

ASSAM & THE MIGHTY BRAHMAPUTRA

26 FEBRUARY - 13 MARCH 2027



FROM
£5,470
PER PERSON

Tour Leader: Bridget Wheeler


The Ultimate
TRAVEL COMPANY

Our journey starts in Kolkata (Calcutta), built by the British some 300 years ago and where we explore their widespread architectural legacy. As well as seeing the Victoria Memorial and the Botanical Gardens we will walk through Dalhousie Square which is characterised by period architecture including the Governor's Residence and St. John's Church.

From Kolkata we fly northeast to Assam for our cruise on the mighty Brahmaputra. Rising in western Tibet, the Brahmaputra charts a course east across the Plateau, south through the Himalaya, emerging from the mountains in Arunachal Pradesh, India's most north-easterly state. It flows through the heart of Assam, a mystic land of rolling blue hills and dense forests that are rich in flora and fauna.

We cruise the Brahmaputra for twelve memorable days, exploring the villages that line its banks, meeting the Assamese people who have had little or no contact with the outside world, and enjoying the wonderful peace and beauty of the river.

Rich in wildlife, we will visit the Hoolongapar Gibbon Sanctuary, where India's only ape – the elusive Hoolock Gibbon – swings through the ancient forest canopy, and we will also safari through both Kaziranga and Manas National Parks, both World Heritage Site and sanctuaries to the Indian 'big four' - tiger, one-horned rhino, buffalo and elephant - as well as a rich diversity of birdlife.





16-DAY ITINERARY, DEPARTING 26 FEBRUARY 2027

26 February London / Dubai

Suggested flights (not included in the cost of the tour) with Emirates via Dubai departing London Heathrow at 14.20 hrs.

27 February Dubai / Kolkata

On arrival, transfer to the Taj Bengal Hotel, a landmark hotel located in the Alipore neighbourhood, a short walk from the iconic Victoria Memorial, where one night is spent.

Lunch at the hotel. Leave on a walking tour of the heart of British Kolkata, Dalhousie Square taking in the classical Post Office, site of the notorious Black Hole, past the Writers' Building built in 1780 and resurfaced in 1880 and St. Andrew's Kirk. Move on to view the exterior of Government House, seat of the Viceroys, a building based on Kedleston Hall, and past the old Town Hall. Visit St. John's Church modelled on St. Martin's in the Fields and designed by James Agg stuffed with fascinating tombs both within and without. Continue to the famous white marble Victoria Memorial, designed by Sir William Emerson in 1921. It has an excellent display on the history of the city and a gallery of pictures by British artists, such as Zoffany, who came to India. Explore Kumartuli, a potters quarter in North

Kolkata famous for sculpting Indian Gods and Goddesses out of clay for different festivals in West Bengal throughout the year. Welcome drinks and dinner at the hotel.

28 February Kolkata / Jorhat

Early morning transfer to Kolkata Airport for a domestic flight to Jorhat. Transfer to board the MV Mahabaahu, where 12 nights are spent on a full-board basis. Lunch on board. Afternoon at leisure. Afternoon orientation talk. Welcome dinner on board.

1 March Hollongapar

Early morning departure for the Hollongapar Gibbon Sanctuary; home to the only Ape in India – the Hoolock Gibbon. The upper canopy of the forest is dominated by the Hoollong Tree, while the Nahar dominates the middle canopy. The lower canopy consists of evergreen shrubs and herbs. Walk through the thick evergreen forest with a naturalist. After a forest-side breakfast, step into the soul of Assam at a working tea factory, where you'll witness the journey of tea from leaf to cup.

Continue to a tranquil Buddhist Monastery, before heading to an authentic Assamese lunch hosted by a local planter's family. Wander

through rolling tea gardens, sip freshly brewed teas, and hear stories passed down over a century of tea cultivation. Return to the boat for dinner on board.

2 March Charaideo / Shivsagar

Morning talk on Shivsagar's rich heritage. Depart for Shivsagar and the serene royal burial grounds (a UNESCO World Heritage Site). Visit one of the tallest Shiva Temple in the country, The Shiva Dol, which was built by Queen Ambika in 1734. Continue to Moidams, the ancient burial mounds of the Ahom royalty and aristocracy.

