



The Crafts and Textiles of Hyderabad and Telangana 11 Days/10 Nights

	Activities	Overnight
Day 1	Fly U.S. to Hyderabad. Upon arrival, you will be transferred to your hotel by private car.	Hyderabad
Day 2	<p>The city of Hyderabad was constructed in 1591 by King Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah of the Qutb Shahi dynasty, which ruled this region of the Deccan plateau from 1507 to 1687. During this time, the Sultanate faced numerous incursions by the Mughals and the Hindu Marathas. In 1724, the Mughal governor of the Deccan arrived to govern the city. His official title was the Nizam-ul-Muluk, or Administrator of the Realm. After the death of Emperor Aurangzeb, he declared his independence and established the Asaf Jahi dynasty of Nizams. The Nizams of Hyderabad were known for their tremendous wealth, which came from precious gems mined in nearby Golconda (see Day 3), the area's natural resources, a vibrant pearl trade, agricultural taxes and friendly cooperation with the British. Much of the architecture still existing in Hyderabad thus dates from the reigns of the Qutb Shahi Sultans or the Nizams. European influences were introduced by the British in the 19th and 20th centuries.</p> <p>At the center of old Hyderabad sits the Charminar, or "four towers," which dates to 1591 and is surrounded by a lively bazaar and numerous mosques and palaces. This morning we will enjoy a leisurely walk through the area. We will stop to admire the colorful tile mosaics found inside the Badshahi Ashurkhana. This Royal House of Mourning was built in 1595 as a congregation hall for Shia Muslims during Muharram. Nearby is the 17th century Mecca Masjid, which has bricks from Mecca embedded in its central arch. In Lad Bazaar, we will watch local artisans craft Hyderabad-style bangles from copper wire, lac resin and multi-colored crystals. After lunch in a local restaurant, we will enjoy cookies and chai at a traditional Irani bakery.</p>	Hyderabad

Day 3 Morning visit to Golconda Fort and the Qutb Shahi tombs. For most of the 16th century, the seat of power of the Qutb Shahi dynasty was Golconda Fort, which was built on the remains of a 13th-century mud fort of the Kakatiya dynasty. Today the ruins of the fort are spread over 15 square miles, and contain decaying palaces, royal baths, gardens and treasuries that were once full of precious gems excavated from the famous Golconda mines. For hundreds of years, Golconda was the primary market city for the diamond trade in India. In fact, until the 18th century, India was thought to be the only source of diamonds in the world. Famous diamonds hailing from Golconda include the Hope (now in the Smithsonian), the Koh-i-Noor (part of the British Crown Jewels), the Regent, the Princie, the Agra, the Wittelsbach-Graff and the Daria-i-Noor (part of the Iranian Crown Jewels). Standing on the wall of the fort you can see the Qutb Shahi Tombs, where seven of the nine Qutb Shahi Sultans are buried. The tombs, built by each ruler in his lifetime, combine Persian, Turkish and Hindu architectural elements and were originally covered in blue and green tiles, only fragments of which still remain.

Hyderabad

We will next visit Suraiya's. Founded in 1985 by Suraiya Hasan Bose, this workshop and school specializes in the revival of Persian brocade traditions such mashru, himroo, jamavar and paithani¹. Brocades are woven textiles featuring low-relief surface decorations created by the addition of supplemental weft threads. The finest brocades are made using silk and metallic thread, and at Suraiya's we will see master weavers attempt to recreate 100 year-old masterpieces thread by thread. The workshop also produces handwoven ikat (see Day 5) and block-printed kalamkari textiles. Afternoon visit to the Salarjung Museum, which contains over 40,000 objects once belonging to Salarjung III, Prime Minister of Hyderabad from 1899 until 1949. The collection includes Mughal jade, carved ivory, textiles, European walking sticks, bidriware, miniature paintings, and a mesmerizing Veiled Rebekah by Italian sculptor G. B. Benzoni.

Day 4 Full day excursion to Bidar, Karnataka to meet with traditional bidriware (GI²) artisans. This metalcraft originated in ancient Persia, and was brought to India in the 14th century by Iranian craftsmen under the patronage of the Bahamani Sultans of Bidar. It involves the creation of intricately-patterned objects by inlaying gold and/or silver into oxidized metal. Bidriware is primarily decorated

Hyderabad

¹ See the appendix at the end of this itinerary for descriptions of these textile techniques.

² *GI* means that the textile or craft has been given a Geographical Indication by the government of India. A GI identifies a good as originating in a specific locality where a given quality, reputation or characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographic origin, e.g., Darjeeling tea.

with Persian-influenced designs, such as flowers, leaves and geometric patterns. Occasionally human figures are portrayed. Traditional bidriware items include hookahs, paan (betel nut) holders, vases, rosewater sprinklers, bowls and keepsake boxes. Today's craftsmen have expanded their repertoire to include jewelry, USB-drive covers, key chains, pen holders, table tops and other keepsake items.

