



NOBLE CALEDONIA

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£300
PER PERSON

WILDLIFE &
WONDERS OF
ASSAM

A journey along Northern India's mighty
Brahmaputra River aboard the MV Mahabaahu

30th January to 14th February
& 2nd to 17th March 2028

Baby elephants, Manas National Park



Assam, the Indian state that lies south of Tibet and Bhutan and north of Bangladesh and the mighty Brahmaputra River which flows through it, offers a plethora of experiences and sights for the naturalist, birdwatcher and cultural traveller. Join us aboard the 46-passenger MV Mahabaahu for an eleven night journey as we traverse the river in comfort visiting national parks, temples, monasteries, tea plantations and tribal villages. Running for some 1800 miles from its source in the Tibetan Himalayas to its delta in the Bay of Bengal, the river scenery is quite unlike anything you will have witnessed before.

Within striking distance of the river are a number of significant national parks and amongst the many highlights of our river expedition will be the time spent exploring the World Heritage Sites of Manas National Park, one of the remotest parks in India and home to many mammals including one-horned rhino, wild buffalo, elephant, gaur, swamp deer, capped langur and clouded leopard, and Kaziranga where the world's largest population of one-horned rhino resides. In addition to the large numbers of rhino, the region is home to elephants, wild buffaloes and the elusive Bengal tiger. Freshwater dolphins reside in the river and with over four hundred varieties of migratory and domestic birds, this is one of the greatest natural habitats of wildlife outside of Africa with National Geographic referring to the area as the 'Serengeti of India'. In addition, we will spend a morning in Nameri National Park, a biodiversity haven in the foothills of the eastern Himalayas and a paradise for bird watchers with over 400 bird species calling it home.

The history, wildlife and tribal culture of this region of India are unique and will be brought to life by our expert local guides. The roads may be poor and the tourist infrastructure very much in its infancy, but that is precisely why we find this region so exciting and this unusual journey is one for those who wish to witness this extraordinary area, its diverse cultures and marvellous wildlife but who are weary of the more well-trodden paths around the world.



Our View

"For our exploration of the Brahmaputra River we have chartered the MV Mahabaahu, whose operators have a long-established presence in Assam and a wealth of local expertise. We have designed the itinerary around an eleven night cruise in order to offer the intrepid traveller a comprehensive visit to this remarkable region with visits to a number of National Parks. The MV Mahabaahu offers considerable comfort across all five of her decks and her size, facilities and refinement set her apart from many of the cruise ships in this region. When not ashore sightseeing or spotting some of India's finest wildlife you can take a dip in the pool, enjoy a massage treatment or simply relax on the top deck whilst watching life unfold on the riverbank."



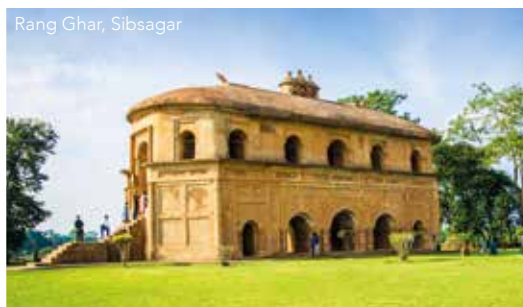
Weaver, Bishwanath Ghat



Golden Langur



One Horned Rhino



Rang Ghar, Sibsagar



Male Hoolock Gibbon, Hoolongapar Gibbon Sanctuary



Victoria Memorial, Kolkata



Capped Langur



'Chang Ghar' houses, Mishing Village

The Itinerary

Day 1 London or Manchester to Kolkata, India. Fly by scheduled indirect flight.

Day 2 Kolkata. Arrive in the morning and transfer to our hotel for a two night stay. Following lunch at the hotel, we will take in what is the best view of Kolkata whilst sailing along the River Hooghly by local boat. Dinner will be at our hotel this evening.