Return to Shivsagar for lunch at a local restaurant. Visit the monuments of Talatal Ghar, which are the remains of a royal palace, and then Rang Ghar, a place where the royals held meetings and watched performances. Return to the ship for dinner.





3 March Majuli / Neamati Ghat

Early morning walk at Neamati Ghat to watch the village come to life. Disembark to visit the island of Majuli; the largest inhabited river-island of the world. Enjoy some Satriya and folk performances as well as the mask-making and pottery which are famous art forms of Majuli culture. Look out for Open-billed Storks nesting all over Majuli and Adjutant Storks, Whistling Ducks, Bar-headed Geese and Weaver Birds are spotted easily.

Enjoy a traditional Majuli lunch. Explore the local bazaar before returning to the ship for a bonfire and drinks on a deserted island and dinner on board.

4 March Eastern Kaziranga

Optional morning yoga on a deserted river island. Visit the Mishing dwellings on non-permanent islands that are at the mercy of the river Brahmaputra. We visit some Mishing Chang Ghars (homes), built on bamboo scaffolding with bamboo mats for floor, walls and roof. Mishing villagers have a unique culture of weaving ethnic colourful designs with home spun and home dyed cotton threads. They use the space under the bamboo scaffolding of their homes for weaving.

Return to the ship for lunch on board. Sail towards the Eastern Range of Kaziranga. Afternoon boat safari to explore the shores of Agoratoli and observe how the river carves Kaziranga each year. Look out for a water buffalo suddenly pulling itself

out of the water or an elephant family coming down to quench their thirst. Dinner on board.

5 March Bishwanath Ghat / Silghat

This morning, leave for Bishwanath Ghat, a sub-urban village on the banks of the Brahmaputra. This is sprinkled with temples and is a cosmos of weavers, fishermen, farmers, boat makers. A Shiva Dol (temple) from the times of Ahoms looms over and a promenade along the outcrop of rocks and swinging country boats add beauty to the area.

Lunch on board. Depart for a local Jute Mill, a co-operative with a focus on sustainability and community spirit. Stroll through a nearby tea estate, watching skilled women handpick leaves that will soon become Assam's world-renowned brew. Witness the transformation in the tea factory. Watch a Bihu performance Assam's vibrant folk dance performed by local youth. Return to the boat for dinner on board.

6 March Kaziranga National Park

Early morning departure to Kaziranga National Park for an elephant safari to watch the wilderness awaken — swamp and hog deer, wild buffaloes, and one-horned rhinos grazing peacefully in the grass, just yards away. After breakfast, board the Jungle Jeeps for our safari at the Western Range. Keep your eyes peeled for Asiatic elephants, water buffalo with majestic horn spans, and the elusive tiger.

Return to the ship for lunch on board

and some time at leisure as you sail downstream past sleepy villages.

Enjoy a cultural evening as you don the traditional Mekhla Chadar or Dhoti Kurta, enjoy freshly caught Assamese fried fish, and lose yourself in the rhythm of Ahomiya music and dance, followed by a full Assamese dinner.

7 March Gualpara Jetty

Optional early morning yoga on the sun deck. Morning talks on Manas National Park and Sikhism.

Lunch on board. Afternoon at leisure as the river begins to narrow and you sail past Peacock Island, the world's smallest inhabited river island. Dinner on board.

8 March Dhubri

This morning, we sail upstream to Dhubri where we walk to the Gurudwara (the Sikh temple) which is located close to the bank of Brahmaputra. Today, we will learn about the Sikh religion, the world's fifth-largest religion. Visit Gurudwara "A place of worship", where the community gathers to participate in devotional activity that typically includes recitation (path) of scripture, singing of scripture to musical accompaniment (kirtan), and its exegesis (katha). At the Gurudwara, we are warmly welcomed by the local community and join in the spiritual experience of Shabad, Kirtan, and Ardas before partaking in a traditional Langar (community meal).

