



**The Historic Hooghly (Lower Ganges Cruise) Kolkata to Farakka (Upstream) - 11 Days**

Day	Destination
	Kolkata
	Farakka
	Serampore
	Barrackpore
	Chandernagore
	Kalna
	Mayapur
	Matiari
	Khushbagh
	Baranagar
	Gaur
	Kolkata

**Day 1: Day 1: Arrive Kolkata**

Located along the eastern bank of the Hooghly River in the lower Ganges Delta, Kolkata is the capital of the Indian state of West Bengal. This 350-year-old metropolis is the heart and soul of eastern India

with its crumbling colonial architecture, elegant gardens, countless temples and bustling bazaars. Celebrated as the birthplace of the early 20th-century Bengal Renaissance, Kolkata is a major centre for drama, art, film, theatre, literature, spirituality and music. Visitors can roam the streets and soak up the atmosphere of faded grandeur, or take a ride in a rickshaw to one of the many Indian restaurants serving mouth-watering Bengali cuisine. Must-see highlights include: the Victoria Memorial, with its east-meets-west architecture; the Indian Museum, with its range of rare artefacts; and the Kali Temple, an important pilgrimage centre for Hindus.

Arrive Kolkata. Upon arrival, you will be received at the airport by **Trail Blazer Tours Representative** and will be assisted for your transfer to the hotel. Check-in at hotel. Hotel's check-in time is 1400 hrs.

**Rest of the day is at leisure.**

## **Day 2: Day 2: Kolkata**

After breakfast, proceed for a **Colonial walk**. Embark upon a historical journey through the streets, markets and heritage buildings from Armenian and Portuguese churches, Jewish synagogues, to the Dalhousie Square, the Writers' Building, the Governor's House and the almost forgotten Charnock Mausoleum with tales of Calcutta's Black Hole till it morphed into the City of Palaces.

One of the renowned monuments in Kolkata, Victoria Memorial was built in the loving memory of Queen Victoria in 1921. Built and designed by Sir William Emerson, the Victoria Memorial Hall is an impressive edifice, which is made in white marble and is a perfect blend of Mughal and European architectural styles.

The Victoria Memorial is also a museum that houses some rare pictures, and statues of men and women who played a prominent part in the history of India and develop a pride in their past especially in relation to the history of Calcutta. In addition the museum also houses dresses, along with several artillery weapons from the Battle of Plassey, the Whispering Gallery in the dome and the famed Rosewood piano.

Built on a land of 64 acres with the building covering 338 ft by 228ft, Victoria Memorial is an architectural splendor that boasts of a scenic landscaped garden, which adds to the beauty of this royal grandeur. There are some remarkable figures sculpted above the north porch, which symbolize prudence, learning and motherhood.

## **St. Paul's Church**

As the European community of Kolkata kept growing, by 1810, the St. John's Church that was meant for offering prayers appeared too small to accommodate all visitors at one go. The need for a bigger cathedral was then proposed by the then Governor-General of Bengal, Marquess of Hastings. He advised William Nairn Forbes to submit the design of a new cathedral.

The location of the land for a new cathedral was proposed by Bishop Middleton. Due to the delays in getting permits, the process continuously kept getting pushed for later dates. Bishop Middleton passed away long before the project of the cathedral building had started. It was only during 1832, under Bishop Daniel Wilson that the building of the cathedral had started.

### **Day 3: Day 3: Embark ABN Cruise**

After breakfast, you will be met at your hotel to embark your ship by midday. Sail past the Old Danish colony of Serampore to Barrackpore. Land and take a walk through the cantonment – past the Semaphore Tower, Government House, the Temple of Fame and Flagstaff House – to get a better understanding of India's journey to independence. Sail up to Chandernagore, a French possession until 1950.

Assam Bengal Navigation (or ABN) is an Indo-British joint venture. With four cruise ships and a houseboat, ABN is the most experienced operator on Indian rivers. In 2003, ABN pioneered long-distance river cruising in India with a unique cruises on the Brahmaputra River in Assam. Later in 2007, ABN was also the first to run cruises on the River Hooghly (Lower Ganges) between Kolkata and Farakka.

### **Day 4: Day 4: ABN Cruise**

Visit the 18<sup>th</sup> century church and Dupleix's House, the erstwhile Governor-General of French India. Sail upstream past the Old Dutch settlement of Chinsura before landing to visit the imposing Imambara at Hooghly. With verses from the Koran written on its walls, the Imambara is an opportunity to step back in time and relive a slice of Islamic history in Bengal. Sail into the night to a mooring near Kalna.

### **Day 5: Day 6: ABN Cruise**

This morning visit the brass-working village of Matiari, a charming riverside village. Interact with the locals of Matiari and witness the whole primitive process of beating out brass water pots and other vessels. Later, cruise on and visit the battlefield of Plassey where, in 1757, Robert Clive, the Commander-in-Chief of British India, defeated Siraj-ud-Daulah, the last independent Nawab of Bengal, to change the course of Indian history. Moor close to Khushbagh for the night.

### **Day 6: Day 7: ABN Cruise**

This morning, walk to the Khushbagh, a peaceful Mughal-style garden that encloses the tombs of Siraj-ud-Daulah – the last independent Nawab of Bengal – and his family. Continue a little way upstream to where the great Hazarduari Palace dominates the waterfront. Built by an English architect in 1837, the palace hosts an extensive collection of pictures, china, weapons and other objects. Carry on to visit the great Katra Mosque before driving out to see the Katgola Palace. Built in classical Georgian style by rich local merchants, Katgola Palace represents the other side of the coin of the 'White Mughal' period when English and Indian cultures came close to fusion. Moor overnight on the riverbank across from town at Baranagar.

### **Day 7: Day 8: ABN Cruise**

This morning, walk through the fields of the delightfully sleepy village of Baranagar to visit its three gorgeous miniature terracotta temples. This is rural India at its most idyllic. Continue up the lower

Ganges (or the Hooghly), which transforms into a charming waterway twisting and turning between banks lined with mustard fields and mango orchards. Carry on up a long canal section to a mooring close to the Farakka Barrage.

### **Day 8: Day 9: ABN Cruise**

After breakfast, proceed for a full-day excursion by road to Gaur, near the town of Malda, or English Bazar. This quiet, deserted place was once one of India's great cities, first under the Hindus in 12th century, then as the Muslim capital of Eastern India from the 14th to the 16th century. There are plentiful remains of mosques, palaces and gateways and you visit a number of the most interesting before re-joining the ship in the evening.

### **Day 9: Day 5: ABN Cruise**

After breakfast, land at the country town of Kalna and take rickshaws to see a group of some of Bengal's most attractive terracotta temples, the unique Shiva temple with concentric rings made up of 108 shrinelets, and a muslin-weaving centre. Continue on through the countryside to Mayapur to visit the vast new (International Society for Krishna Consciousness) temple which dominates the skyline. As the headquarters of ISKCON or the Hare Krishna movement, the temple receives over a million singing and dancing devotees a year from around the world. Sail on through the night to a mooring near Matiari.

### **Day 10: Day 10: Disembark ABN Cruise to Kolkata**

After breakfast, transfer to Farakka railway station in the morning for a 4 hr (approximately) train journey to Kolkata.

***(The itineraries, including cruises and approximate durations, are subject to river and weather conditions.)***

On arrival at Kolkata, our representatives will meet you and transfer to your hotel.

Rest of the day is at leisure.

### **Day 11: Day 11: Depart Kolkata**

In time transfer to Kolkata airport to board your flight for onward destination.