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Princely Murshidabad

7 nights / 8 days Cruise

Kolkata – Bandel – Kalna – Matiari – Khushbagh – Baranagar – Murshidabad –
Mayapur – Chandernagore – Kolkata

Day 1: Arrive Kolkata, Embarkation (L/D)

Embarkation: 12:00 PM

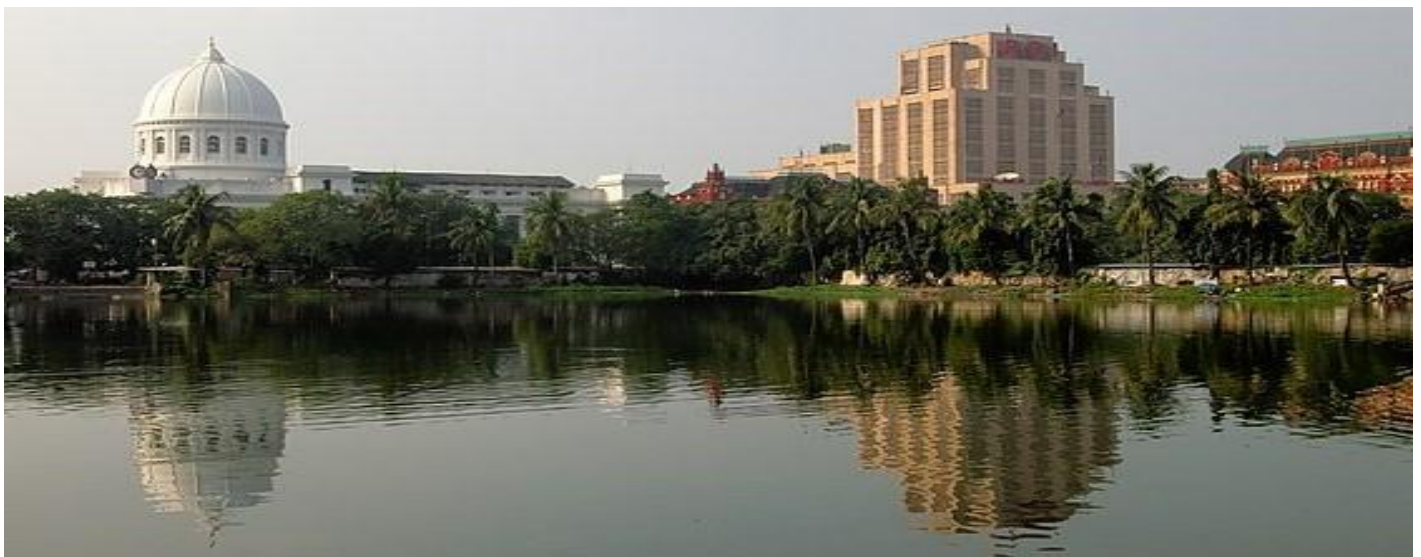
Morning embark the ship at the Jetty in Kolkata and enjoy lunch on board. The afternoon excursion includes a visit to **Mother Teresa's Home** and Tomb (*closed on Thursdays*). Mother Teresa started the Missionary of Charity in 1952, then lived and worked here until her death in 1997. The permanent exhibition includes a visit to her personal room, we learn her life story, and see her charity that is still active. Optional: We continue by foot a short distance to her orphanage, Sishu Bhawan (Children's Home), where one of the sisters will lead us on a tour.

Then we return to the ship for overnight. Enjoy cultural performance onboard.

Highlight of the Day: Welcome to the Big City of Kolkata, often regarded as the Cultural Capital of India and the gateway to our journey along the world's holiest river, the sacred Ganges, known in this region as the Hooghly. Be entertained onboard by **Baul musicians**, whose music represents a long heritage of preaching mysticism through songs in Bengal. The Baul tradition has been included in the list of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.

Overnight onboard Ganges Voyager

Day 2: Kolkata – Bandel – Kalna (B/L/D)



General Post Office & Reserve Bank of India at Dalhousie Square

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Guests embark on an early-morning city tour, featuring a **Panoramic Tour** of the well-preserved British colonial buildings in Kolkata: Writer's Building, General Post Office, High Court, Raj Bhawan (Governor's House), Town Hall, Council House, Treasury Building, Reserve Bank of India and Dalhousie Square. The day continues with a visit to St. John's Church, the oldest Anglican Church in Kolkata, built in 1756. The tour features the oldest functioning pipe organ in India and several tombs of British Generals who died during the Siege of Kolkata by Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula in 1756. Then we visit the recently renovated Victoria Memorial Museum, which houses the largest collection of British colonial historical artifacts in India.

We set sail upstream to Bandel, meaning port in Bengali. It was founded by Portuguese settlers who built the Church and a Monastery around 1660. Afternoon, visit the **Hooghly Imambara**, one of the famous Shiya pilgrimage centres in West Bengal, built in 1841 by Haji Mohammad Mahasin. The two-story building and surrounding rooms provide housing for pilgrims as well as classrooms, or Madrasa that teach the Koran. The structure contains a Victorian-era clock with a winding key weighing 20kg. Large Persian chandeliers and lamps light the Imambara's stunning hallways and passages.



Hooghly Imambara, Bandel

We sail onward to Kalna.

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Highlight of the Day: We sail through areas where various European settlers had established East Indian Companies, leaving many remnants of their settlements from the 17th through 19th Centuries.

