



The Crafts and Textiles of Gujarat

16 Days/15 Nights

Saturday Arrival in India

Activities

Overnight

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| Day 1 | Fly U.S. to Mumbai, arriving on a Saturday. | Mumbai |
| Day 2 | Morning flight to Ahmedabad, arriving in time for lunch. Afternoon tour of old Ahmedabad, a maze of temples, mosques, bazaars and underground stepwells. Highlights include Siddi Saiyad's Mosque, the Teen Darwaza, Jami Masjid, Rani Rupmati's Mosque and the Swaminarayan Temple. Many of these beautiful structures were built between the 13 th and 16 th centuries. Pre-dinner visit to the Hussain-Doshi Gufa, an underground art gallery designed by renown Indian architect B. V. Doshi, a resident of Ahmedabad. | Ahmedabad |
| Day 3 | Morning visit to The Calico Museum, which houses an outstanding collection of rare textiles and cloth paintings. This will be followed by a visit to two innovative buildings designed by Le Corbusier, the Mill Owner's Association and Sarabhai House (entry permitting). Afternoon excursion to Adalaj Vav, the finest stepwell in Gujarat. Built in 1499, this elaborately carved well was constructed to store water and to provide a pleasant space for social gatherings. A series of stone platforms, pavilions and galleries are built into the sides of the well, winding their way down to the very bottom. | Ahmedabad |
| Day 4 | Morning visit to the Sabarmati Ashram, Gandhi's home for many years and a significant site in India's struggle for independence. In Gandhi's small cottage, Hriday Kunj, you can still see his spinning wheel, which became the symbol of his <i>swadeshi</i> movement. The swadeshi movement sought to promote the creation and consumption of hand-spun textiles and other local products over British imports among Indians of all castes and social classes. Entry permitting, we will also visit Kalam Khush, a handmade paper factory established by the Gandhi ashram in 1956. Afternoon visit to Ahmedabad's famous kite makers and one of the few families that still practice <i>Mata-ni-Pachedi</i> , or ritual cloth painting. | Ahmedabad |
| Day 5 | This morning we will drive to Patan, home to Rani ki Vav, a beautiful Gujarati stepwell built in the 11 th century by Queen Udaymati as a memorial to her husband. This will be followed by a visit to the famous Patola <i>double-ikat</i> weavers of Patan. Double-ikat is a weaving technique in which parts of the warp and weft threads are colored by tie-dyeing and then woven to form intricate designs. Afternoon visit to the Sun Temple at Modhera, built in | Dasada |

1026 by King Bhima I of the Solanki dynasty. The temple halls in this complex are perfectly aligned along an east-west axis such that the sun's rays stream through them and illuminate the inner sanctum at noon every day. Continue driving to Dasada, arriving in time for dinner.

- Day 6** Morning departure for Bhuj, which was founded in 1510 by Rao Hamirji and later became the capital of the prosperous Kutch region of Gujarat. Kutch derived its wealth from a robust sea trade with East Africa and the Persian Gulf. Bhuj was once a beautiful walled city filled with ornate palaces, havelis and bazaars. In 2001, a devastating earthquake struck this region of India, destroying much of Bhuj and displacing 250,000 people. However, many pastoral groups still live in the region, such as Rabari, Jats, Mutwas, Banni, Bharwads, Meghwals, Sodha Rajputs and Halepotra. These groups still maintain a remarkable craft tradition that includes textiles, metalwork, woodwork, leather goods, pottery and jewelry. On our drive today, we will visit the villages of Ajrakhpur and Dhamadka where we will see traditional *ajrakh* block printing using natural dyes. We will also visit the village of Bhujodi, where the Vankar community weaves beautiful woolen shawls and blankets, as well as the village of Dhaneti, where we will see the embroidery work of the Ahir community. Bhuj
- Day 7** Morning excursion to the Vijay Vilas Palace in Mandvi, an Indo-Edwardian castle overlooking the Gulf of Kutch that was completed in 1929. Lunch will be in a simple seafood restaurant on the beach. Afternoon visit to a local workshop for *bandhani* tie-dyed textiles, which are created by tying tiny knots in silk, cotton or wool to create intricate patterns on fabric. We will also visit a workshop for *mashru* (mixed silk and cotton cloth), which is used by Muslim men who are prohibited from wearing pure silk. On our drive back to Bhuj, we will pass the traditional dhow builders of Mandvi, who construct elegant sea vessels for traders plying the Arabian Sea. Bhuj
- Day 8** Morning visit to Nirona, where we will witness the only family in India that still practices Rogan painting, in which cloth is decorated with symmetrical patterns using thick colored paste. This will be followed by a visit to the blacksmiths and wood workers of nearby Zura village. After lunch in Hodka, we will explore the villages of Dhordo, Ludiya and Khavda, where we will see many excellent examples of Kachchhi embroidery, including spectacular cotton and silk textiles covered with hundreds of tiny mirrors. Kachchhi work has a wide variety of styles, with different stitches, patterns and preferred colors, depending upon the community creating it. Hodka
- Day 9** Morning tour of Hodka village, where we will see more Kachchhi embroidery, as well as leatherwork and other crafts created by Halepotras and Marwada Meghwals. We will then visit Kala Raksha in Sumrasar, an NGO founded in 1993 to preserve the traditional embroidery, patchwork and appliqué techniques of Kutch. Afternoon visit to Bhuj's gorgeous, crumbling palaces: the 18th-century Aina Mahal, built in the Indo-European style, and the adjoining 19th-century Prag Mahal, built in the Italian Gothic style. If time permits, we will also visit the Kutch Museum, the oldest museum in Bhuj, which contains a good collection of Kutch textiles, embroidery, weaponry and other crafts. Bhuj

