

Best Time to Visit

The best time to visit Shantiniketan is during monsoon and winter months between July to February.

Places of Interest

- Ballavpur Wildlife Sanctuary ■ Bethuadahari Wildlife Sanctuary ■ Amar Kutir ■ Sarkar Rajbari
- Cheeni Bhavan ■ Kala Bhavan ■ Patha Bhavan
- Chhatimtala ■ Viswa-Bharati University

In and around Shantiniketan are places like Fullora (40km), Kankalitola (7km), Masanjore (78km), Tarapith (80km). Many of these places are pilgrimage sites connected to the Goddess Sati.

Getting There

By Rail: The nearest station is Bolpur. Take the Viswa-Bharati Fast Passenger or Rampurhat Express from Howrah to reach Bolpur within 2.5 hours.

By Road: If you follow the Durgapur Expressway, it takes approximately 4 hours to reach Santiniketan. Buses to Bolpur are available from Esplanade bus terminal in Kolkata.

Accommodation

SANTINIKETAN TOURIST LODGE

Santiniketan Tourist Lodge | Bolpur

Dist Birbhum | Pin 731204 | Mobile 97321 00920

Fax (03463) 252 699/398

E-mail santiniketantl@gmail.com

RANGABITAN TOURIST COMPLEX

Rangabitan Tourist Complex | Village Ballavpur

PO Sriniketan | Dist Birbhum | Pin 7321236

Mobile 86979 84960

E-mail rangabitantc@gmail.com



TOURISM CENTRE (Kolkata)

3/2 | B.B.D Bag (East) | Kolkata 700 001

24x7 Toll Free Helpline 1800 2121 655

tourismcentrekolkata@gmail.com

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Shantiniketan



Known to few, mainly as Rabindranath Tagore's home and now a university, Shantiniketan is a small town located in the Birbhum district of West Bengal, about 212 kms north of Kolkata (formerly Calcutta). This abode of peace embodies Rabindranath Tagore's vision of a place of learning that is unfettered by religious and regional barriers.

Previously Shantiniketan was known as Bhubandanga (after Bhuban Dakat, a notorious dacoit), and was owned by the Tagore family. In 1862, Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, the poet's father, while on a boat journey, came across the place with its red soil and lush green paddy fields. He built a small house and called his home Shantiniketan, the abode of peace. 48 years later, his son Rabindranath set up the school that became Vishva Bharati with the aim of helping education go beyond the confines of the classroom. Shantiniketan grew into the Visva Bharati University in 1921, attracting some of the most creative minds in the country, after Tagore received the Nobel Prize.

The Shantiniketan campus is adorned by splendid sculptures, frescoes, murals, and paintings of Rabindranath, Nandalal Bose, Ramkinkar, Binodbehari Mukhopadhyay, and others.

Famous for its festivals, the grand Poush Utsav at Shantiniketan is celebrated on the Foundation Day of the University, while the colourful Basant Utsav is celebrated on the occasion of Holi. The Nandan Mela, which was originally started to raise money for a poor student, is today an event where university students display and sell their art. Other events like the Sarodotsav (Autumn Festival), Maghotsav (Founding Day of the Sriniketan campus) and Briksharopan Utsav (Tree Planting Festival) are also celebrated with great pomp and fervour. Not to mention the Baul Mela at Joydev and the Kenduli festival.

Shopaholics and souvenir collectors will find cottage industries that specialise in pottery, leatherwork, batik print and woodwork.

Today, this beautifully laid out university and small sleepy town have acquired the status of a unique tourist haven.

Shantiniketan

Abode of Peace

