

The Telegraph

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Today's Edition

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Shopping

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Getting in step

Don't sit out on this one, as dance festivals across the world get ready to draw the crowds in, says **Tania Bhattacharya**

TRAVEL 360

If you enjoy shaking a leg at the slightest provocation, how about taking off for an exotic destination to watch talented artists perform live — sometimes at touching distance — at offbeat dance festivals? Be it the Holland Dance Festival, the scintillating Rio de Janeiro Carnival or the annual dance festival at Konark, this is one quirky holiday you can't afford to miss. And fret not. You can participate in some dance workshops to get your steps right!

Here's a roster of some upcoming festivals:

HOLLAND DANCE FESTIVAL



The Holland Dance Festival, held biennially at The Hague, is the most spectacular contemporary dance event in The Netherlands. Each edition lasts nearly three weeks and includes international dance performances, workshops for professionals and amateurs and a 'dansparade'.

The festival is now on (since October 28) and will carry on till November 15. Top draws include performances by the Batsheva Dance Company from Israel, Cullberg Ballet from Sweden and Spain's Compañía Nacional de Danza. Prices of tickets start at 5 euros (Rs 350 approx.).

► Hot ticket!

At Rs 27,375 per person on twin sharing basis, Cox and Kings has a four-night five-day package to Amsterdam. This includes 3-star accommodation with breakfast and taxes, airport transfers and sightseeing. For details, go to www.coxandkings.com. For overnight stay at The Hague, mail to info@hollanddancefestival.com.

DANCE CHICAGO

Celebrating its 15th anniversary this year, Dance Chicago has held pride of place amongst the world's best dance festivals. This year's festival (started from October 30 to carry on till December 12) will feature 130 companies and works in hip-hop, ballet, tap, jazz, ethnic and contemporary dance by talented choreographers.

Dance Chicago 2009 will take place across four different venues. Top draws include performances by Chicago's Cerqua Rivera Dance Theatre, Mexican Dance Ensemble and much more. Prices of tickets start from \$15 (Rs 700 approx.).

► Hot ticket!



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At Rs 20,850 (approx.) per person on twin sharing basis, Cox and Kings has a four-night five-day package to Chicago. This includes 3-star accommodation, return airport transfers and a tour of Chicago. For details, go to www.coxandkings.com.

SALSA CRUISE ASIA

Care for a salsa lesson on a luxury cruise liner? If so, then Salsa Cruise Asia is for you. Touted as the grandest dance-themed cruise vacation yet, it includes stay on board Royal Caribbean's Legend of the Seas and travel to Malaysia and Phuket from Singapore.

Salsa Cruise Asia will be held from November 22 to November 27. With an accent on modern Latin American dances, there will be performances by Johnny Vasquez (also called the Prince of salsa) from the US, Magna Gopal from Toronto and Kaytee Namgyal lined up. There will be dance workshops too along with all night parties for a complete experience.

▶ Hot ticket!

Prices for the five-night six-day package start from Rs 51,000 (approx.) per person depending on cabin type on board the ship (ex-Singapore). This includes a night's stay at the Ritz Carlton Millenia, Singapore (for the opening concert), a cabin, meals and access to all dance events. The package excludes all beverages, sightseeing at Singapore, Malaysia and Phuket, taxes and airfare. For details, go to www.salsacruiseasia.com.

KONARK DANCE FESTIVAL

 This festival celebrates the heritage of Indian classical

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Starr Dance Studio is accepting registration for the 2009 Season
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This festival celebrates the heritage of Indian classical dances. An annual event, the Konark Dance Festival will be held from December 1 to December 5 this year. This mega-event is held on the premises of the historical Sun Temple of Konark, situated on Chandrabhaga Beach in Orissa.

The performances take place in the temple's open-air auditorium or Natya Mandir. Leading exponents of Odissi, Bharatanatyam, Manipuri, Kathakali, Chao etc showcase their talent on this stage. A crafts *mela* is also held at this time. Entry is free.

► **Hot ticket!**

At about Rs 7,367 per person on twin-sharing basis, Travelocity has a four-night five-day package to Puri, which includes round trip airfare (Calcutta-Bhubaneswar-Calcutta), 3-star accommodation in Puri, all fees and taxes. Go to www.travelocity.co.in.

RIO DE JANEIRO CARNAVAL

Each February, Brazil is engulfed in a samba frenzy during the Brazilian 'carnaval'. And Rio de Janeiro hosts the best of them all. The next 'carnaval' will be held from February 13 to February 16, 2010.



Held four days before Ash Wednesday, this is a national tradition with samba as its theme. It's characterised by countless performances and street parades. Rio's carnival also includes performances at the spectacular Sambodromo (Stadium of Samba) by trained dancers vying for the top prize. The best part? You can always plunge in and do some serious samba, instead of watching everyone around you dancing away!

► **Hot ticket!**

At Rs 2.8 lakh (approx.) per person on twin-sharing basis, Travelocity has a three-night and four-day package to Rio de Janeiro. The package includes round trip airfare (Calcutta-Rio-Calcutta) via Paris, 3-star accommodation at a hotel facing the Copacabana beach, buffet breakfast, all fees and taxes. Go to www.travelocity.co.in.

Pix courtesy: Marc Hauser and Joke Schot



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