

# NOBLE CALEDONIA

18 nights from  
£6195

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## Passage through Assam

A journey along the mighty Brahmaputra River aboard the RV Charaidew

21 November 2018 16 January 2019 13 February 2019



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Think of Assam and your first thoughts probably involve tea and maybe temples. Certainly it is not noted for its tourism, mostly because of the lack of acceptable accommodation and transportation. This is a great pity, as this state that lies south of Tibet and Bhutan and north of Bangladesh has so much to offer the naturalist, bird watcher or cultural traveller. One of the world's great rivers, the **Brahmaputra** runs for some 1800 miles from its source in the Tibetan Himalaya to its delta in the Bay of Bengal. Nothing can prepare the traveller for the vastness and emptiness of this great water highway, as myriad channels ply through seemingly endless archipelagos of sand islands. Within striking distance of the river are a number of significant national parks. Among these is the World Heritage Site at Kaziranga, where the world's largest population of one horned rhino reside.

This unusual journey will appeal to 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. 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. Now is the time to visit before big business moves in with the resort hotel chains and all other paraphernalia that 21st century tourism entails. For these voyages along the Brahmaputra River we are working with our associates, Assam Bengal Navigation, an Indian/British joint venture based in Guwahati whose directors have a wealth of experience in operating river vessels in **India**. We have chartered the **RV Charaidew** from them and the vessel is specially designed for the navigational conditions on the Brahmaputra.

### Useful links & Travel Advice

Please find a selection of [useful websites](#) to refer to for information from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, on visa requirements, NHS travel health advice and other useful travel tips.

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### Itinerary

**Day 1 - London to Kolkata, India.**

Fly by scheduled indirect flight from London to Kolkata.

### **Day 2 - Kolkata.**

Arrive in the morning and transfer to the Oberoi Grand Hotel for a three night stay. Following lunch at the hotel, enjoy an afternoon city tour of India's second largest city. Dinner will be at our hotel this evening.

### **Day 3 - Kolkata.**

Following breakfast and a leisurely morning at our luxurious hotel, we will enjoy lunch in a local restaurant followed by a visit to Kolkata's vibrant and colourful flower market. Following time here, we will take in what is arguably the best view of Kolkata, whilst sailing along the River Hooghly by local boat. Return to the hotel before enjoying dinner at a local restaurant.

### **Day 4 - Kolkata.**

This morning our excursion will focus on the wonderfully opulent and eccentric Marble Palace, displaying some incredible and varied works of art; South Park Cemetery, the last resting place of many of Kolkata's early British settlers and The Mother House, the former home and last resting place of Mother Theresa. Following lunch in a local restaurant, we will return to our hotel for an afternoon at leisure. Dinner will be at our hotel this evening.

### **Day 5 - Kolkata to Guwahati.**

Depart on a morning flight to Guwahati and transfer to the RV Charaidew for embarkation. We will moor overnight in Guwahati.

### **Day 6 - Guwahati to Ganesh Pahar.**

After breakfast, drive up Nilachal Hill to see the holy Kamakhya temple where, with its tantric rites and animal sacrifice, the more squeamish may prefer to content themselves with the exterior. Visit the poignant Commonwealth War Graves before spending the remainder of the day cruising upstream.

### **Day 7 - Cruising.**

Leaving the hills behind, we enjoy our first taste of the wilderness experience, sand banks like icebergs on either side. We may make a short stop to visit a bankside village, creating a sensation as we do. We moor for the night in a lunar landscape of sand islands, with hopefully the Himalayas in view and providing a contrasting backdrop in the distance.

### **Day 8 - Tezpur.**

We cruise on to Tezpur, where we visit the 6th century Da Parbatia temple ruins, with a beautifully carved portal, and explore the town by cycle rickshaw. We will stop at Cole Park with Medieval stone carvings saved from sites all over the region and aim to pass by the bungalow once lived in by Alexander Bruce, pioneer of the tea industry. Our ship will be waiting at the town's waterfront for us to re-board.

### **Day 9 - Nameri National Park.**

After an early breakfast we drive for some two hours to the Nameri National Park at the foot of the blue hills of Arunachal Pradesh, the old North East Frontier Agency. Here we take a float trip of around two hours duration down the Jia Bhoreli River through the park, with excellent birdwatching (look out for the great hornbills) and perhaps the chance of sighting wild elephant. After lunch we will take a walk in the

village before returning to the ship.

### **Day 10 - Kaziranga.**

Continue upstream, passing below a seemingly endless new bridge across the vast width of the riverbed, to moor at Steemer Ghat, a lovely beach backed by jungle-covered hills. In the afternoon we drive to Kaziranga's Western Range for a jeep safari and to scan the wilderness from an observation tower. Kaziranga is a World Heritage site and, with a population of well over 1000 one-horned rhinoceros it is the best place in the world to see these beasts. There are also good populations of tiger, wild elephant, sambar, swamp deer, hog deer, wild pig and many other species.

### **Day 11 - Kaziranga.**

Disembark pre-dawn and drive to Kaziranga's Central Range for an early morning elephant safari, one of the best ways to get really close to the rhino and other animals. After breakfast at a lodge, we walk through terraced tea gardens and past a Karbi tribal village, then drive to a Mising tribal village, with their distinctive houses raised on piles. After lunch either take a jeep safari in the little visited Burapahar Range before returning to the boat or return directly to Steemer Ghat to visit a delightful nearby Assamese village and walk along a path alive with butterflies to a solitary temple on the river bank.