Partake in a traditional Langar (community meal). Return to the boat for dinner on board.



9 March Manas National Park

Early morning departure for Manas National Park, known for its rare and endangered endemic wildlife such as the Assam Roofed Turtle, Hispid Hare, Golden Langur and the only known population of Pygmy Hogs in the world. Manas is famous for its population of the Wild Water Buffalo. Enjoy an elephant safari through the grasslands and sal forests of the Bansbari Range. After breakfast, enjoy a jeep safari flanked by the Bhutan Hills where the Manas and Beki Rivers crisscross through the valley. Manas proudly holds seven major conservation designations — including Tiger Reserve, Biosphere Reserve, Elephant Reserve, and Bird Sanctuary — making it one of the most ecologically diverse landscapes in all of India.

Lunch at a local restaurant. Enjoy a traditional Bodo tribal performance before venturing out again in the jeeps to explore a different route through the Bansbari Range. Return to the ship for dinner on board.

10 March Sualkuchi

Depart for Sualkuchi where we are received by the tribals with a lot of pomp and show. Explore the Sualkuchi Weavers' Village located on the northern banks of the Brahmaputra. It is endearingly referred to as the "Manchester of Assam" due to the vast number of cottage industries there that are involved in handloom. The quality of the Muga and Pat silks, as well as the Eri silk and Endi cloth from this area, is well known. We take an e-rickshaw to the silk processing and weaving area for an insight into all that goes into silk production.

Return to the boat for lunch on board. Afternoon at leisure as you sail towards Guwahati. Dinner on board.

11 March Guwahati

Morning yoga and talk on Guwahati. Visit the Kamakhya Temple, perched atop Nilachal Hill. Revered across India, this ancient temple is a potent symbol of feminine power, devotion, and mysticism. Observe the devotees offering prayers to Kamakhya Devi,

the Goddess of Desire.

Enjoy an intimate home-hosted lunch with a local Assamese family. Share in the warmth of their hospitality as you discover traditional recipes, savour authentic home-cooked dishes, and enjoy heartfelt conversations that offer a true taste of Assamese life. Explore the local market before returning to the boat for Chef's Farewell Dinner – Alvida Bhoj.

12 March Guwahati / Kolkata

Transfer to Guwahati Airport for a domestic flight to Kolkata.

Lunch under own arrangements. On arrival in Kolkata, transfer to the Taj City Centre Hotel, a 5-star hotel a short drive from the airport, where one night is spent. Dinner under own arrangements.

13 March Kolkata / Delhi / London

Transfer to Kolkata Airport for suggested Emirates flight via Dubai departing Kolkata at 09.45 hrs arriving London Heathrow at 20.15 hrs (not included in the cost of the tour)

M.V MAHABAAHU FACT SHEET



The MV Mahabaahu cruise ship has been rated by the Travelinsider Magazine of Qantas Australian Airlines as being one of the Top Ten River Cruise Ships of the World and the overall cruise experience on the Brahmaputra River has been rated as one of Top Fifty Adventure Experiences of the World by the Sunday Times of UK.

It is a 23 cabin ship with four categories, a swimming pool, a boutique SPA, a passenger elevator through four of the five decks, a restaurant, lounge, bar and a small open gym. The ship is a class certified vessel, operates with three engines and is a double bottom.

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES ON BOARD INCLUDE:

- A well-stocked library
- Various board games
- Swimming pool on the first deck
- Spa and salon on the lower deck
- Sun deck

THE SHIP'S COMPLEMENT CONSISTS OF 30 STAFF INCLUDING:

- Captain/Master
- Cruise Director
- Marine Engineer
- Guide/Naturalist
- Hospitality Manager
- Navigational Crew
- Hospitality Crew

The chefs devise local/Indian and Continental cuisine menus using locally sourced ingredients. All meals inclusive of tea and coffee served in the main indoor dining restaurant. Given advance notice, all dietary requirements can be catered for, along with the guest preferred alcoholic beverages.

Imported alcoholic beverages, laundry, massages, salon and phone calls/internet (when available): are extra and subject to additional charges.

