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Nandankanan
Photo by Umakanta Shabar

Editorial Team
Vishal Kumar Dev, IAS
Commissioner cum Secretary to Government
Sachin Ramchandra Jadhav, IAS
Director & Additional Secretary

Content and Design
Project Management Unit
FOREWORD

Odisha has emerged confidently from these testing times, and we have never been more eager to exhibit our hospitality to our guests.

As the world converges towards the values of sustainability and community participation, all we need to do is to reinforce our core as a culture that upholds these values to the fullest. Odisha has beautifully harmonised development and conservation, and tourism has been at the forefront. Our award-winning ecotourism model is now being noticed nationally and globally.

As we innovate to diversify Odisha’s offerings spanning into water-based recreation, road trips and adventure among others, there is a need for a robust legislative framework to facilitate the sustainable growth of tourism and hospitality trade through regulatory empowerment and protects the interests of tourists as well as service providers. The state government will soon bring such a law to help the travel, tourism and hospitality sector ensure structured and sustainable development towards global standards.

Editor’s Note

While Odisha Tourism has confidently embarked on the road to revival, policy enablement of niche product is a key imperative. In the new draft under consideration, we have accorded priority to encouraging niche tourism segments such as houseboats, homestays, heritage hotels, camping sites, caravan tourism, water sports etc. We have carried out stakeholder consultations and inputs received on improving ease of doing business as well as consistent hand holding for expediting approvals and clearances, are being incorporated.

While the segments greatest hit by the pandemic such as MICE & business tourism, sports tourism, religious and festival tourism will hopefully recover next year, to ensure a jumpstart, we have launched the Odisha By Road campaign through which Odisha Tourism will offer exciting itineraries for road trippers to discover the state’s treasures by road.

Odisha is also back with its most successful offering in a fresh package. Read on to know more.
Odisha will be back with the hugely successful glamping event - Eco Retreat. We will replicate the Eco Retreat to boost peak season tourist activity at five locations in 2020 – Chadrabhaga Beach at Konark, Hirakud Reservoir, Daringbadi, Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary and Badmul Sandbars on the banks of Mahanadi River.

“Over this prolonged lull phase, our teams led by Chief Secretary, Development Commissioner and Secretary Tourism conducted several tours to assess the infrastructure and plan the development of our priority destinations. In the process we discovered some locations which perfectly fit in our vision for the Eco Retreat template. Given the success of our beach glamping experiment, we were keen to showcase it in different styles to offer tourists diverse environs of a forest, a wetland, a hill station and so on. Moreover, the Eco Retreat will unambiguously signal the resurgence of Odisha Tourism. The new edition of the Eco Retreat will raise the bar of responsible tourism to a new level”, said Director Tourism, Shri. Sachin Jadhav, IAS.

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The Government of Odisha has pitched the development of the Buddhist Circuit under Government of India’s Swadesh Darshan Scheme. In a communication to Ministry of Tourism, Commissioner cum Secretary Shri. Vishal Dev, IAS emphasised the huge potential in Odisha for Buddhist tourism, owing to the presence of more than 200 Buddhist sites across the state, with the focal point at the famous diamond triangle of the state comprising Ratnagiri, Lalitagiri and Udayagiri being only about 100 kilometres from state capital Bhubaneswar.

The significance of Odisha in Buddhist history is rooted in that of the first disciples of Gautama Buddha, Trapusa and Bahalika who were the two merchant brothers from Utkala (present day Odisha).

As per the annals of history, after the Kalinga War of 261 BCE Buddhism spread all over Asia with Odisha as the centre of activities of Emperor Asoka. This is evident from the Rock Edicts at Dhauli and Jaugada. As archaeological discoveries sped up in recent times, the relic casket from the Maha Stupa at Lalitgiri was discovered. Lalitgiri site is as old as Bodhgaya and Radhanagar Buddhist settlement is as old as Rajgir, given that all Buddhist remains date back to 4th to 3rd Centuries BCE. Further, a series of sites of about 200 in number has been documented and the journey of Buddhism from its inception to its diffusion is very well reflected in the standing monuments particularly at Ratnagiri, Lalitagiri and Udayagiri.

The Buddhist sites of Odisha present a panoramic view with awesome landscapes and narrate the story of human civilization from 4th Century BCE to 14th Century CE, a specialty of Odisha’s Buddhist heritage.
Odisha Tourism Development Corporation, the state’s hallmark chain of 21 hotels has driven up innovative diversification strategies for public engagement and brand popularity.