### **Day 12 - Vishnath.**

This morning set sail upstream, with Kaziranga National Park on the right bank. At around midday we reach Vishnath, with an Ahom-period Shiva temple. There are other later temples too, and we walk through the town before re-boarding and setting off again, with Kaziranga still on the far bank.

### **Day 13 - Cruising.**

The day is spent on the river, and we have a good chance of spotting Gangetic dolphin.

### **Day 14 - Kaziranga.**

This morning we land and take a jeep safari in Kaziranga's little-visited Eastern Range, with grasslands much favoured by rhino and where you might spot the rare Bengal Florican. Returning to the boat, we continue our cruise upstream.

### **Day 15 - Cruising.**

Another day spent cruising upstream. We shall take time to pause and walk through a bank-side village, getting an insight into the life of rural India.

### **Day 16 - Majuli Island.**

Around breakfast time, we should reach Majuli Island, supposedly one of the world's largest river islands and possessing unique Hindu monasteries famed for their dance-drama performances - the whole island is now shortlisted for future UNESCO World Heritage status. We visit a monastery at Auniati with an eclectic museum and attend a dance performance at Kamalbari monastery before cruising across to Neamati Ghat on the opposite bank.

### **Day 17 - Sibsagar.**

We visit a tea estate this morning where we hope to catch a glimpse of some of the colourfully dressed tea pickers at work before we drive for about an hour to Sibsagar, the one-time capital of the kings of Assam.

Shan by origin (Assam and Siam share the same derivation) but converted to Hinduism, they ruled Assam for some 700 years until the 1820s, and their culture and architecture is a strange and delightful amalgam of Indian and S.E. Asian. We will see temples with stupa-like profiles, and palaces of distinctive form - note the crocodiles and rather erotic caryatids that adorn the roof of the Rang Mahal. For the record book, the temple tank here is believed to be the world's largest hand-excavated reservoir. We return to the ship which will have cruised up to Dikhou Mukh, close to Sibsagar, and spend our last night on board. (Dependent on river conditions the last night may be spent at Neamati, close to Jorhat).

**Day 18 - Assam to Kolkata.**

Disembark after breakfast for your flight to Kolkata. On arrival we will transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay.



**Day 19 - Kolkata to London.**

Depart this morning by scheduled indirect flight, arriving into London this evening.

Dates and Prices

LIMITED AVAILABILITY

Prices per person based on double occupancy

21 November 2018 to 9 December 2018 • 16 January 2019 to 3 February 2019 • 13 February 2019 to 3 March 2019		
Category	Price	
 Category 1 Upper deck twin	£6195	
 Category 2 Upper deck double for sole use	£7695	

Tour Reference Code: RCCHASSAM18

**Price Includes:** Economy class scheduled air travel, four nights at the Oberoi Grand Hotel (or similar) in Kolkata on full board basis, 13 nights aboard the RV Charaidew on full board basis, shore excursions, Tour Manager, gratuities, transfers, port taxes, UK airport taxes.

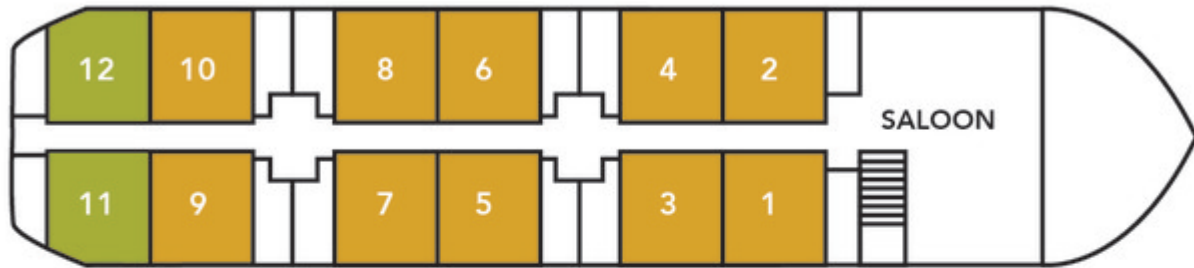
**Not Included:** Travel insurance, Indian visa, camera fees in national parks.

*NB. Excursions, events ashore and ports are subject to change depending on entrance time allocations, venue schedules and river conditions. Elephant rides are subject to availability. Wildlife sightings are not guaranteed.*

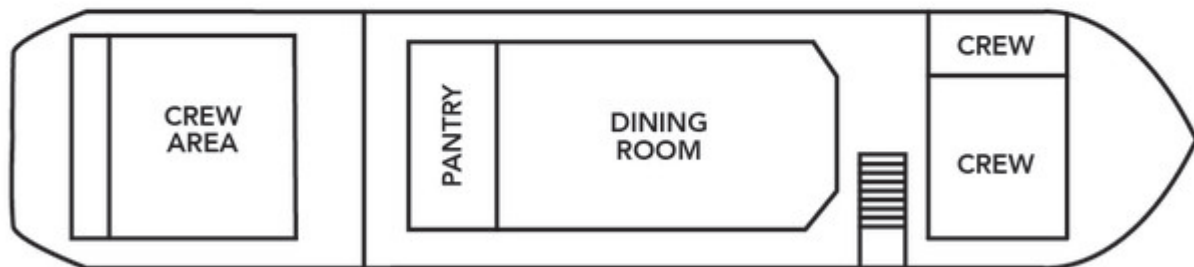
**Deck Plan**

[Deckplan](#)

