

Ajanta & Ellora

4 days | Starts/Ends: Mumbai



See the remarkable, rock-hewn 2nd century B.C. caves of Ajanta adorned with exquisite paintings and sculptures of Buddha and view the impressive temples and monasteries of Ellora, home to the renowned Kailasa Temple.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Aurangabad - Bibi-ka-Maqbara (Taj Mahal replica), Panchakkib (water mill) and Aurangabad Caves
- Ajanta - Caves in the shape of a mammoth horseshoe
- Ellora - Caves and Daulatabad Fort

What's Included

- Return economy class flights from Mumbai to Aurangabad
- 3 nights standard accommodation (superior and deluxe available upon request) at the President Park Hotel or similar
- Entrance fees applicable to excursions
- 3 breakfasts included
- Ajanta, Ellora and Aurangabad excursions
- Services of English-speaking Indian guides for all scheduled sightseeing

What's Not Included

- International flights and visas
- Laundry, drinks, items of a personal nature
- Tipping - an entirely personal gesture

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Mumbai

Mumbai - Aurangabad. Early morning transfer to the airport for your included flight to Aurangabad. Onward transfer to hotel. In the afternoon, we undertake a city sightseeing tour of Aurangabad. The Pani Chakki is a late 17th century water mill that displays the engineering skills of Malik Ambar, the architect of Aurangabad City. It is surrounded by a picturesque garden-landscape dotted with fish tanks. The Bibi-ka-maqbara was built by Aurangzeb's son as a tribute to his mother, Begum Rabia-ud-Durani. It is a replica of the Taj Mahal, and stands out as the only example of Mogul architecture on the Deccan Plateau. Also visit the Aurangabad Caves No. 7 & 8, caves from the Mahayana school of Buddhism. **Overnight - Aurangabad**

Day 2 : Ajanta Caves

Enjoy a full day excursion to Ajanta Caves. Nestling in an inner fold of the Sahyadri hills, 100 kms from the city of Aurangabad in the shape of a mammoth horseshoe are the 30 rock-hewn caves of Ajanta, dating from 2nd century B.C. Discovered in 1819, by a group of British Officers, these startling achievements

took around 600 years to create. Carved with little more than a hammer and chisel, Ajanta, once the retreat of the Buddhist monastic orders features several 'Chaityas' and Viharas. The exquisite paintings and sculptures of Buddha's life belong to the Mahayana period. **Overnight - Aurangabad (B)**

Day 3 : Ellora Caves - Buddhist, Jain & Hindu Sculptures

Aurangabad. This morning we head out to Ellora Caves. Impressive in their own right are the rock-hewn temples and monasteries of Ellora that lie just 30 kms away from Aurangabad City and are the meeting point of the Buddhists, Jains and Hindus.

In all, there are 34 cave temples - 12 Mahayana Buddhist caves (550-750 A.D.) and 17 Hindu caves (600-875 A.D.) and five caves of the Jain faith (800- 1000 A.D.) 22 more caves, dedicated to Shiva, have been recently discovered. Cave 16, the renowned Kailasa Temple dedicated to Lord Shiva, is probably the largest monolith in the world and is said to have taken 150 years to be built by 7000 labourers, working in continuous shifts. Lavishly carved and sculptured from a single rock, it bears testimony to the excellence of Dravidian art. It includes a gateway, pavilion, courtyard, vestibule, sanctum, sanctorum and tower. Cave No. 32, which is the assembly

Ajanta & Ellora - 4 days

www.onthegotours.com
 UK 020 7371 1113 info@onthegotours.com
 AUS 1300 855 684 aus-info@onthegotours.com
 NZ 0800 44 77 69 CAN 1 866 890 7038
 USA 1 866 606 2960 SA 0800 990 311

This information has been compiled with care and good faith. They give an accurate illustration of the proposed arrangements for this holiday. Circumstances beyond our control such as changes in local conditions, inclement weather or other reasons could force us to make changes to this itinerary. Any costs shown are subject to change, though are an accurate reflection of costs at time of writing. Please also note that visa requirements are subject to change and are the responsibility of the traveller and not that of On The Go Tours.

