhi>

**Friday, February 14: Delhi – Bharatpur, Rajasthan**

Today, after breakfast, we drive to Bharatpur to visit the summer palace of the Maharaja of Bharatpur in Deeg. Continuing to the Bagh, we explore our heritage hotel, which is the princely estate of a member of the Maharaja's family that has been expanded to accommodate guests in restful four-star luxury accommodations.

A highlight of today is a visit to the Keoladeo Ghana National Park for bird watching on foot and by cycle rickshaws. The Park is one of the most famous bird sanctuaries in the world.

(Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner at resort in Bharatpur)

**Overnight at The Bagh, Bharatpur**

[http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel\\_Review-g303886-d611837-Reviews-The\\_Bagh\\_Resort\\_Bharatpur-Bharatpur\\_Rajasthan.html](http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g303886-d611837-Reviews-The_Bagh_Resort_Bharatpur-Bharatpur_Rajasthan.html)

The Bagh offers guests and opportunity to experience quiet luxury in an environment of exquisite 200 year old hotel gardens, with over fifty species of flora, including fruiting trees and flowering plants. Art by contemporary Indian women artists is also displayed throughout the complex. In addition to three hundred fifty avian species of birds, the nearby Keoladeo Ghana National Park has nearly fifty different mammals.

**Saturday, February 15: Bharatpur – The Taj Mahal, Agra - Bharatpur**

After breakfast we visit Fatehpur Sikri, the deserted imperial capital of Emperor Akbar, and the Agra Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage site. We continue on to Agra to be dazzled by the Taj Mahal, completed in 1654 in memory of Emperor Shah Jaha's wife, Mumtaz, and often described

as the most beautiful monument to love ever built.

The Taj Mahal is regarded as one of the eight wonders of the world, and some Western historians have noted that its architectural beauty has never been surpassed. The Taj is the most beautiful monument built by the Mughals, the Muslim rulers of India. Built entirely of white marble, its stunning architectural beauty is beyond adequate description, particularly at dawn and sunset. The Taj seems to glow in the light of the full moon. On a foggy morning, visitors have often said that they experience the Taj as if suspended when viewed from across the Jamuna river.

Return to Bharatpur in the evening for overnight (Breakfast at resort in Bharatpur; Lunch at local restaurant in Agra; Dinner at the resort in Bharatpur)

**Overnight at The Bagh, Bharatpur**

[http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel\\_Review-g303886-d611837-Reviews-The\\_Bagh\\_Resort\\_Bharatpur-Bharatpur\\_Rajasthan.html](http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g303886-d611837-Reviews-The_Bagh_Resort_Bharatpur-Bharatpur_Rajasthan.html)

**Sunday, February 16: Drive from Bharatpur - Delhi – Fly Home**

After breakfast we drive to Delhi and check-in at our airport hotel for lunch and day rooms until 2100 hrs. (9 p.m.). Dinner is in the hotel, and you will be transferred to the international airport for outbound flights depending on your flight times.

(Breakfast at resort in Bharatpur, Lunch & Dinner at hotel in Delhi)

**Dayroom Use: Hotel Radisson Blu or Similar, Delhi, until 21:00 hrs (9 p.m.)**

<http://www.radissonblu.com/hotel-newdelhi>

**INDIA CLIMATE AND WEATHER IN FEBRUARY**

Traveling along the River Ganges in February you can expect temperatures in the low to mid 70s F and little rain (the dry season is November through March), making this the perfect time of year for a Ganges cruise.

**MONEY & CURRENCY IN INDIA**

India's unit of currency is the India Rupee. As of March 18, 2013, 1 USD = 53.91 INR (India Rupees).

Bring U.S. cash and credit cards. Visa and MC are the most commonly used credit cards and are widely accepted in most hotels, restaurants, and department stores. Am Ex is not as widely accepted. ATMs are available in large cities, and sometimes in smaller ones.

You can find the current rate of exchange at the following website: <http://www.xe.com/ucc/>

## WHAT TO PACK FOR YOUR INDIA ADVENTURE TOUR & RIVER CRUISE

**Luggage, Clothing, and Travel Accessories:** Three words of packing advice for your river cruise in India: **LIGHT, LIGHT, LIGHT!** It is best to condense your luggage into one manageable suitcase with wheels and one daypack or backpack (carry-on size). Also, a spare, very light, duffel bag or day pack rolled or folded into your wheeled suitcase is useful for transporting souvenir items home. There are wonderful handicrafts and weavings available in India!

We suggest you use your daypack as your carry-on bag during your flights. In it you should have all valuables and essentials: medications, passports and all important documents, cameras and memory cards, a day's change of clothing, lightweight sleepwear, and toiletries.