## UPPER DECK



## MAIN DECK



## Charaidew

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Charaidew  
Lounge  
Restaurant  
Charaidew - Sun Deck  
Charaidew - On deck  
Twin cabin  
Double cabin

## Your Cabin / Suite

## Your Cabin / Suite

The 12 upper deck cabins measure 4.5m x 3.425m and are all en suite. Cabins are divided into ten twin-bedded cabins and two double-bedded cabins, all with under-bed storage for clothes and suitcases. All cabins have built-in wardrobes with hanging and shelf space, and also contain individual programmable electronic safes. Bathrooms have shaver sockets, a hair drier, and a selection of Boutique toiletries. All cabins have large windows with sliding glass panes and fly-screens, and have two comfortable rattan armchairs which are well-placed for admiring the passing scenery. Mineral water is provided in your cabin and is replenished daily. All cabins have individual air conditioners.

## Your Dining

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The single seating dining room provides a choice of both western and Indian dishes at lunch and dinner including always a vegetarian option. Assamese food is generally prepared without chillis, to Western taste, but hotter versions are available on request. Most dietary requirements can be accommodated given previous notice. A good choice of the best varieties of Indian beer, wines and spirits are available.

## Your Space

### Your Space

The RV Charaidew is a 38m long, twin-engined, steel hulled passenger ship ideal for navigating the Brahmaputra. Built along traditional lines the ship is comfortable, airy and light throughout. There is a spacious saloon looking out over the bows, with its own outside space reached through sliding glass doors. In the saloon is a bar, while in another corner there is a well-stocked library. DVDs are available for playing on the large TV set. The top deck is a spacious Sun deck with generous amounts of seating both shaded and outside, as well as an honesty bar for beer and soft drinks, while tea and coffee are always available. A laundry service is available on board.

## Life Onboard

### Life Onboard

Each evening in the saloon before dinner you will have a chance to get together with the ship's manager and with the on-board guide, who will talk about the next day's programme, and what is entailed, whether a rickshaw ride, a walk through a rural village, an elephant safari or an excursion using our minibus. While sailing you can relax on the sundeck and watch the passing scene, while the on-board naturalist is usually on hand to identify birds or other wildlife. In the evenings drinks time in the saloon is always a sociable affair, while sometimes a film might be shown, or guests might prefer to play cards, Scrabble or browse the ship's well-stocked library.

## For Your Comfort

### For Your Comfort

Your ship meets all statutory safety requirements, and a full safety briefing is given on boarding. You are welcome to visit the bridge and observe the master and pilot at work picking their way through the shallows and sandbanks of the great Indian rivers. Often embarkation and disembarkation will be by means of the country

boat which acts as our tender. Moving from ship to country boat to shore is secure and easy with plenty of handholds, while ever-willing crew members are always on hand to assist.

## **Ship Directory**

## **[Ship Directory](#)**

*Please find below further details pertaining to the vessel or click on the booklet to download.*

We are delighted you have chosen the RV Charaidew for your upcoming voyage along the Brahmaputra.

The RV Charaidew was built in Guwahati in 1973, as a passenger ship for long distance voyages for the wealthy including the President of India. In 2003 she was completely rebuilt and refurbished to her current form, retaining original features such as her polished brass engine room telegraph.

With 12 elegantly appointed cabins, the Charaidew is well-suited to the challenging conditions of the River Brahmaputra for which she was designed. Extensive use has been made of eco-friendly laminated bamboo panelling, while most fabrics are hand-woven by tribal people in remote villages.

We hope this information booklet answers any questions you may have pertaining to the vessel and wish you a pleasant voyage.

## **AIR CONDITIONING**

All cabins have individually controlled air-conditioning. All cabin windows are fitted with gauze screens so it is feasible to switch off the air-conditioning at night and open the windows.

## **ALARM**

An alarm will be sounded in the event of an emergency. Please follow the instructions provided on board for what to do in the event of an emergency.

## **ALL ABOARD**

Your times for embarkation and disembarkation will be provided by your Cruise Director.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

During your time on board, various announcements will be made by the ship's crew and our Tour Manager. Please listen out for these announcements as they will be of importance or interest.

## **BAR/BEVERAGES**

An honesty bar is available on the ship's Sun Deck. Your bill for drinks consumed throughout your cruise should be settled at the end of your journey. The ship's water supply comes from the river after passing through a filtration plant. This water is suitable for washing but should not be drunk. Purified water is used for cooking and food preparation on board. Bottled water is available within your cabin and replenished daily.

## **BEAUTY SALON**

No salon is available on board.

## **CABIN DIMENSIONS**

All cabins, located on the ship's Upper Deck, measure 4.5 metres x 3.4 metres. This includes a large window with sliding glass panes and fly-screens.

## **CABIN FACILITIES**

Your bathroom includes boutique toiletries, shaver sockets and a hairdryer. Cabins include individually controlled air conditioning, built-in wardrobes with hanging and shelf space and under bed storage for clothes and suitcases. There is also an electronic safe and two comfortable rattan armchairs.