Day 3 Kolkata. After breakfast we will take an exclusive ride on India's only operating tram network and the oldest electric tram in Asia that has been running since 1902. We will then visit the South Park Cemetery, the last resting place of many of Kolkata's early British settlers. After lunch in a local restaurant, enjoy an afternoon tour of India's second largest city including the Victoria Memorial. Return to the hotel before enjoying dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 4 Kolkata to Guwahati. After breakfast in the hotel we transfer to the airport for our morning flight to Guwahati. On arrival, transfer to the MV Mahabaahu for embarkation. We sail over lunch and this afternoon our onboard lecturer will talk about the wildlife of India focusing on our upcoming visits to Manas and Kaziranga national parks. The remainder of the day is spent cruising along the river before we arrive in Dungar Ghat this evening where we moor overnight.

Day 5 Manas National Park & Tiger Reserve. After an early breakfast we drive to the Manas National Park which has seven national and international designations, including World Heritage Site, National Park, Tiger Reserve (Core), Biosphere Reserve, Elephant Reserve, Tiger Sanctuary and Bird Sanctuary. Its northern boundary is next to the border of Bhutan and the imposing Bhutan Hills can be seen whilst the Manas-Beki River system flanks the region. After a jeep safari during which we hope to spot some of the great variety of wildlife including elephant, rhino, leopard and perhaps, if we are very fortunate, the rare golden langur or even the endangered tiger, we return to the ship for a late lunch and spend the afternoon sailing upstream.

Days 6 to 8 Cruising the Brahmaputra. Spend the next three days cruising upstream along the mighty Brahmaputra. You may wish to start your day with some invigorating yoga on the sun deck or simply relax in one of the many public areas and enjoy the passing scenery. There will be a series of talks by one of the vessel's experts about life in the villages, the river's role in the area and the wildlife we will see along the way. We will also make stops in local villages including Sualkuchi, a bustling small town that is the centre of Assamese silk production and offers a chance to visit weaving workshops. Witness the entire process of silk manufacture, from cocoon and spinning, then dyeing to hand-weaving into exquisite mekhela chadars (a two-piece sari, the traditional attire of an Assamese woman). Also sail by Peacock Island, famous for being one of the smallest river islands in the world and home to the endangered golden langur monkey, whilst Gangetic dolphins may be sighted in the river. Meanwhile, on board we will enjoy a cooking demonstration of local street food and a saree-tying demonstration.

Day 9 Nameri National Park & Silghat. We awake early to drive to Nameri National Park which provides habitat to an array of wildlife including Bengal tiger, Indian leopard, clouded leopard, sambar, dhole, gaur and capped langur. Meanwhile the bird enthusiasts can keep a lookout for the rare white winged wood duck, great pied hornbill, wreathed hornbill, rufous necked hornbill, black stork, ibis bill, blue bearded bee-eaters, and plovers. After our safari we return to the ship for lunch as we cruise to Silghat. From our berth we will walk to a nearby jute mill, where ecologically friendly gunny bags are produced using a system of spinning and drawing, manufactured by the most wonderful machines. We will also take in a performance of Bihu, a traditional dance of Assam performed by the villagers.

Day 10 Kaziranga National Park. Today is another early start as we head out to one of the finest examples of conservation and ecology in India, Kaziranga National Park. The sighting of one-horned rhino within the park is remarkably common and, during our two safaris, we will be given the very best chance of getting close to all of Kaziranga's endemic wildlife. While the rhinos themselves are reason enough to visit, the park is home to multiple mammals, reptiles and birds including wild elephants, hog deer, crested serpent eagles and of course, the Bengal tiger. We will explore the Central and Western Ranges with lunch in the park before returning to the ship in Silghat.

Day 11 Bishwanath Ghat & Kaziranga National Park. Spend the morning at the tiny village of Bishwanath Ghat to meet the weavers, fishermen, farmers and boat makers that reside here. Take the chance to learn about life in the remote community and maybe purchase some of their wares. This afternoon we arrive at the eastern side of Kaziranga National Park and taking the Mahabaahu's two tenders, we will travel along the waterfront of Kaziranga where we will be able to explore its rich and varied wildlife. Having the vessel's tenders will afford us a further perspective of the national park as lizards, otters, birds, and larger mammals, such as water buffalo and elephant congregate along its riverbanks.