ACCOMMODATION

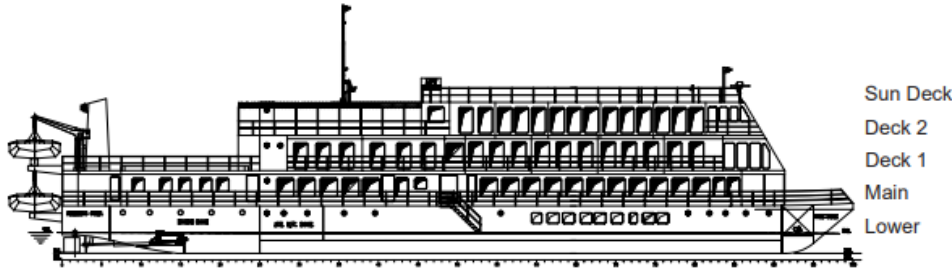
All cabins incorporate satellite TV, personal safe, mini bar, in-house telephone and en-suite bathrooms. All the cabins and the restaurant/lounge are centrally air-conditioned.

There are 23 aesthetically designed twin and double cabins as below:

- 2 Suites with balcony - 283.2 sq ft (includes the cabin, bathroom and balcony)
- 2 Luxury cabins with Juliet balcony - 230 sq. ft (includes the cabin, bathroom and balcony)
- 7 Deluxe cabins with Juliet balcony - 206 sq. ft (includes the cabin, bathroom and balcony)
- 12 Superior cabins without balcony - 150 sq.ft. (includes the cabin and bathroom)



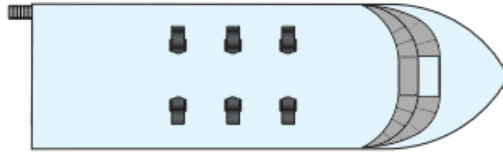
M.V. Mahabaahu Deck Plan



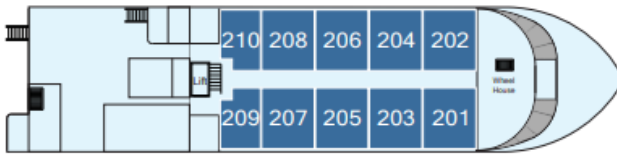
Sun Deck
Deck 2
Deck 1
Main
Lower

Cabins

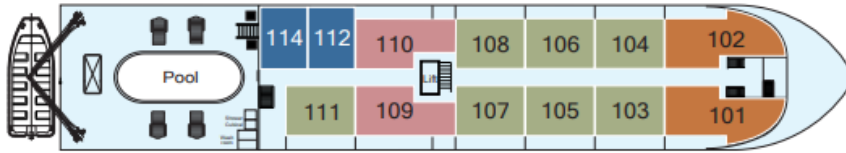
- 2 Suites with private balcony
- 2 Luxury with private balcony
- 7 Deluxe with private balcony
- 12 Superior without balcony



Sun Deck



Deck II



Deck I



Main Deck



Lower Deck

TOUR PRICES PER PERSON

Superior without balcony	£5,470
Deluxe with balcony	£6,270
Luxury with balcony	£6,870
Suite with balcony	£7,970
Superior single supplement	£1,765
Deluxe single supplement	£2,165