## **CRUISE DIRECTOR**

A local Cruise Director will accompany you on your voyage, along with a Noble Caledonia Tour Manager.

## **CURRENCY**

All bills on board the ship will be in Indian rupees, but payment may also be made in US dollars, Euros or Pound Sterling. Payment may be made on board by Visa or MasterCard. Debit cards are not accepted. An itemised bill will be presented to each passenger prior to their disembarkation for any items purchased during the cruise.

## **DAILY PROGRAMME**

Each evening the next day's programme will be delivered to your cabin.

## **DRESS CODE**

Comfortable and practical attire is recommended during the day for excursions. Dress on board is casual or smart-casual for the evenings. Jackets are not required. Your travel wardrobe should be informal and comfortable. Lightweight clothing which can be layered is the most suitable to cover a range of conditions; take light rainwear e.g. disposable rain poncho to be prepared for showers. Warmer items may be required for the mornings and some evenings.

Whilst at hotels, dress should be respectful to cultural differences and both males and females should not reveal too much "skin". As we will be travelling through the Indian countryside, where many people are not used to tourists and are often curious about visitors please be prepared to be stared at. Women should dress modestly; a headscarf is useful. Long baggy shorts for men and women, or medium length skirts for women are acceptable.



During the later months, October to February, warm clothes (in subdued colours) are required for dawn and dusk jeep safaris in wildlife sanctuaries. When going ashore, guests should use easily removable footwear for visiting holy sites. Trousers are a must if the opportunity to travel by elephant presents itself – elephant stubble can be uncomfortable, and elephant grass can be sharp. The Sun Deck is ideal for sunbathing in hot weather, but please make sure you are not visible from the shore if you are not covered up.

## **ELECTRICITY**

Voltage on board is 220V/50~, cabin sockets are for plugs with three round pins; adaptors marketed for use in South Africa will work. Bathrooms have 220V UK-style razor sockets (two round pins).

## **ELEVATOR**

There is no elevator (or chair lift) on board.

## **EMBARKATION/DISEMBARKATION**

Embarkation is approximately 16.00 hours, unless advised otherwise. The official embarkation time will be advised in your final documentation. The official disembarkation time is between 8:30-09.00 hours, however your Cruise Director will provide detailed information prior to the end of the cruise. This will include departure transfer information.

## **EMERGENCY AND SAFETY PROCEDURES**

Full details of the ship's emergency and safety procedures will be provided following your embarkation.

## **FIRE SAFETY**

The RV Charaidew meets with all fire and safety guidelines as outlined by the relevant governing bodies. Further information regarding fire safety shall be provided to you on board the vessel.

## **FIRST AID**

Please note there is no doctor on board the vessel. A number of crew are fully trained and certified to provide First Aid. Further medical assistance can be sought from one of the hospitals along the river in the event of emergency.

## **FITNESS ROOM**

There is no fitness room on board the vessel.

## **GRATUITIES**

Gratuities have been included in your holiday price, however if you feel that certain individuals deserve special award, you are of course free to remunerate as you please.

## **GIFT SHOP**

There is no gift shop aboard the vessel, however postcards and stamps can be purchased from the ship's bar during the cruise.

## **HAIRDRESSER**

There is no hairdresser on board the vessel.

## **HOUSEKEEPING**

Your cabin will be cleaned daily with a 'turn down' service at night.

## **'INFOTAINMENT' SYSTEM**

The ship's lounge has a CD and DVD player with a limited selection of CD's and DVD's to choose from. Please note that there is no internet aboard the vessel, nor any mobile signal coverage throughout Assam.

## **KEYS TO CABIN**

Each cabin will receive their own cabin key. Before leaving the ship we kindly ask all passengers to swap the cabin key with a shore pass which will be provided to you by the ship's reception desk. After your return to the ship, please return your shore pass to reception in exchange for your cabin key.

## **LAUNDRY**

A laundry service is provided on board at additional cost.

## **LIBRARY AND GAMES**

A small selection of books and games are available for your enjoyment.

## **LOST PROPERTY**

Lost property can be handed to the ship's reception. Please ensure you have all of your belongings with you before you return home. Should you leave items on board the ship we are only able to return them to you at your own cost.

## **MEALS**

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are all served buffet-style in the dining room. Cuisine is a combination of Assamese (milder than most Indian cuisine) and continental. Special dietary requests such as vegetarian, low salt and low cholesterol should be made with Noble Caledonia in advance, however, we recommend that you contact the Hotel Manager once on board to reconfirm such requests. We regret that these, and any other special dietary needs, cannot be guaranteed. If you have any specific/special foods that you require we recommend that you take some with you.

## **MOSQUITOES**

External doors and the gauze windows should be kept closed at all times – day and night. At night, if on deck or going ashore, make sure to rub ankles and other exposed parts with repellent. Switch off lights when leaving your cabin so as not to lure the mosquitoes in. Mosquitoes love damp spots so it helps to keep the shower room door bolted shut with the light off when not in use. Please ensure you take the appropriate precautions to guard against mosquito bites.

## **NEWSPAPERS**

Newspapers are not available on board.

## **OPERATIONAL CHANGES**

Despite our meticulous planning efforts, there may be times when changes must be made to the daily programme due to circumstances beyond our control such as heavy river traffic or fluctuating water levels. The ship's Captain and crew along with Noble Caledonia's staff will do their utmost to find the best and safest solution. Any changes to the day's schedule will be communicated as soon as possible.