Day 12 Mishing Village. The Mishing people are the second largest tribal group in northeast India, with a population of over a million in Assam alone. Today, we will pause by the banks of the river to explore a Mishing village with its characteristic 'Chang Ghar' houses on raised platforms. The Mishing women are expert weavers and during our time here we will be provided with a demonstration of the skill used in making typical Assamese dresses and of precisely how to don their tribal clothing. On returning to our vessel, we will enjoy a traditional Assamese evening on board.

Day 13 Majuli Island. Majuli is the world's largest inhabited river island and possesses unique Hindu monasteries famed for their dance-drama performances – the whole island is now shortlisted for future UNESCO World Heritage status. On today's excursion, we will witness a traditional cultural performance before travelling to Kamalabari monastery to witness Vaishnavite priests carrying out their ritualistic ceremonies. The island also has a number of bird species with open-billed storks nesting all over the island whilst adjutant storks, whistling ducks, bar-headed geese and weaver birds may also be spotted.

Post-cruise Jaipur & Ranthambore Extension

14th to 20th February & 17th to 23rd March 2028



If you would like to spend some more time in India after disembarking the MV Mahabaahu, we are offering a six night escorted extension which will include the 'pink city' of Jaipur and Ranthambore National Park which offers some of the best opportunities for wildlife sightings.

The Itinerary

Day 1 Kolkata to Jaipur. Check out after breakfast and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to Jaipur. Originally the city's walls were the colour of red sandstone, Jaipur's universal coat of pink only came in 1876 to coincide with the visit of the Prince of Wales (King Edward VII). Almost the entire city was given a coat of pink paint, thus giving it the name 'The Pink City'. Arrive and transfer to the ITC Rajputana Hotel and after some free time to relax we will meet for dinner this evening. (B, D)

Day 2 Jaipur. This morning we explore Jaipur beginning with a visit to the Amber Fort, located on the outskirts of the city. This extensive palace complex was built with pale yellow and pink sandstone, and white marble, and is a fine example of Rajput architecture. After lunch we continue to the Jantar Mantar (Observatory), a collection of 19 astronomical instruments which were completed in 1734 by the Rajput ruler Sawai Jai Singh. Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, it has the world's largest stone sundial. Our tour will continue to the City Palace and the beautiful Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds). Constructed out of pink sandstone in 1799, it was designed to extend the chambers of the harem and allow royal ladies to observe everyday life in the street below without being seen. (B, L, D)

Day 3 Jaipur to Ranthambore National Park. After breakfast in the hotel we will drive (4 hours) to Ranthambore National Park. After checking in to the Ranthambore Bagh Palace we will have lunch followed by some time at leisure to enjoy the hotel facilities. In the late afternoon a local naturalist will provide a talk on the flora and fauna found in the park before we enjoy dinner this evening. (B, L, D)

Days 4 & 5 Ranthambore National Park. Named after the historic Ranthambore Fort, which lies within the park, this used to be the hunting ground of the Maharaja of Jaipur and in 1972 the sanctuary came under the Project Tiger scheme. One of the largest national parks in Northern India, Ranthambore offers some of the finest opportunities for wildlife sightings including the magnificent tiger, basking crocodiles, king vultures, serpent eagle, sloth bears, jackal and hyena or spotted deer. Over the next two days we will enjoy a series of jeep safaris in the park with our rangers on the lookout for wildlife with the remainder of the time spent at leisure in the resort. (B, L, D)

Day 6 Ranthambore National Park to Delhi. Transfer this morning to the railway station to join our train to Delhi. On arrival we transfer to the Novotel Aerocity and have the remainder of the day at leisure before meeting for dinner this evening. (B, D)

Day 7 Delhi to London. Check out this morning and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London. (B)

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: **£1795** Single: **£2195**

Price Includes: Economy class scheduled air travel, two nights hotel accommodation in Jaipur, three nights hotel accommodation in Ranthambore National Park, overnight hotel accommodation in Delhi, meals as indicated (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner), Indian wine, beer and soft drinks with included lunches and dinners, Tour Manager, excursions, gratuities, transfers.