Day 5

Full day excursion to the ikat weavers of Nalgonda, Telangana. Ikat is a craft tradition in which the warp and/or weft threads that make up a woven textile are resist-dyed prior to weaving. The word "ikat" is Javanese and means tied, bound or knotted. Ikat can be made from cotton, silk, wool or artificial fibers. Since the surface design is created on the yarn itself, both sides of ikat textiles are patterned. The blurriness or jagged appearance of ikat stems from the inherent difficulty faced by the weaver in lining up the dyed yarns so that the desired pattern emerges.

Hyderabad

Single ikat refers to a textile in which either the warp threads or the weft threads are dyed prior to weaving. In double ikat both the warp and weft are dyed. Double ikat is extremely difficult to produce, and is only found in India, Japan and Indonesia. In India, only a few villages still produce double ikat, including Puttapaka in Telangana and Patan in Gujarat. Today we will visit three villages in Nalgonda district known for their high-quality ikat, including Pochampally (GI), Puttupaka and Koyalagudem. We will interact with the artisans and learn about the process from start to finish, including the creation of the design, the dying of the yarn, preparing the loom warp, winding the weft shuttles, and weaving the final textile.

Day 6

Morning visit to Secunderabad, a British cantonment established in 1806 northeast of the city center. Highlights include the Holy Trinity Church and the Paigah Palace compound, which contains the Spanish Mosque and the opulent Vicar Manzil mansion. This will be followed by a visit to The Residency, a Palladian mansion built in 1805 for James Kirkpatrick, the British Resident at the court of the third Nizam.

Hyderabad

This afternoon we will enjoy a culinary walk and cooking demonstration highlighting Hyderabadi cuisine. Both the Qutb Shahi Sultans and the Nizams loved to eat well and throw lavish banquets. As a result, a unique cuisine developed in the region blending Mughal, Turkish, Arabic, Telugu and Marathi traditions. Predominant flavors include coconut, tamarind, peanuts, sesame seeds, mustard seed, garlic and copious amounts of chili. One specialty is Hyderabadi biryani, particularly Kacche Gosht ki Biryani, which is raw, marinated mutton cooked between layers of

rice served with garlic raita. Other notable local dishes include haleem (minced meat cooked with wheat), lukhmi (puff pastry filled with minced meat), Baghara baingan (eggplant stuffed with peanuts, coconut and spices), Kaddu ka Dalcha (mutton and lentil stew), Pathar ka Gosht (mutton or lamb cooked on a stone slab), nihari (mutton or lamb shank and bone marrow stew) and sheermal (saffron flavored flatbread). Desserts include Gajjar ka Halwa (carrot pudding), Tamatar ka Halwa (tomato pudding), Mauz ka Meetha (banana and milk pudding), Gil-e-Firdaus (milk and bottlegourd pudding), and Qubani ka Meetha (apricot pudding).

Day 7

Full day excursion to the weaving villages of Gadwal and Narayanpet. Gadwal saris (GI) feature a cotton body, silk borders and a silk pallu, and incorporate extensive *zari* (gold and silver threads). They are woven using an interlocked weft technique called *kuppadam* that utilizes three shuttles - one for the body and one for each border – and require two weavers to complete. The pallu, or loose end-piece of the sari, is woven separately and attached to the body by hand. Decorative motifs include peacocks, swans, lions, eagles, mangos and *kumbam* or temple-inspired shapes. Today there are very few looms in Telangana still able to handle three shuttles. This fact, combined with the labor cost associated with a sari that requires two people to complete, has rendered the handwoven Gadwal sari a dying art. On a positive note, designers such as Vinay Nakar are attempting to revive traditional Gadwal saris through his upscale Reshamwala label.

Hyderabad

Narayanpet saris (GI) still show the influence of Marathi weavers who settled in this region in the 17th century. They feature a simple checked surface design with geometric or temple designs on the border and small *zari* elements throughout. They are typically made of silk and colored using vegetable dyes. Eight saris (56 yards) can be woven in succession on one loom, making them very affordable for handwoven silk.

Day 8

Morning drive to the town of Siddipet, a center for the weaving of Gollabhama saris (GI). These textiles are easily identified by their charming milkmaid motif, which refers to the women of the nearby Golla community. They are woven from fine cotton, with only a single color used for the background. The milkmaid motifs, as well as subtle decorative elements like small flowers or geometric patterns, are made with one or two additional colors of discontinuous supplementary weft. We will share our lunch today with the few remaining scroll painters of Cheriyal, Telangana (GI). In ancient times, wandering bards went from village to village recounting stories to the public with the assistance of large painted scrolls. Stories were based on Hindu texts and mythology, local

Warangal

folk heroes, and day-to-day life in the villages. The scroll paintings could reach 40 feet in height, with different panels on view as different portions of the story progressed. Today the painters of Cheriyal create small scroll paintings for home decoration. They also make colorful masks depicting animals, Hindu deities and villagers out of coconut shells or a mixture of wood, sawdust and tamarind paste. Continue driving to Warangal, which served as capital of the Kakatiya dynasty until the beginning of the 14th century.