## **PAYMENTS ON BOARD**

The vessel operates a signed-chit system whereby no payment is immediately required (the vessel only requiring a signature for your purchase) and, only at the end of the cruise will you be presented with your final itemised bill to settle.

## **POST**

Postcards and stamps are available for you to purchase at the ship's bar (subject to availability) and, items can be posted on your behalf by the ship's crew (although as they are unable to do so at every port of call, this could take longer than if you were to post yourself). Please note that neither the ship nor Noble Caledonia can be held responsible for items of post that are not successfully delivered on your behalf.

## **QUESTIONNAIRES**

A questionnaire will be provided to all passengers towards the end of their sailing. We would be grateful for you to complete and return this.

## **RECEPTION**

Reception is staffed throughout the day and a member of crew can be contacted in the evenings in the event of emergency.

## **ROOM SERVICE**

Room service is not available, although should you feel unwell and unable to make it to the ship's restaurant, special arrangements can be made.

## **SAFE**

All cabins are fitted with a safe and we recommend you place your valuables inside the safe whenever you are away from your cabin. Please remember to remove all items from your safe prior to you departing the vessel at the end of the cruise.

## **SAFETY**

Please take careful note of all safety instructions provided to you by the Master and crew of the vessel.

## **SMOKING**

Smoking within your cabin or any of the vessel's public areas is strictly prohibited. Designated smoking areas are provided and can be advised by the ship's reception upon embarkation.

## **SUN DECK**

The ship has a Sun Deck which is available for guests to enjoy. There may be times, for example at periods of inclement weather or low bridges, whereby it is necessary to close the Sun Deck. Please listen carefully to the Captain and Crew for instruction. Please also note that the Sun Deck and its steps may become slippery if the weather is cool or dew forms.

## **TELEPHONE**

There is no phone on board for passenger use although arrangements can be made in the event of emergency.

## **VISITORS**

Visitors are not permitted aboard the vessel without the prior consent of the ship's senior staff. Please provide as much notice as possible to the senior staff so that the necessary arrangements can be made. The ship's operators reserve the right to deny boarding to any visitors.

## **WATER**

Complimentary water is available during breakfast, lunch and dinner. Bottled water is also available in your cabin and replenished daily.

## **WIFI**

Wi-Fi is not available on board.

## **PLEASE NOTE:**

*The above information is accurate and correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of publishing. Noble Caledonia accepts no responsibility for any errors or omissions and none of the facilities or features of the vessel described herein which are not specifically described in our advertisements and on your holiday invoice as being included in your holiday price will be deemed to be included in your holiday package. If you would like further information about the vessel or about any of your holiday arrangements, please do not hesitate to contact us.*

## **[View all tours](#)**

## **Your Cabin / Suite**

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Whilst at hotels, dress should be respectful to cultural differences and both males and females should not reveal too much "skin". As we will be travelling through the Indian countryside, where many people are not used to tourists and are often curious about visitors please be prepared to be stared at. Women should dress modestly; a headscarf is useful. Long baggy shorts for men and women, or medium length skirts for women are acceptable.

During the later months, October to February, warm clothes (in subdued colours) are required for dawn and dusk jeep safaris in wildlife sanctuaries. When going ashore, guests should use easily removable footwear for

visiting holy sites. Trousers are a must if the opportunity to travel by elephant presents itself – elephant stubble can be uncomfortable, and elephant grass can be sharp. The Sun Deck is ideal for sunbathing in hot weather, but please make sure you are not visible from the shore if you are not covered up.

## **ELECTRICITY**

Voltage on board is 220V/50~, cabin sockets are for plugs with three round pins; adaptors marketed for use in South Africa will work. Bathrooms have 220V UK-style razor sockets (two round pins).

## **ELEVATOR**

There is no elevator (or chair lift) on board.

## **EMBARKATION/DISEMBARKATION**

Embarkation is approximately 16.00 hours, unless advised otherwise. The official embarkation time will be advised in your final documentation. The official disembarkation time is between 8:30-09.00 hours, however your Cruise Director will provide detailed information prior to the end of the cruise. This will include departure transfer information.

## **EMERGENCY AND SAFETY PROCEDURES**

Full details of the ship's emergency and safety procedures will be provided following your embarkation.

## **FIRE SAFETY**

The RV Charaidew meets with all fire and safety guidelines as outlined by the relevant governing bodies. Further information regarding fire safety shall be provided to you on board the vessel.

## **FIRST AID**

Please note there is no doctor on board the vessel. A number of crew are fully trained and certified to provide First Aid. Further medical assistance can be sought from one of the hospitals along the river in the event of emergency.

## **FITNESS ROOM**

There is no fitness room on board the vessel.

## **GRATUITIES**

Gratuities have been included in your holiday price, however if you feel that certain individuals deserve special award, you are of course free to remunerate as you please.

## **GIFT SHOP**

There is no gift shop aboard the vessel, however postcards and stamps can be purchased from the ship's bar during the cruise.

## **HAIRDRESSER**



There is no hairdresser on board the vessel.

## **HOUSEKEEPING**

Your cabin will be cleaned daily with a 'turn down' service at night.

## **'INFOTAINMENT' SYSTEM**

The ship's lounge has a CD and DVD player with a limited selection of CD's and DVD's to choose from. Please note that there is no internet aboard the vessel, nor any mobile signal coverage throughout Assam.