Not Included: Indian visa.

NB. Minimum numbers are required for this extension to operate.



Tea garden, Brahmaputra River Valley

Day 14 Hollongapar Gibbon Sanctuary, Kaziranga & Sibsagar.

The Hollongapar Gibbon Sanctuary is home to seven of India's nine primates including the only ape, the Hoollock gibbon and Northeastern India's only nocturnal primate, the Bengal slow loris. After an early breakfast we will drive to the sanctuary for a dawn safari. The upper canopy of the forest is dominated by the hoollong tree, while the nahar dominates the middle canopy and the lower canopy consists of evergreen shrubs and herbs. Together with our naturalist guides and an armed guard, we will walk through the thick evergreen forest for a couple of hours as we search for wildlife. On leaving the park those interested in history may want to visit Sibsagar, the stronghold of the Ahom Kings. We will visit the Rang Ghar used by the Royal family for enjoying buffalo fights and cultural performances and Shiva Dol, 104 feet tall and containing three Hindu temples. Afterwards, take a stroll in the market area to visit some silk shops and Assamese goldsmith shops. Alternatively, wildlife enthusiasts may wish to continue to the Eastern range of Kaziranga where an afternoon safari explores the Soholaheel, Maklung, Turturani and Dhuba areas of the park.

Day 15 Assam to Kolkata. Disembark after breakfast for our flight to Kolkata. On arrival transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay.

Day 16 Kolkata to London or Manchester. Depart this morning and transfer to the airport for the scheduled indirect flight, arriving in London or Manchester this evening.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £300 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

| Cat | Cabin Description | Brochure Price | Special Offer Price |
|-----|--|----------------|---------------------|
| C | Superior cabin without balcony on Parshuram or Gadadhar Singha Deck | £6895 | £6595 |
| B | Superior cabin with private balcony on Gadadhar Singha Deck | £7395 | £7095 |
| A | Suite with private balcony on Gadadhar Singha Deck | £7695 | £7395 |
| C | Superior cabin without balcony on Parshuram or Gadadhar Singha Deck for sole use | £8895 | £8595 |

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • Three nights hotel accommodation in Kolkata on full board basis • 11 nights aboard the MV Mahabaahu on full board basis • Indian wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Shore excursions • Noble Caledonia Tour Manager • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes • UK airport taxes.

Not Included: Travel insurance, Indian visa, camera fees in national parks.

MV MAHABAAHU



Superior twin-bedded cabin



Superior double-bedded cabin with balcony

For our exploration of Assam and the great Brahmaputra River we have chartered the MV Mahabaahu, a stylish and elegant vessel which accommodates 46 guests. The vessel has a total of five decks and facilities include a swimming pool, spa and restaurant and an open top deck from where you can watch the busy life of the waterside villages pass by as well as watch for wildlife.

Your Cabin/Suite

All cabins and suites are furnished in traditional Assamese fineries and feature ample closet space, television, hairdryer, in-house telephone, in-room safe and a choice of bed configuration (double or twin). The en-suite bathrooms include spa-branded amenities, bathrobes and slippers. There are two suites located on the ship's Gadadhar Singha Deck which measure a generous 283 square feet and include an outside balcony with chairs. The nine superior cabins with balcony, also located on the ship's Gadadhar Singha Deck, measure 206 square feet and the 12 superior cabins without balcony, located on both the Gadadhar Singha Deck and Parshuram Deck, measure 150 square feet.

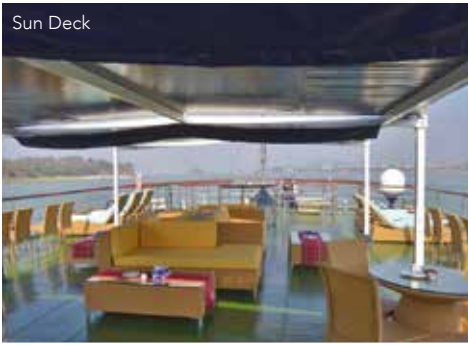
Your Space

Spread over five decks, the ship has a number of public areas and facilities to ensure that you remain comfortable and relaxed throughout your journey. These include a lounge and bar with a well-stocked library, massage and treatment room offering traditional Ayurvedic therapies, steam and sauna room, Jacuzzi, hair salon and a beauty room. There is also a swimming pool and small outside gym area and a large sun deck –

the Donyi Polo Deck – with its own seating area and bar where you may relax and observe life on the banks of the river. The restaurant seats all passengers in one sitting and is also the room where the lectures will be held. The facilities also include a hospitality bar, pool table, tea and coffee station and a lift that services all decks other than the Donyi Polo Deck.