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| Day 10 | Depart very early for Bhavnagar, stopping for lunch in the town of Wadhwan, where the local Khatri community creates beautiful tie-dyed clothing and textiles. Arrive in Bhavnagar in time for dinner. Our home for the next two nights will be Nilambagh Palace, which was built in 1859 for the ruling Gohil dynasty of Bhavnagar. | Bhavnagar |
| Day 11 | Full day excursion to Palitana. This collection of 1,008 Jain temples, most of which date to the 16 th century, sits at the top of Shatrunjaya Hill. Adinath, the first Jain <i>tirthankara</i> , is said to have visited this hill, and today the complex is one of the most important Jain pilgrimage sites in India. The 2½ mile climb to the top takes approximately two hours; from here you have a magnificent view of the countryside and the Gulf of Khambhat to the east. Afternoon visit to Palitana craftsmen who make metal-embossed wood items for home and decorative use. We will also visit master stone carvers who create intricate statues and temple ornaments from marble and sandstone. | Bhavnagar |
| Day 12 | Depart Bhavnagar for Vadodara, stopping en route to tour the ancient city of Lothal, which contains the remains of a 4,500 year-old Indus Valley civilization. The original foundations of this planned city are still visible, and the adjacent Archeological Museum houses an interesting collection of beads, pottery, sculpture and jewelry found at the site. Afternoon visit to the Amul Dairy (entry permitting), a pioneer in India's dairy cooperative movement. Today, this dairy procures over one million liters of milk per day from over 1,000 small milk cooperatives. | Vadodara |
| Day 13 | Morning excursion to the town of Khambhat on the Gulf of Khambhat, a center for the production of agate jewelry and decorative items. Return to Vadodara for lunch. Afternoon visit to Laxmi Vilas Palace, an Indo-Saracenic marvel designed by Major Charles Mant for Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III. At the time of its completion in 1890, it was reputed to be the largest private dwelling in the world, several times larger than Buckingham Palace. This will be followed by a visit to the Maharaja Fateh Singh Museum, which is located within the palace grounds and contains a rare collection of paintings by Raja Ravi Varma. | Vadodara |
| Day 14 | Morning excursion to Champaner. This UNESCO World Heritage site was the capital of Gujarat in the early 16 th century, and today features the remains of many old mosques and palaces that blend Islamic and Jain architectural styles. The highly-ornamented and remarkably symmetrical Jami Masjid, built in 1523, is one of the finest Islamic structures in western India. Afternoon visit to the village of Dabhoi, where we will watch the creation of traditional Indian copper and brass pots and community vessels. We will also visit Dabhoi Fort, which was constructed in the 13 th century and is an excellent example of Rajput military architecture. | Vadodara |
| Day 15 | Full day tour of the craft villages around Vadodara, where we will interact with members of the Rathwa, Bhil and Nayak tribes. In Sankheda, we will see villagers making lac-coated, turned wood furniture. In Tejgadh and Chhota Udaipur, we will see the famed Pithora paintings of the Rathwas, as well as tribal beadwork and terracotta pottery. Our visit is timed to coincide with the Saturday tribal market in Chhota Udaipur, one of the liveliest in Gujarat. If time permits, we will also visit the town's tribal museum. | Vadodara |

Day 16 Afternoon drive to Ahmedabad to catch your flight to Mumbai for your return flight to the U.S.

Flight to U.S.

Suggested Extensions: Historic and Contemporary Mumbai; The Caves of Ajanta and Ellora; Nasik – The Wine Capital of India

Trip Timing – This trip can be taken anytime between September and March, with the best weather conditions in November through March. In all of our tours, we concentrate our sightseeing in the morning and afternoon hours, avoiding the hot mid-day sun as much as possible.