## **KEYS TO CABIN**

Each cabin will receive their own cabin key. Before leaving the ship we kindly ask all passengers to swap the cabin key with a shore pass which will be provided to you by the ship's reception desk. After your return to the ship, please return your shore pass to reception in exchange for your cabin key.

## **LAUNDRY**

A laundry service is provided on board at additional cost.

## **LIBRARY AND GAMES**

A small selection of books and games are available for your enjoyment.

## **LOST PROPERTY**

Lost property can be handed to the ship's reception. Please ensure you have all of your belongings with you before you return home. Should you leave items on board the ship we are only able to return them to you at your own cost.

## **MEALS**

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are all served buffet-style in the dining room. Cuisine is a combination of Assamese (milder than most Indian cuisine) and continental. Special dietary requests such as vegetarian, low salt and low cholesterol should be made with Noble Caledonia in advance, however, we recommend that you contact the Hotel Manager once on board to reconfirm such requests. We regret that these, and any other special dietary needs, cannot be guaranteed. If you have any specific/special foods that you require we recommend that you take some with you.

## **MOSQUITOES**

External doors and the gauze windows should be kept closed at all times – day and night. At night, if on deck or going ashore, make sure to rub ankles and other exposed parts with repellent. Switch off lights when leaving your cabin so as not to lure the mosquitoes in. Mosquitoes love damp spots so it helps to keep the shower room door bolted shut with the light off when not in use. Please ensure you take the appropriate precautions to guard against mosquito bites.

## **NEWSPAPERS**

Newspapers are not available on board.

## **OPERATIONAL CHANGES**

Despite our meticulous planning efforts, there may be times when changes must be made to the daily programme due to circumstances beyond our control such as heavy river traffic or fluctuating water levels. The ship's Captain and crew along with Noble Caledonia's staff will do their utmost to find the best and safest solution. Any changes to the day's schedule will be communicated as soon as possible.

## **PAYMENTS ON BOARD**

The vessel operates a signed-chit system whereby no payment is immediately required (the vessel only requiring a signature for your purchase) and, only at the end of the cruise will you be presented with your final itemised bill to settle.

## **POST**

Postcards and stamps are available for you to purchase at the ship's bar (subject to availability) and, items can be posted on your behalf by the ship's crew (although as they are unable to do so at every port of call, this could take longer than if you were to post yourself). Please note that neither the ship nor Noble Caledonia can be held responsible for items of post that are not successfully delivered on your behalf.

## **QUESTIONNAIRES**

A questionnaire will be provided to all passengers towards the end of their sailing. We would be grateful for you to complete and return this.

## **RECEPTION**

Reception is staffed throughout the day and a member of crew can be contacted in the evenings in the event of emergency.

## **ROOM SERVICE**

Room service is not available, although should you feel unwell and unable to make it to the ship's restaurant, special arrangements can be made.

## **SAFE**

All cabins are fitted with a safe and we recommend you place your valuables inside the safe whenever you are away from your cabin. Please remember to remove all items from your safe prior to you departing the vessel at the end of the cruise.

## **SAFETY**

Please take careful note of all safety instructions provided to you by the Master and crew of the vessel.

## **SMOKING**

Smoking within your cabin or any of the vessel's public areas is strictly prohibited. Designated smoking areas are provided and can be advised by the ship's reception upon embarkation.

## **SUN DECK**

The ship has a Sun Deck which is available for guests to enjoy. There may be times, for example at periods of inclement weather or low bridges, whereby it is necessary to close the Sun Deck. Please listen carefully to the Captain and Crew for instruction. Please also note that the Sun Deck and its steps may become slippery if the weather is cool or dew forms.

## **TELEPHONE**

There is no phone on board for passenger use although arrangements can be made in the event of emergency.

## **VISITORS**

Visitors are not permitted aboard the vessel without the prior consent of the ship's senior staff. Please provide as much notice as possible to the senior staff so that the necessary arrangements can be made. The ship's operators reserve the right to deny boarding to any visitors.

## **WATER**

Complimentary water is available during breakfast, lunch and dinner. Bottled water is also available in your cabin and replenished daily.

## **WIFI**

Wi-Fi is not available on board.

## **PLEASE NOTE:**

*The above information is accurate and correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of publishing. Noble Caledonia accepts no responsibility for any errors or omissions and none of the facilities or features of the vessel described herein which are not specifically described in our advertisements and on your holiday invoice as being included in your holiday price will be deemed to be included in your holiday package. If you would like further information about the vessel or about any of your holiday arrangements, please do not hesitate to contact us.*

## [Video/Image Library](#)

Indian rhinoceros

Vishnath

Sunset on the Brahmaputra River

Golden Langur

Majuli Island

Assam Tea

Stork billed kingfisher

Kolkata  
Parbatia

## Tour Extensions

### Post-Cruise Bhutan extension

### Pre-Cruise Rajasthan Extension

#### **9th December to 16th December 2018; 3rd February to 10th February & 3rd March to 10th March 2019**

Join us after your cruise for an exploration of Bhutan – the ‘Land of the Thunder Dragon’ – nestled between India and the Tibetan Plateau in the heart of the Himalayas. Bhutan offers a fascinating insight into a Buddhist culture and this is a unique opportunity to explore this little-visited country, steeped in tradition with warm and hospitable people. Added to this, we will be surrounded by some of the most incredible scenery in the world; rugged snow-capped mountain ranges, the breathtaking Taktsang Monastery perched on a cliff-top and beautiful Himalayan landscapes dotted with colourful prayer flags.