Your Dining

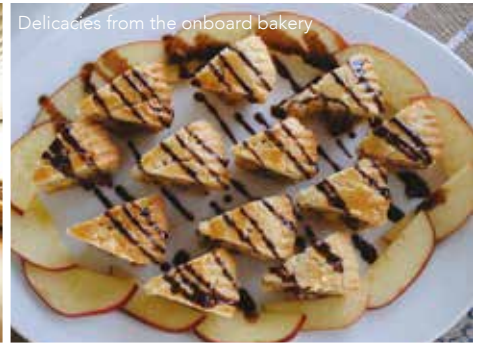
Meals are taken in the vessel's single-sitting Mungri Mungram restaurant located on the vessel's Rudra Singha Deck. The restaurant seats all passengers in an open seat arrangement and the food reflects the flavours of the region, whilst also offering an extensive selection of western dishes. There is an onboard bakery and breakfasts and lunches are a full buffet with both western and Indian delicacies being offered. Vegetarian options are available and dietary requests can be catered for on request. Dinners are served and will often be themed, the restaurant team taking great pride in showcasing the many cuisines and dishes from around India. A 24 hour tea and coffee station is available.



Sun Deck



Soma Lounge



Delicacies from the onboard bakery



Mungri Mungram Restaurant



Soma Lounge

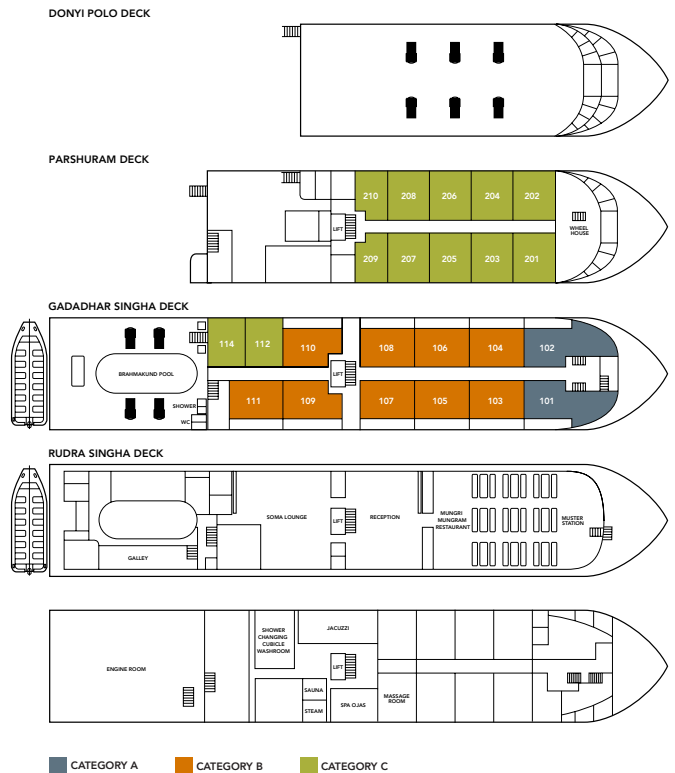
For your Comfort, Safety and Security

The MV Mahabaahu meets with health and safety measures implemented and enforced by the relevant governing bodies and a full safety briefing will be given upon embarkation of the ship. Crew members are always on hand to assist should you require and the vessel will be escorted by the local River authorities, offering additional support and assistance if at all required.



Brahmakund Pool

MV MAHABAABU DECK PLAN



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All special offers are subject to availability. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
 Cover image: Indian Roller, Kaziranga National Park.