Day 9

Morning visit to the Thousand Pillar Temple, which was constructed by Rudradeva of the Kakatiya dynasty in 1163 A.D. It is made from grey-green basalt and contains shrines for Shiva, Vishnu and Surya. Our next stop is Warangal Fort, which was built during the reign of Kakatiya queen Rudramadevi in the 13th century. Here you can still see four ornate toranas that once led to a gigantic Shiva temple. This will be followed by an interaction with Warangal's dhurrie weaving community. Dhurries are thick, flat-woven carpets made from cotton, wool or jute. The dhurries of Warangal feature geometric patterns or kalamkari block-print and are made traditionally with vegetable dyes. Amazon India recently formed a partnership with the Telangana Department of Handlooms and Textiles to market both the dhurries of Warangal and Pochampally ikat.

Hyderabad

Afternoon visit to the silver filigree workers of Karimnagar (GI). Filigree is a type of delicate metalwork, often resembling lace, made by soldering together narrow threads of gold and/or silver to form an object. It is an art form that requires superb vision and eye-hand coordination; craftsmen regularly work with tiny scrolls of metal only several millimeters in length. Traditional decorative motifs include flowers, leaves and birds. Filigree objects made in Karimnagar today include jewelry, keepsake boxes, key chains, desk sets, mirrors, napkin holders, handbags, serving trays and decorative objects. Afternoon drive back to Hyderabad, arriving at Taj Falaknuma Palace in time for dinner.

Day 10

Falaknuma Palace was built for the Nizams in 1872 with a Palladian front facade and Indo-Saracenic architectural elements at the back. It contains a dining table that seats 101 people, and a noteworthy library of old books and manuscripts that can be accessed by hotel guests under the supervision of a full-time librarian. Today you are free to enjoy this one-of-a-kind property, which features an outdoor pool, a spa, numerous gardens and terraces through which to stroll, and daily high tea. Optional morning visit to Chowmahalla Palace, another opulent residence of the Nizams. It is actually a complex of four palaces, constructed in phases between 1750 and 1869 and supposedly modeled after the

Hyderabad

palace of the Shah of Iran in Tehran. Tonight we will enjoy a farewell dinner at Falaknuma Palace.

Day 11 Depart Hyderabad for the U.S. or for other destinations in India. Flight to U.S.

Appendix

Mashru means “this is allowed” in Arabic. It is a textile that originated in response to a Muslim ban on wearing animal products against the skin. It is woven using a mixture of silk and cotton; the cotton forms the base of the fabric and is the only thing that touches the skin, while the top of the fabric still retains the lustrous look of silk. Most mashru designs involve multi-colored stripes or polka dots.

Himroo is similar to mashru in that it is a mix of silk and cotton, with the ultra-soft cotton worn against the skin and the shiny silk facing outwards. Himroo designs are more elaborate than those found in mashru. Fruit, flowers, birds and paisley motifs are depicted using supplementary silk and/or zari weft. Both mashru and himroo were popularized in Aurangabad, Maharashtra in the 14th century under the patronage of Mohammed Tughlaq, later gaining popularity with the Mughal Emperors.

Jamavar or *Jamawar* is a type of brocade thought to have been brought from Persia to Kashmir 500 years ago. It flourished under Mughal patronage and was a favorite of Emperor Akbar. The base of Jamavar is wool (ideally pashmina) or a blend of wool and silk, and the brocade is made from silk or pashmina. Floral and paisley motifs predominate, and dozens of colors can be found in a single shawl.

Paithani is a type of brocade sari named after the village of Paithan in Aurangabad. It is made by weaving together fine silk and zari to create a textile that shimmers like water. The *pallu* is typically decorated with peacock, parrot or lotus flower motifs.

Kalamkari is a type of textile made by hand-painting Persian designs or Hindu epic stories on cotton or silk using vegetable dyes (*qalam* means “pen” and *kari* means “craftsmanship”). These textiles were used traditionally for temple or palace wall hangings, chariot banners, or storytelling scrolls. Today hand-painted kalamkari is very rare, and most pieces are created using block-print techniques. The designs, color scheme and presence of heavy black outlining make kalamkari distinguishable from other block-print techniques, such as those found in Rajasthan or Gujarat. Kalamkari from Shrikalahasti, Andhra Pradesh has been granted a Geographical Indication.