Put luggage ID tags outside AND identification inside your baggage. If your bag is lost and the outside ID tag and baggage stickers are dislodged, the airlines may open the bag to search for an ID inside your bag. (We will send you 3 tags for the outside of your bags.)

You should also be aware of any new **airline regulations for travel within India** ([www.tsa.gov/travelers](http://www.tsa.gov/travelers)) about what you can and cannot bring in your carry-on bag, and what you must put in your checked luggage.

### Pre-Departure Tasks

- Obtain or renew passport.
- Obtain necessary visa for India.
- Evaluate and obtain trip cancellation, baggage, and medical insurance.
- Consult with physician for physical examination, immunization, and prescription medicine recommendations.

### Clothing for your India Cruise & Adventure Tour

The dress code onboard is "casual and comfortable". Staff on the *Bengal Ganga* request that shorts not be worn, and that you wear long sleeve shirts or tops (not sleeveless) during excursions to temples and mosques, and carry a stole or a scarf to cover your heads.

- Clothing should be lightweight, quick drying, and breathable. Pay special attention to sun protection needs. Long sleeves and wide brim hats are recommended.
- Underwear. Synthetics are easier to wash and dry.
- Sleepwear.
- Shirts: Long-sleeve, synthetic or cotton shirts because they are featherweight, durable, wrinkle-resistant, and dry quickly. Those with multiple, closed

(velcro or zipper) pockets are excellent.

- Short-sleeve synthetic or cotton T-Shirts. Those with multiple, closed (velcro or zipper) pockets are excellent.
- Sweater/Jacket: Medium-weight sweater or jacket made of synthetic fabric (fleece) for cool evenings.
- Vest: A lightweight, multi-pocket, photo journalist-type vest is excellent for day use (use it to store film, cameras, binoculars, etc.)
- Pants: Full-length pants, preferably of quick-drying synthetic fabric with many zippered pockets, and capris.
- Bathing Suit.
- Sun hat with a wide brim, preferably with a chin strap to keep it from blowing off.
- Gore-Tex rain/wind parka and/or sturdy poncho to protect day pack and camera gear from rain or water spray. (This can be your jacket, as listed above, as long as it is waterproof).
- Athletic socks (synthetic for easy washing and drying) that are suitable for your lightweight walking shoes.
- While off the boat: Sturdy, properly fitting footwear can make your trip much more comfortable and enjoyable. Very comfortable, lightweight walking shoes are a good option. We will be doing a lot of walking on this trip, so bring shoes that you will be comfortable in for all day wear.
- While on board the boat: When reboarding the boat, we ask that you remove your shoes so that they can be cleaned, and they will be returned to you at a later time. You will be given a pair of slippers to use for getting back to your cabin, at which time you can put on a pair of comfortable sandals or flip-flops to wear onboard the vessel. Street shoes, or shoes that you wore for shore excursions, should not be worn on the boat.
- Sandals for onboard the boat, (Teva-type sandals or similar: Merrill's, Keens, etc. and a pair of flip flops or similar).
- 3-4 cotton bandannas (it's an AdventureWomen tradition!)
- One or two sets of nice, lightweight casual clothes for evening dinners or social activities (maybe a lightweight skirt to be included)
- Laundry service is available onboard, and laundry bags and a price list will be in your closet.

### Personal Items

- Passport and Indian Visa.
- 2-3 spare passport photos to bring on the trip (in case of lost passport/visa).
- Battery operated travel alarm clock.
- Extra batteries for cameras, alarm clock, etc.

- Small flashlight with extra batteries and bulb.
- Sunglasses, case (90% - 100% ultraviolet and some infrared protection).
- Contact lenses, cleaner, saline solution, extra eyeglasses with safety band.
- Money belt.
- Bring U.S. cash and credit cards. Visa and MC are the most commonly used credit cards and are widely accepted in most hotels, restaurants, and department stores. ATMs are in larger cities, and infrequent in smaller ones.
- Address book, writing paper, or journal, pen/pencil.
- Daypack (also serves as an airline carry-on bag and for daily excursions from the boat).
- Plastic water bottle. Nalgene plastic is recommended as there is no plastic taste in the heat.
- TSA approved locks for your suitcase/ carry-on bag.
- Ziploc-type bags for packing shampoo or other liquids, or wet, dirty clothing.
- Washcloth (not supplied in many hotels, etc.).
- Personal toiletries in small leak-proof bottles.
- Earplugs. We recommend Mack's Pillow Soft White Moldable Silicone Snore Proof Earplugs, which you can buy at most drugstores, or [www.earplugstore.com](http://www.earplugstore.com). Good to 22 Decibels!
- Biodegradable bar soap (can double as laundry soap for washing undies).
- Tampons or sanitary napkin supply (not always widely available).
- Thread, needles, safety pins for minor repairs.
- Your favorite, and effective, insect repellent.
- Wash & Dries (or other antiseptic wipes) for hand washing and emergency toilet paper.
- A mini-sized English – India - English phrase book dictionary.
- Lonely Planet/or Eyewitness Travel Guide/or other book on India.

