



Antara Cruises Introduces “*Artisans of Bengal*” on MV Bengal Ganga

A Boutique Voyage Through Bengal’s Rich Craftsmanship

Kolkata, January 24th, 2025 – **Antara Cruises**, India’s premier river cruise operator, is thrilled to announce that its celebrated ***Artisans of Bengal*** program will now be available aboard its boutique vessel, the **MV Bengal Ganga**. This **7-night/8-day immersive journey** offers a unique opportunity for guests to experience the heart of Bengal through its rich craftsmanship, vibrant artisan communities, and historical landmarks. From Kolkata’s colonial splendour to the handloom weaving villages of Fulia, the ***Artisans of Bengal*** cruise promises an unforgettable cultural exploration along the Hooghly River.

Rediscovering Bengal’s Artisanal Legacy

Artisans of Bengal has long been one of Antara Cruises’ signature experiences, providing a window into the time-honoured traditions that define Bengal’s artistic heritage. Now, guests can embark on this transformative voyage aboard the newly added **MV Bengal Ganga**, a boutique river cruise vessel that enhances the experience with modern comforts, personalized service, and panoramic views of the scenic riverbanks.

The cruise weaves together Bengal’s diverse cultural tapestry, showcasing a variety of local crafts, from the intricate terracotta sculptures of Kalna to the famous Jamdani sarees of Fulia. This immersive journey allows guests to meet the artisans behind these crafts, explore their villages, and experience first-hand the techniques that have been passed down through generations.

Itinerary Highlights

- **Day 1 – Kolkata Embarkation:** The adventure begins in Kolkata with a panoramic city tour, featuring the majestic Victoria Memorial, St. John’s Church, and other colonial landmarks. Guests will then board the MV Bengal Ganga for an evening sail, kicking off their journey with a delectable dinner onboard.
- **Day 2 – Kolkata Flower Market & Kumartuli:** A visit to Kolkata’s bustling Flower Market offers guests a chance to witness local artisans creating intricate garlands and ornaments. The day continues with a tour of Kumartuli, Kolkata’s famed potters’ quarter, where guests can observe the age-old craft of clay idol making, a tradition that has been practiced for centuries.
- **Day 3 – Chandernagore:** A charming French colonial town, Chandernagore invites guests to stroll along its promenade, past colonial-era buildings and the elegant Sacred Heart Church, reflecting the region’s French influence.
- **Day 4 – Kalna’s Temples & Terracotta Art:** In Kalna, guests explore the Rajbari Temple Complex, home to 108 Shiva shrines, and admire the intricate terracotta artwork that adorns the temples, depicting themes from Hindu epics and local mythology.
- **Day 5 – Nabadwip & Mayapur:** The journey continues to Nabadwip, the birthplace of Saint Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Guests will witness the art of handloom weaving in the village before sailing across the river to Mayapur, home to the renowned ISKCON temple and an iconic center of Vaishnavism.
- **Day 6 – Guptipara & Fulia:** Explore Guptipara’s terracotta temples and visit Fulia, a village renowned for its Jamdani saree weaving. Guests will see how these exquisite fabrics are made, blending cotton and gold thread in intricate designs.
- **Day 7 – Bandel & Serampore:** Visit the historic Hooghly Imambara in Bandel and then travel to Serampore, once a Danish colony. Guests will walk through the charming old quarters, visiting landmarks like St. Olav’s Church and the Danish Tavern.
- **Day 8 – Kolkata Disembarkation:** After breakfast onboard, guests disembark in Kolkata, taking with them lasting memories of their journey through Bengal’s artistic heartland.



An Immersive Cultural Journey

The **Artisans of Bengal** cruise is more than just a sightseeing trip – it's a deep dive into the cultural fabric of one of India's most artistically rich regions. From handloom weaving to terracotta sculpture, the journey provides guests with rare opportunities to meet artisans in their villages, learn about their crafts, and even try their hand at traditional techniques. This unique cultural experience is designed for those who wish to connect with the true essence of Bengal.

*"As we introduce **Artisans of Bengal** aboard the **MV Bengal Ganga**, we are excited to offer our guests an even more immersive way to experience this transformative journey," says **Mr Raj Singh, Founder & Chairman at Antara Cruises – Heritage River Journeys Pvt Ltd.***

Mr. Raj Singh further adds, *"The program celebrates the **Artisans of Bengal**, whose work has shaped the region's identity for centuries. This cruise is an invitation to immerse oneself in the rich cultural traditions of Bengal, and to connect with the artisans who keep these practices alive."*

A Boutique Experience

The **MV Bengal Ganga** is an intimate vessel with mix 20 cabins and suites, ensuring a personalized experience for every guest. The newly refreshed decor combines contemporary 1970s styling with traditional elements, providing a stylish yet restful setting for guests to relax and enjoy the voyage. Onboard amenities include a wellness center, spa, fine dining, and panoramic viewing decks, perfect for soaking in the spectacular views of the Ganges and the surrounding landscapes. Antara Cruises is known for its exceptional service, ensuring that each guest feels completely pampered throughout their journey.

Reservations & Availability

Artisans of Bengal aboard the **MV Bengal Ganga** is now open for bookings. With select departures available, guests are encouraged to book early to secure their spot on this unique and enriching cruise.

For more information or to make a reservation, please visit www.antaracruises.com

About Antara Cruises:

Antara Cruises is a luxury river cruise company offering exceptional experiences along India's iconic rivers. Known for its impeccable service and personalized itineraries, Antara Cruises provides intimate, culturally immersive journeys that allow guests to explore India's heritage, art, and natural beauty in the most luxurious setting possible. With a focus on sustainable travel and authentic local experiences, Antara Cruises is redefining luxury river cruising in India.