After the successful Ama Ghara Ama Handisala culinary contest, OTDC announced its new initiative of the Nimantran chain of Odia cuisine restaurants. “Odia cuisine has always been very underrated. It is arguably the best marriage of taste and health. In our continuing endeavour to invite tourists from across India and the globe to visit Odisha to taste its delicacies, we will launch the Nimantrain chain of restaurants. The recent success of Odia chefs Abinas Nayak and SmrutiShree Singh at Masterchef India have catapulted our state’s cuisine to the limelight. We are very keen to contribute to this upward trend”, said Smt. Shreemayee Mishra, Chairperson, Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC)

In a new venture to make weekends memorable, OTDC is set to impart a local zest to revive the traditional indulgence of day picnics through its novel initiative of Bana Bhaji. The curated tour packages will offer end-to-end services familiarising locals and tourists exciting weekend and holiday getaways and activities. The initiative is all about offering people the opportunity to get together with families, friends and loved ones after the prolonged period of mutual isolation due to the lockdown.
India’s best kept secret is ready to be rediscovered.

There’s a surprise at every corner. This quest has never been safer. We welcome you with open arms. Come, discover!

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In a narrative-changing initiative, Odisha Tourism, in association with ten superbike clubs from across Odisha, celebrated World Tourism Day 2020 through a superbike rally from Infocity in North Bhubaneswar to the iconic Dhauli Shanti Stupa. Coined *Kalinga Rides*, the rally which included several women superbikers, was envisioned to kick off the Odisha by Road campaign which offers road trippers exciting itineraries across Odisha, to discover secrets at every corner. As an adventure with a cause, several groups further rode to ecotourism destinations such as Daringbadi-Mandasaru, and Mangalajodi to mark the opening up of community-managed Ecotour Odisha Nature Camps.
World Tourism Day also witnessed a virtual e-conclave titled The Future of Travel & Tourism and strategies to Revitalise the Industry, presented by Odisha Tourism in association with FICCI. Several Who’s Who of the industry – Yatra CEO Mr. Dhruv Shringi, Special Advisor to UNWTO Ms. Anita Mendiratta, ITC Hotels COO Mr. Anil Chadha, Swosti Group Chairman Shri J.K. Mohanty, renowned chef Mr. Ranveer Brar, Director of Belgadia Palace Ms. Akshita Bhanj Deo – spoke at the e-conclave on a range of issues such as niche and experiential tourism, cuisine promotion, policy-driven revival, etc. Tourism Minister Shri. J.P. Panigrahi, Commissioner cum Secretary Shri. V.K. Dev and Director Tourism Shri. S.R. Jadhav represented Odisha Tourism at the conclave.

Several key initiatives were announced during the World Tourism Day ceremony by Chief Minister Shri. Naveen Patnaik. In line with the WTD 2020 theme of Tourism and Rural Development, Odisha has beautifully harmonised development and conservation, and tourism has been at the forefront.
Odisha through Lens

In the run up to World Tourism Day 2020, Odisha Tourism held a photo contest on social media which received a great response with over 500 entries across seven categories: Waterbodies, Landscapes, Rural & Tribal life, Temples & Monuments, Urban Odisha, Cultural Arts and Crafts and Wildlife. The top two winning entries in each category were awarded stays at OTDC or Ecotour Odisha Properties while the second runners up were awarded gift vouchers from OTDC.
Break through the dark clouds of doubt, 
Answer your instinct to see all that’s silver. 
Hit the road for a memorable adventure, 
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Deep into the Mangroves
Bichitrapur - Chandipur - Bhitarkanika National Park

Ultimate Monsoon Escape
Deomali - Koraput

Cruising along the Circars
Chilika - Gopalpur - Mahendragiri

The Quest for Odisha’s Wild West
Debrigarh - Hirakud

Reaching for the Hills
Daringbadi - Mandasaru - Rayagada

Tiger Trails & Royalty
Similipal Tiger Reserve - Baripada

The Cascade Trail
Waterfalls of Keonjhar

and many more!

For more, visit odishatourism.gov.in
About Odisha Tourism

Established as Department of Tourism & Culture in 1973, the Department of Tourism (DoT) strives to:

1. Promote diverse and sustainable tourism with a view to enhancing the national and global visibility and favourability of Odisha as a prime tourist destination
2. Create employment opportunities to bring socio-economic benefits to the community and boosting community participation in tourism
3. Preserve, enrich and promote Odisha’s unique cultural heritage and ecological diversity through sustainable development

Apart from undertaking various initiatives for the development of tourism infrastructure and services in the state under the Odisha Tourism Policy 2016, DoT aims to establish its brand globally and enhance the favourability of Odisha as a prime tourist destination through the twin strategies of event based promotion and destination experience promotion, through innovative advertising and multimedia based outreach to national and global markets.

Photo by Rakesh Kumar Roul

Department of Tourism, Govt. of Odisha, Paryatan Bhawan, Lewis Road, Bhubaneswar - 751014,
Ph: 0674 - 2432177/ 2431896, Fax: 0674 - 2430887
info@odishatourism.gov.in | odishatourism.gov.in