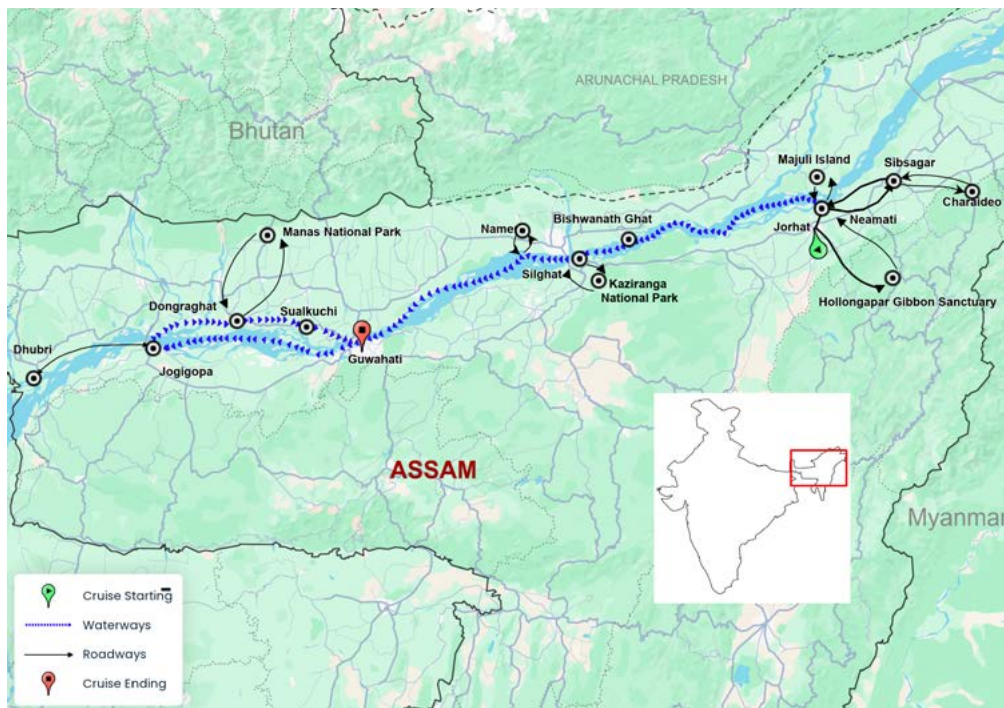
Please note we have not included the cost of the flights in the tour price. Please contact us for prices should you wish to book them through us.

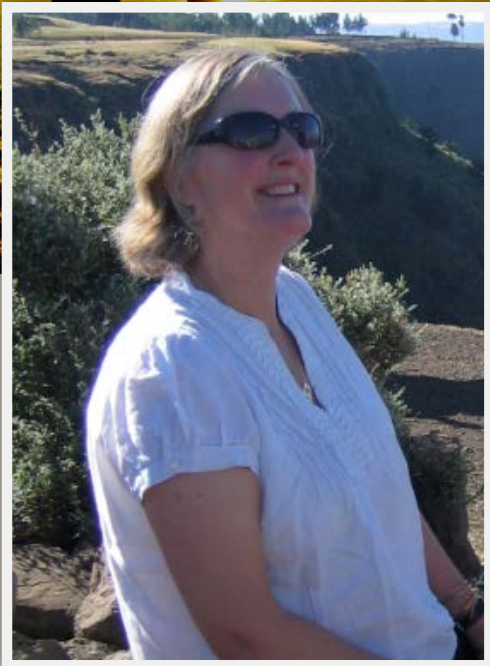
PRICE INCLUDES

- Accommodation throughout as shown in the itinerary
- All meals on board the MV Mahabaahu
- Lunch and dinner at the Taj Bengal Hotel on 27 February
- All entrance fees, visits and excursions as per the itinerary
- Soft drinks and tea / coffee
- All transportation as detailed in the itinerary
- Local English-speaking guide/s
- Gratuities to driver/s; gratuities to guide/s; gratuities in restaurants; portorage
- The services of your tour leader throughout
- Domestic flights as shown in the itinerary (including 10kg excess baggage per person)

PRICE EXCLUDES

- Alcoholic drinks
- International flights
- Travel insurance
- Items of personal expenditure (e.g. telephone calls / laundry etc.)
- Visa fees
- Government levies or taxes introduced after costing and publication of this programme on 29/10/2025





YOUR TOUR LEADER

Bridget Wheeler

Bridget has worked in the travel industry for 35 years. After obtaining a degree from London University she started her career at Montpelier Travel before setting up Riverside Travel in the late 1990s, which then amalgamated with The Ultimate Travel Company in the early 2000s. She now divides her time between her office in Hampshire and The Ultimate Travel Company in Fulham. She has travelled extensively and has led numerous groups to various diverse destinations including Ethiopia, Cuba, Jordan, the Baltic States and Georgia.

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