Taktsang Dzong monastery

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[http://www.noble-caledonia.co.uk/thumb.php?source\\_type=editable\\_pages&source\\_info%5Bmedia\\_gallery\\_item\\_id%5D=73445&source\\_info%5Burl%5D=%2Fab%2F](http://www.noble-caledonia.co.uk/thumb.php?source_type=editable_pages&source_info%5Bmedia_gallery_item_id%5D=73445&source_info%5Burl%5D=%2Fab%2F)

**Day 1 Kolkata to Thimphu Valley, Bhutan.** After breakfast transfer to Kolkata Airport for your flight to Paro. On arrival at Paro airport, you will be met and transferred to Thimphu, the modern capital town of Bhutan and an exciting blend of tradition and modernity. Check-in to your hotel for a two night stay and visit both National Memorial Chorten, a monument to peace and prosperity, and the Buddha Dordenma statue, one of the largest Buddha rupas in the world.

**Day 2 Thimphu Valley.** Thimphu, perhaps the most unusual capital city in the world, is the seat of government. Today’s full day of sightseeing includes a visit to Thimphu’s National Library with its vast collection of Buddhist texts and manuscripts, the Institute of Traditional Medicine, Thimphu handicrafts emporium and the botanical gardens in Serbithang with its large display of flora, fauna, fruit orchids and Rhododendrons. In the evening, take a stroll along the town’s main street.

**Day 3 Punakha.** After an early breakfast depart for Punakha (three hours drive approximately). Drive up to Dochu-la pass (3,088 metres), stopping briefly to take in the view and admire the chortens, Mani walls, and prayer flags which decorate the highest point on the road. On arrival check-in to your hotel and then visit Punakha Dzong, built in 1637 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyel to serve as the religious and administrative centre of the region.

**Day 4 Punakha.** After breakfast, you will be taken to Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Temple (it is a 30 minute hike from the car park up to the Temple). Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten stands out on a beautiful ridge above the Punakha valley, built by Her Majesty the Queen Mother, Ashi Tshering Yangdon Wangchuck. It took nine years to build and Holy Scriptures rather than engineering manuals were consulted to construct this four-storey temple. It is a fine example of Bhutanese architecture and artistic traditions. In the afternoon, you may choose to visit Nalanda Monastery, a monastic school shrouded in history and intrigue.

**Day 5 Paro.** This morning we set off early for Paro (four hours drive approximately) through beautiful valleys that encapsulate Bhutan's rich culture, scenic landscape, myths and legends. Following lunch at a local restaurant we visit the National Museum with its intriguing collection of artefacts reflecting the Kingdom's heritage. We then head to Rinpung Dzong (Paro Dzong) situated at a commanding height overlooking Paro valley. Check-in to your hotel for a two night stay and this evening we will visit a traditional farmhouse.

**Day 6 Paro.** In the morning, take an excursion to Taktsang Monastery, also known as Tiger's Nest. The walk to the nest is relatively steep, however the Monastery itself and the views from its walls are simply breathtaking. In the afternoon visit Drukgyel Dzong before returning to our hotel for dinner.

**Day 7 Paro to Kolkata to London.** After an early breakfast transfer to the airport for your flight to Kolkata where day use rooms will be available at a hotel until our afternoon transfer back to the airport for the scheduled indirect flight to London.

**Day 8 London.** Arrive this morning.

Prices per person based on double occupancy

Category	Price
Twin	£2695
Single	£3995

**Price Includes:** Return air travel between Kolkata and Paro, six nights hotel accommodation in Bhutan on full board basis, day room in Kolkata with lunch provided, excursions, Tour Manager, local guides, gratuities, Bhutan visa fee, tourism fee.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance.

***NB.** Minimum numbers are required for this extension to operate. Please note that the high altitude of this tour may affect some travellers and so you are advised to seek medical advice before booking. A good level of physical fitness will be required for the excursion to Taktsang Monastery (although horses can be hired to take you up part of the way).*

### **16th to 25th November 2018; 11th January to 20th January**

Our exploration of India's largest state, Rajasthan, will take you back to a time when rulers displayed their power and wealth by erecting extraordinary monuments, buildings and temples so magnificent in stature that they remain, even today, some of the most beautiful and awe-inspiring ever constructed. The literal Hindu translation of the name 'Rajasthan' equates to 'land of the kings', and our carefully selected luxury hotels and array of sights and sounds on offer will indeed give you a taste of what it must have been like to be a Maharaja or Maharani purveying this most enchanting, colourful and vibrant region of India.

The Amber Fort, Jaipur

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[http://www.noble-caledonia.co.uk/thumb.php?source\\_type=editable\\_pages&source\\_info%5Bmedia\\_gallery\\_item\\_id%5D=73441&source\\_info%5Burl%5D=%2Fab%2F](http://www.noble-caledonia.co.uk/thumb.php?source_type=editable_pages&source_info%5Bmedia_gallery_item_id%5D=73441&source_info%5Burl%5D=%2Fab%2F)

**Day 1 London to Udaipur, Rajasthan, India.** Fly by scheduled (indirect) flight from London to Udaipur.

**Day 2 Udaipur.** Arrive in the early afternoon and transfer to the Taj Lake Palace hotel for a 2 night stay. Following lunch at the hotel we will enjoy a relaxing walk around a major garden complex within Udaipur whilst also taking time to see Jagdish Temple, one of the most major monuments of Udaipur. Dinner will be at our hotel this evening.

