



Rajshahi & Rangpur

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Best Places to Stay

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- » Chez Rassak (p101)
- » Archaeological Rest House (p93)

Best Ruins

- » Paharpur (p92)
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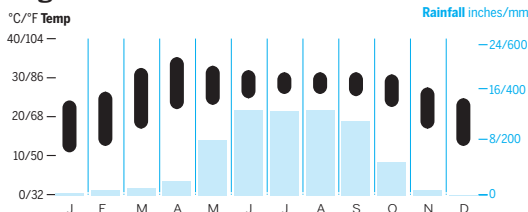
Why Go?

The rich soils of northwest Bangladesh once held court for powerful Buddhist kingdoms and neutered Hindu empires before falling easily to the embrace of Islam. And all three religions have left their mark in the tumbledown walls of the many ruins that litter this region.

Small villages, colourful markets and remote communities living on fast-eroding sand islands all add to the allure of a trip to this part of the country, but it's the historical narrative that excites the most. Rajshahi and Rangpur contain some of Bangladesh's finest rajbaris (Raj-era palaces), its most exquisitely decorated temples and its largest and most impressive Buddhist ruins. The idyllic rural backdrop to the rest of the country is found here too, but chances are it will be the decaying, moss-hewn ancient architecture that steals the attentions of your camera.

When to Go

Bogra



Oct–May

Dry season, the best time to visit the flood-prone eastern regions.

May–Jun

Mango season in the western areas between Rajshahi and Sona Masjid.

Nov

Maha Raas Leela attracts pilgrims to Kantanagar Temple.



Rajshahi & Rangpur Highlights

- 1 Explore the ruined monastery at **Paharpur** (p92), Bangladesh's standout archaeological site
- 2 Wander the ruined remains of **Mahasthangarh** (p91), the country's oldest known city
- 3 Stroll the ruins of Hindu temples, palaces and former mansions **Puthia** (p103)
- 4 Walk through farming villages to the stunning **Kantanagar Temple** (boxed text p98), Bangladesh's finest example of Hindu architecture
- 5 Track down the scattered Islamic ruins of the lost city of **Gaud (Sona Masjid)** (p102)
- 6 Discover how one million Bangladeshis are forced to survive on temporary sand islands in the middle of the country's largest rivers by visiting the chars of the **Jamuna** (boxed text p91) or the **Brahmaputra** (boxed text p95)
- 7 Picnic in the pleasant grounds of the lakeside rajbari of **Natore** (p104)