**Personal First Aid Kit** (Bring in small amounts and in small containers)

- Foot powder for moisture absorption; cloth, not plastic Bandaids; about 10 individually wrapped alcohol pads; and a small tube of Neosporin or other antibiotic cream.
- Aspirin/ibuprofen, etc.
- Cold-symptom relief tablets, antihistamine, cough drops.
- Adequate quantity of sweat-resistant sun screen with at least an SPF 15 rating or higher, and lip balm with sunscreen.
- Tweezers.
- Ace bandage.
- Antibiotics (Cipro, or another systemic antibiotic).
- Prescription medicines in their original bottles.
- Acidophilus enzyme (available in capsules in health-food stores). This often helps your digestive system get in shape for "new" flora.
- Imodium, Lomotil, or similar anti-diarrhea medicine.
- Pepto-Bismol tablets and/or liquid (in leak-proof bottle).
- Emergen-C. Good for higher altitudes, and some people swear they get fewer colds on airplanes if they take this during flights.

**Camera Equipment**

For many women, photography will be a VERY LARGE part of this trip. The opportunities are endless, and the scenery spectacular! We suggest that you bring many more memory cards and batteries than you think you could ever use!

- Digital camera, memory cards, battery charger, and adapter. In India, triple round pin sockets are the norm. Most digital cameras have a built in converter so you probably only need to bring an adapter. You can also purchase adapter plugs in stores. You will be able to charge all of your batteries on the boat

**Optional**

- Small, lightweight binoculars.

- Pictures of your house, pets, and family (local people love to see this!).
- Reading material.
- Extra, lightweight duffel bag (empty, and packed inside your suitcase).

#### Last-Minute Reminders

- Make photocopies of your airline tickets and the first two pages of your passport, plus your visa (if it is stamped inside your passport) and put them in different locations (suitcase, carry-on bag, etc.).
- Bring your 2-3 additional passport size photos to use in emergencies.
- Your valuables should be insured for the duration of the trip, but better yet, leave them at home.
- Remove extra credit cards, driver's license, and personal items from wallet or purse.
- Make sure passport, tickets, and visa are valid and in the correct name.
- Check with airline to reconfirm reservations and departure time (most airlines want to hear directly from the client for confirmations).

#### Some Extra Items to Add to your "What to Pack" for your India Adventure Tour & River Cruise

We are updating and adding the following items for all international trips. With more than 30 years of experience flying around the world, we think these items help make your long airline flights much more comfortable and even more bearable.

- Neck pillow** - Inflatable neck pillow for blissful support and deep sleep. For packing, it folds into itself. Self-sealing valve means nothing to close. Soft microfleece cover removes for washing.  
Eagle Creek® Large Inflatable Travel Neck Pillow at TravelSmith.
- Sleep mask /Comfort eye shade** - Ultra lightweight and comfortable, the Comfort Eye Shade screens out light and distractions for a cozier flight. Ultra-soft micro fleece for comfort. Adjustable elastic strap for a perfect fit. Made of Molded Polyester Micro Fleece.  
Eagle Creek® Comfort Eye Shade at TravelSmith.
- Travel compression socks** - Reduce ankle and leg swelling and reduce the risk of deep vein thrombosis. These doctor-designed socks stimulate circulation through gradual compression that stops swelling and guards against (DVT). Made of coolmax®-lycra®-nylon. The TravelSox® cushion Walk Socks have extra-padded soles and are made of moisture wicking SoftPrim®.  
TravelSox® Cushion Walk Sock™ at TravelSmith.
- Noise canceling headphones** - Block out unwanted sounds of children crying and airplane engine drone, and/or enjoy great audio sound. Reduce distortion and increase perceived loudness so you can enjoy sound at a lower volume. Get the around the ear design, which is very comfortable.  
Bose Quiet Comfort 2 - List Price: \$199.99. Oval shaped around-the-ear design, an iPod fits nicely in the center of the case between the headphones. You can get the next generation of Bose Quiet Comfort 3, but the cost is \$349.00.  
Audio Technica ATH-ANC7- List Price: \$219.95 Excellent sound quality and above average noise cancellation. Comfortable leather cushioning around the ear and can be worn for long periods of time with no discomfort. Excellent headphones with a reasonable price tag. Comparable in quality to the Bose Quiet Comfort 3.

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*Thank you for choosing to travel with AdventureWomen!  
If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call, write, or email us.*

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