Overnight onboard Ganges Voyager

Day 3: Kalna – Matiari (B/L/D)

In the morning enjoy a rickshaw ride through the town centre of **Kalna** to visit the enchanting **Rajbari Temple Complex**, which has the highest concentration of temples in the region. Visit the Nabakailas Temple, built in 1809 by the Bardhaman Maharaja, which contains 108 eight slope-roofed shrines dedicated to Lord Shiva. Other temples in the complex feature diverse architecture and terra cotta plaques depict themes of Hindu epics, mythical life of Sree Chaitanya, images of Durga, and various aspects of day-to-day life in the region.



Terracotta plaque, Kalna

Return to the ship walking through the local market and sail onward to arrive at the shore-side village of Matiari.

Highlight of the Day: Admire the terracotta art and temple architecture of the region and walk through the local market witnessing the bargains between shoppers and vendors of fruit and vegetables.

Overnight onboard Ganges Voyager

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Day 4: Matiari - Khushbagh (B/L/D)

Early this morning enjoy a walk in the village to see and experience the craftsmen at work. The village is known for manufacturing beautiful handcrafted brass items, utilizing traditional methods passed down for generations. These master craftsmen utilize recycled copper to create exquisite pots, platters and more from their workshops in the village.



Brass-work, Matiari

Sail onward to the village of **Plassey**, which was the site of the famous battlefield, where Robert Clive of British East India Company defeated the Mogul Nawabs in 1757. The rulers of Bengal and their French allies established the company rule in India, which spread through much of South Asia for the next 190 years.

Early evening we visit Khushbagh, a charming riverside village surrounded by scenic fields. Walk through the farmland to visit the peaceful **Khush Bagh**, the Moghul-style garden built by Nawab Ali-Wardi-Khan. The complex houses his family's private mosque and the tomb of the last Nawab of Bengal Siraj-ud-Daula who was defeated by the British East India Company at the Battle of Plassey

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Highlights of the Day: Marvel at the deft hands of the brass-smiths at work creating wonders on metal. Walk through farmland to the peaceful garden tomb.



The Mosque at Khush Bagh

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Day 5: Khushbagh – Baranagar – Murshidabad (B/L/D)

Today we sail to the sleepy village of **Baranagar** where we take a walk to experience rural India at its most idyllic. A lovely example of life in rural India, this village is home to several temples dating from the 18th century (1714-1793). Built by Rani Bhabani, the landlady of Natore (now in Bangladesh), the Char Bangla temple here is considered to be among the best examples of Bengal terra cotta art.

Once you're back on board, enjoy the afternoon to unwind as the ship glides along the Lower Ganges, twisting and turning between banks lined with mustard fields and mango orchards to arrive at **Murshidabad**, a hidden architectural gem with dramatic whitewashed colonial era structures. We visit the **Hazarduari Palace** (*closed on Fridays*), which dominates the waterfront, built during the reign of Nawab Nazim Humayun Jah (1824-1838 AD) by an English architect, McLeod Duncan, in the Greek "Doric" style. The palace has more than a thousand real and false doors in the vast corridors, and is filled with colonial era

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antiques, artwork and manuscripts. Opposite to the Palace is a vast Imambara – built by the Nawab for worship.



Hazraduari Palace, Murshidabad

Ride the *Toto* (electric-rickshaw) to the **Katra mosque**. Built by the first Nawab of Murshidabad – Murshid Quli Khan in the 1724-25, this mosque has distinctive minarets from which the muezzin calls the faithful to Friday prayers.



Katra Mosque, Murshidabad

Highlight of the Day: Interact with villagers in Baranagar. View the grandeur of colonial heritage in Murshidabad.

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Overnight onboard Ganges Voyager

Day 6: Murshidabad – Mayapur (B/L/D)

After a restful morning, observing the local life along the riverbanks, we stop in the village of **Mayapur**. Known as the birthplace of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (1486) and considered an incarnation of Lord Krishna. Mayapur is also the headquarters of the International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) movement with a new temple comparable in size to the Vatican and largely funded by Alfred B. Ford, the great grandson of car maker Henry Ford. Meet Krishna followers and walk through the pilgrim's bazaar.



Pilgrim's Bazaar, Mayapur

Highlight of the Day: Let your soul mingle in the chants of *Hare Rama Hare Krishna!*

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Day 7: Mayapur – Chandernagore – Kolkata (B/L/D)

Morning sail to **Chandernagore**, established as a French colony in 1673. The French obtained permission from Ibrahim Khan, the Nawab of Bengal to establish a trading post on the riverbanks of this city, which became a permanent French settlement in 1688. Explore the French colonial buildings along the promenade,

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including the former French governor's residence, now converted into the Dupleix Museum (*closed on Thursdays & Saturdays*) that features an exhibition of items that depict life during this period.

Also visit the Sacred Heart Church, designed by French Architect Jacques Duchatz. The church was inaugurated in 1884 and stands for over two centuries to mark the beauty of the architecture during the French period.



Sacred Heart Church, Chandernagore

We then return to the ship and continue our journey downstream to Kolkata.



Highlight of the Day: An insight into French colonial heritage.

Overnight onboard Ganges Voyager

Day 8: Kolkata Disembark (B)

Disembarkation Time: 09:00 AM

Following breakfast disembark the ship and transfer for your onward journey.

Important Note:

The itinerary maybe readjusted due to local conditions and days of the week, in order to avoid closure of monuments/museums. Last minute sailing adjustments may also occur. The schedule may shift due to the weather or to take advantage of unexpected opportunities. The exact time for each activity will be announced or posted by the onboard tour staff. The letters in parentheses indicate the included meal of the day B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner

FOR BOOKING YOUR CRUISE

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