Ajanta & Ellora

hall of Indra (God of rain), belongs to the Jain group. A shrine within the assembly hall contains the seated Mahavir, last of the 24 tirthankars and founder of Jainism. The lotus design details on the columns are the finest examples of craftsmanship in the Ellora complex.

This afternoon we enjoy an excursion to Daulatabad Fort, a labyrinthine structure that was once covered in Persian tiles. **Overnight - Aurangabad (B)**

Day 4 : Aurangabad - Mumbai by flight

Aurangabad - Mumbai. Transfer to the airport and fly to Mumbai. Upon arrival to Mumbai our arrangements end. If you are booking extra accommodation with us in Mumbai, you will be transferred to your hotel and the following day returned to the airport for your onward international flight.

Alternatively, you are able to book a hotel day use room with us. Where by a car, driver and room will be made available to you for use until the time of your international flight, later in the day.

Please Note: Ajanta Caves are closed on Monday, Ellora Caves are closed on Tuesday.(B)

Tipping

Tipping is much a part of Indian Culture. For a job well done we would suggest that you reserve the following amount per person per day to cover tips along the way.

- INR400 (USD\$8.50) if the day includes local guide & sightseeing
- INR200 (USD\$4.50) if the day excludes local guide & sightseeing

Fabulous Food!

India's vast range of climates, cultures and peoples has produced a very diverse culinary repertoire. Curry is the word that springs to mind when people think of India food. Believe it or not, there is no such thing as 'curry' in India. It's an English invention, an all-purpose term to cover the whole gamut of Indian spicing. Although all Indian food is certainly not curry, this is the basis of Indian cuisine. Curry doesn't have to be that hot it'll blow your

head, although it can be made that way, if you ask! Rather, for the most part Indian food is very, very aromatic, since the spices used by Indian chefs and cooks in India don't arrive in the cooking pot via a pre-packed tub of spice.

Indian chefs and cooks have about 25 spices on their regular list and it is from these that they produce the curry flavour.

Normally spices are freshly ground with a pestle and mortar, and blended in certain combinations to produce varying flavours and heat. It is the freshness of the spices that transform the dish. Curries can be vegetable, meat-lamb, mutton or chicken in content, though never beef. The cow is sacred to the Hindu people and India in general, so it is extremely rare to see beef on any menu across the country. Lamb also substitutes beef at McDonalds in India. Ask for a Maharajah Mac!

Thalis

Thalis are an all-purpose Indian dish offering a variety of curried vegetable dishes, relishes, poppadams, puris or chapatis and a mountain of rice. Often served on a metal tray with a number of small bowls known as katoris holding each dish or just small indentations moulded into the metal tray, Thalis are consistently tasty and cheap.

Secular India

India, despite being a secular state, harbours arguably the world's richest heritage of spirituality and religious experience. India's major religion, Hinduism is practised by more than 80% of the population. In numbers, that translates to in excess of 700 million people.

No definition of Hinduism truly justifies the true meaning and significance of Hinduism. Hinduism has many layers. Hinduism is not just a religion but a complex body of social, cultural, religious beliefs and practises evolved in and largely confined to the Indian subcontinent. Hinduism is marked by a caste system, an outlook tending to view all forms and theories as aspects of one eternal being and truth, and the practice of the way of works, the way of knowledge, or the way of devotion as a means of release from the round of rebirths. It is not based upon a single scripture

or the teachings of one prophet. It has no founder, central authority or hierarchy. You can't be converted; to be a Hindu you must be born one. The strictly orthodox maintain only a person born in India of Hindu parents can truly claim to be Hindu.