**Day 3 Udaipur.** This morning's exploration commences with a visit to City Palace which was built over a period of 400 years and includes architectural contributions from several rulers of the Mewar dynasty. Following a traditional Rajasthani meal, we will visit the Heritage Transport Museum, housing an eccentric and fascinating display of automobiles and memorabilia, before enjoying a boat ride of Lake Pichola and returning to our hotel for dinner.

**Day 4 Udaipur to Deogarh.** On finishing breakfast at our hotel, we will drive to Deogarh (approximately 3 hours) visiting Ranakpur Temple en route. This Jain Temple, built in the 15th century and taking approximately 50 years to build, is a wonder to behold, amongst its splendour being 1444 carved pillars, no two being the same. We will then relax for lunch in a local restaurant, before arriving into Deogarh, a small town known for its luxurious resorts and strong associations to the ruling and royal Indian families. After check in at our hotel we will enjoy a leisurely stroll around the town before enjoying dinner back at our hotel.

**Day 5 Deogarh to Jodhpur.** After breakfast and check-out, we will drive to Jodhpur (approximately 4 hours), where upon arrival and check in to our hotel, we will enjoy lunch. This afternoon, we will explore Mehrangarh Fort, being one of the largest forts in the whole of India, perching 400 feet above Jodhpur and housing a number of palaces with intricate carvings and lavish courtyards behind its thick walls.

**Day 6 Jodhpur.** This morning awake and head off by jeep to Bishnoi Village where we will be able to sample rural life in Rajasthan and see local people working in traditional textile industries. This afternoon will be at leisure for you to relax and explore independently. Both lunch and dinner will be at our hotel today.

**Day 7 Jodhpur to Jaipur.** Following breakfast at our hotel, we drive to Jaipur (approximately 6 hours) with lunch en route. Following our arrival and check in at our hotel, we will visit City Palace and then the Jaipur observatory, showcasing a collection of architectural astronomical instruments. This evening witness an Aarti ceremony followed by dinner at our hotel.

**Day 8 Jaipur to Delhi.** This morning we will head-out by jeep to the magnificent Amber Fort, which, being perched high on a hill, commands a dominant view over Amer town and Maota lake. The fort is known for its blend of Hindu and Rajput styles and being over 400 years in age, is steeped in history. We then visit Hawa Mahal, a 200 year old iconic honeycomb structure of 953 windows built so women could observe the street festivals occurring below them that they themselves were not permitted to attend. Following lunch, we will drive to Delhi (approximately 6 hours) where we shall check in to our luxurious hotel for a 2 night stay. Dinner will be at the hotel this evening.

**Day 9 Delhi.** Following breakfast, enjoy a morning city tour taking in sights such as, India Gate, Qutub Minar, being the tallest brick minaret in the world, and Humayun's Tomb, an architecturally stunning monument, UNESCO World Heritage site and seen by many as the inspiration for the Taj Mahal. After lunch in a local restaurant we will continue our exploration of Delhi visiting Jama Masjid, one of the largest mosques in India, Gandhi's cremation site and enjoy a rickshaw ride through one of the oldest markets in India's capital city. We will dinner and overnight back at the hotel this evening.

**Day 10 Delhi to Guwahati, Assam.** After breakfast at our hotel we will transfer to Delhi airport for our flight to Guwahati and embarkation aboard the RV Mahabaahu (day 5 of the 'basic' holiday programme).

Prices per person based on double occupancy

Category	Price
Twin	£2995

Category	Price
Single	£4795

**Price Includes:** Eight nights hotel accommodation as described (or similar) on full board basis, flight from Delhi to Guwahati, excursions as described, Tour Manager, local guides, gratuities.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, camera fees. NB. Minimum numbers are required for this extension to operate.

## River Guides

### Brahmaputra

To see our current selection of tours for the river Brahmaputra [click here](#).

Image not found

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### Brahmaputra

The Brahmaputra flows 2900km (1800 miles) from its source, the Chemayungdung Glacier, in the Himalayas to meet the Ganges and thence to the Bay of Bengal. It passes through several countries and changes its name along the way. In Tibet it is the Tsangpo (“the Purifier”) and its Chinese name is Yarlung Zangbo. There are a number of tributaries that join the river close to its source including the Lhasa (Kyi) that flows past the Tibetan capital, Lhasa.

While still in Tibet the river passes through deep gorges (the walls 16,500 ft, 5,000m high at some points) and then into Assam in India where in the rainy season it can be up to five miles wide and there can be major floods when the Himalayan snows melt from June to October. It flows on through Bangladesh (as the Jamuna) and it is



only around 900 miles (1450km) before its end that the river is called Brahmaputra (“Son of Brahma”) a rare masculine river name in India where mostly they are feminine. The stretch that is navigable by cruise ship is around the Assam region of India. This is best known for its tea growing but there are other crops too as well as wild hilly countryside, national parks with elephants and rhinos, beaches, jungles, rural villages and an abundance of wild life.

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