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

Day	Destination
	Kolkata
	Gaur
	Baranagar
	Khushbagh
	Matiari
	Mayapur
	Kalna
	Chandernagore
	Barrackpore
	Serampore
	Farakka
	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: Kolkata to Farakka & embark ABN Cruise

After breakfast, you will be met & transferred to Kolkata railway station to board your train journey (4 hr approximately) to Farakka in the afternoon and then a short road transfer to the ship.

Rest of the day is at leisure.

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 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

This morning’s cruise is along a straight canal section to Jangipur, where the afternoon is free to explore this small country town on foot.

Alternatively, enjoy 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 historical sites before re-joining the ship in the evening near Jangipur.

Set sail down the Lower Ganges, a charming waterway twisting and turning between banks lined with mustard fields and mango orchards. Moor at Baranagar for the night.

Day 5: Day 5: ABN Cruise

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

Continue on down past Azimganj, boasting some fine riverside mansions, to Murshidabad where the Nawab's 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.

Day 6: Day 6: ABN Cruise

Sail downstream a short distance then walk to the Khushbagh, a peaceful Mughul-style garden enclosing the tombs of Siraj-ud-Daulah – the last independent Nawab of Bengal – and his family. Return to the ship and continue downstream past the old British cantonment of Berhampur to a rural mooring close to the battlefield of Plassey where, in 1757, Robert Clive, the Commander-in-Chief of British India, defeated Siraj-ud-Daulah, to change the course of Indian history. You can walk through the fields to the commemorative obelisk. Cruise on to a mooring near Katwa, a market town with narrow bustling bazaars.

Day 7: Day 7: ABN Cruise

Visit the brassworking village of Matiari, where you can see the whole primitive process of beating out brass water pots and other vessels. Continue on through the countryside to Mayapur to visit the vast new ISKCON (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.

Day 8: Day 8: ABN Cruise

Continue on down to the country town of Kalna. Take cycle rickshaws to see a group of some of Bengal's most attractive terracotta temples, as well as the unique Shiva temple with concentric rings made up of 108 shrinelets. Sail on, leaving fields behind and arrive at the outskirts of Kolkata. Land at Hooghly to visit the imposing Imambara. 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 downstream past

fine waterfront buildings and the Old Dutch settlement at Chinsura to moor at Chandernagore.

Day 9: Day 9: ABN Cruise

At Chandernagore, a French possession until 1950, visit the 18th century church and Dupleix's House, the erstwhile Governor-General of French India, before continuing down 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. Subject to river tide, cruise under the Howrah Bridge to reach central Kolkata.

Day 10: Day 10: Disembark ABN Cruise to Kolkata

After breakfast, disembark ABN Cruise and then you will be met & transferred to your hotel in Kolkata.

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

On arrival; check into your hotel. Hotel's check-in time is 1400 hrs.

Rest of the day is at leisure.

Day 11: Depart Kolkata

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