Hinduism has the largest number of adherents of any religion in Asia. Along with Buddhism, Jainism and Zoroastrianism, it is one of the oldest extant religions with roots extending back to 1000BC. Buddhism and Jainism arose around the same time as one another in the 6th century BC at a time of social and religious discontent. Both were reactions against the strictures of Brahminical Hinduism. Although more recent, Sikhism too has its roots in a protest movement in the late 15th century, the bhakti (devotional tradition) that started in southern India as a reaction against the caste system and Brahmin domination of ritual. It was conceived at a time of great social upheaval and was an attempt to fuse the best of Islam and Hinduism.

Today, there are some 16 million Sikhs in India, mostly from Punjab. The Golden Temple in Amritsar is the holiest shrine of Sikhism. Islam was introduced to the north by invading armies (in the 16th century the Mughal empire controlled much of India) and to the south by Arab traders.

Today, Islam is the largest minority religion in the country with in excess of 100 million adherents. Christianity arrived in southern India not with the first Europeans but with Syrian immigrants in the 4th century. A sect of the Syrian Orthodox church was established and still survives today, along with other eastern Orthodox sects. Catholicism arrived with the Portuguese and Protestantism with the English and Dutch. Today, India has around 18 million Christians, of who around 75% are South Indian.

Our Environmental

Preserving the natural state and beauty of the areas we pass through is essential. In helping to preserve the historical and religious legacy of India; it's coastlines and waterways, local cultures, flora and fauna, please read on and see how you can do your bit. Please respect the following;

Ajanta & Ellora - 4 days

www.onthegotours.com
 UK 020 7371 1113 info@onthegotours.com
 AUS 1300 855 684 aus-info@onthegotours.com
 NZ 0800 44 77 69 CAN 1 866 890 7038
 USA 1 866 606 2960 SA 0800 990 311

This information has been compiled with care and good faith. They give an accurate illustration of the proposed arrangements for this holiday. Circumstances beyond our control such as changes in local conditions, inclement weather or other reasons could force us to make changes to this itinerary. Any costs shown are subject to change, though are an accurate reflection of costs at time of writing. Please also note that visa requirements are subject to change and are the responsibility of the traveller and not that of On The Go Tours.

Ajanta & Ellora

- Take no relic from historical sites with you, be it a small chunk of fluted marble, stonework or carving.
- Dress appropriately if entering a place of worship such as a Hindu temple. Show respect for the sacred beliefs of others.
- Stick to designated paths. Erosion is a problem on hill and mountainsides, especially at high altitudes.
- Avoid removing or disturbing any plant life that keeps topsoils in place.
- Do not engage in hunting or the purchase of trophies of endangered species. It's illegal in India's parks and sanctuaries, and to import the hide of an endangered species is also illegal.
- Take all personal litter with you.
- Toilet Paper and tissue should be disposed of in a bin, to avoid blocking sometimes temperamental plumbing systems.
- If needing to perform your ablutions beyond the confines of a WC, be sure to bury any waste.

on the go promotes the recruitment, training and employment of local people in tourism. As well as benefiting the local people, on the go believes this fosters national pride in India's illustrious history. Understanding today ensures the preservation of India for tomorrow.

If looking to offer donations or gifts to local people – in particular children, please do so discreetly and without show. Despite generous acts of goodwill, people still like to retain their dignity. Useful gifts to consider include educational items such as English language books (English is taught in many schools), chalks, pens, paper, balls and small items reflecting where you are from.

Ajanta & Ellora - 4 days

updated on 19-02-2020 12:12:21

www.onthegotours.com
 UK 020 7371 1113 info@onthegotours.com
 AUS 1300 855 684 aus-info@onthegotours.com
 NZ 0800 44 77 69 CAN 1 866 890 7038
 USA 1 866 606 2960 SA 0800 990 311

This information has been compiled with care and good faith. They give an accurate illustration of the proposed arrangements for this holiday. Circumstances beyond our control such as changes in local conditions, inclement weather or other reasons could force us to make changes to this itinerary. Any costs shown are subject to change, though are an accurate reflection of costs at time of writing. Please also note that visa requirements are subject to change and are the responsibility of the traveller and not that of On The Go Tours.