



PANDAW RIVER CRUISES  
INDIA  
SEPTEMBER 2009 INAUGURATION





## Slowly on the Ganges

Join us as we venture eight hundred miles along India's most holy of rivers on a journey from the mighty metropolis of Calcutta to the soaring temples of Varanasi. No river in the world plays a more important cultural, economic or social role in the lives of more people than the Ganges. The spiritual heart of Hinduism, the Ganges is strewn with cities, pilgrimage sites, mountains and forests.

A Pandaw river journey allows the traveller to slowly absorb the sights and everyday life that is just not possible by any other means of travel. This is particularly true of the Ganges; its banks offer an ever-changing colourful scene and a fascinating glimpse of India, from the enchanting rural landscapes to the bustling towns and cities.

Anyone who travels regularly to India will tell you that moving around on land can often be frustratingly slow. Our journey aboard the *RV Bengal Pandaw* alleviates much of this stress as so much of what we will see and do can be approached from the banks of the river.

Romantic notions and modern travel are often a difficult marriage. A Ganges river journey is one of the few trips that still can inspire. Whether you are watching a torrent of pilgrims or holy men wading into the river. Reflecting on the history of the Raj, and its ever present monuments, or simply observing fishermen and locals going about their business in their tiny boats, the Ganges cannot fail to be a genuinely moving experience.

We offer extensions before and after your cruise including two nights in Delhi with a day excursion to Agra to see the Taj Mahal.

## UPSTREAM ITINERARY

- Day 1:** **Calcutta** - now called Kolkotta, transfer from airport to embark on the *RV Bengal Pandaw* moored in the Hugli River close to the city centre. City orientation tour in afternoon; moor overnight at the Outram Ghat
- Day 2:** **Calcutta** - further explorations of colonial Calcutta, arguably the greatest of the British Raj cities with a stupendous architectural heritage. Still largely intact, highlights include the Queen Victoria monument and neo-gothic law courts. Cast off at midday and cruise the Hugli River to Serampore, a former Danish colony, and Barrackpore cantonment where the garden's of Flagstaff House contain a collection of former British statues removed from the streets of Calcutta.
- Day 3:** **Chandernagore** - a French colony until 1950, we visit the house of Dupleix, a small museum, an 18th century church and then on by bus to visit the Dutch cemetery at Chinsura and a Portuguese church at Bandel where we rejoin the ship.
- Day 4:** **Kalna** - cycle rickshaw tour of Bengali terracotta temples. The river here narrows and the Bengal countryside is lush and green.
- Day 5:** **Plassey** - visit the battlefield of where Clive of India defeated the French in 1757. Continue to the fascinating brassworks at country village of Metiari.
- Day 6:** **Kushbagh** - with its Moghul gardens and tombs. Visit the vast Hazarduari Palace built in 1837 by an English architect. Further visits to the Katra mosque, and the late 18th century Nashipara and Katgola palaces. Overnight at Baranagar famous for its lovely miniature temples.
- Day 7:** **Farraka** - pass through the narrow Farraka Feeder Canal and enter the Ganges by lock at the Farraka Barrage. Continue up the Ganges entering Bihar State.
- Day 8:** **Munger** - Here the river is 2km across and vast panoramas unfold. The river is rich in activity with fishermen and country boats. At Munger we stop to visit the Bihar School of Yoga which lies within the 15th century Munger Fort. Near the fort is an 18th century British cemetery.
- Day 9:** **Bihar State** - cruising through the heart of Bihar state seeing a rural India remote from the tourist track and rarely visited by foreigners. Stop for a walk ashore.
- Day 10:** **Nalanda** - day trip to the ruins of the vast Buddhist university at Nalanda (7th-10th C). Then on after lunch in a local hotel to Bodh Gaya place of the Buddha's enlightenment and a major centre of pilgrimage for Buddhists of all sects from all countries.
- Day 11:** **Patna** - explore the town with its huge hemispherical Golghar grain silo built in 1786 by Captain John Garstin, the State Museum with its Mauryan and Pala period Buddhist sculptures, and if traffic permits, the eclectic Jan Museum where Napoleon's bed is on display. Cast off at mid day.
- Day 12:** Cruise all day with a village stop for a walk.
- Day 13:** **Sarnath** - cruising all morning and cross into Uttar Pradesh, in the afternoon we make a short coach trip to visit the important Buddhist site of Sarnath, with its Gupta Period monuments commemorating the site of the Buddha's First Sermon. We will visit the excellent Archaeological Survey of India museum here with its staggering collection of Gupta sculptures.
- Day 14:** **Varanasi** - early morning moor off the Varanasi (Benares) ghats. Explore on foot the ghats, palaces, temples and museums of this one of the oldest cities in the world. Varanasi contemporary with 7th century BC Babylon and Nineveh, is the cultural heart of Hindu India at its richest and most beautiful. Evening boat trip to observe the spectacular ritual fire dances to Lord Shiva held on the ghats.
- Day 15:** disembark from ship at Varanasi (Benares) and transfer (included) to airport or railway station.

Downstream in reverse



## THE RV BENGAL PANDAW

Formerly *Pandaw IV* and built in Myanmar in 2004, this delightful ship has 28 outside staterooms (each 170 square feet) over two decks. All rooms are air-conditioned with individual controls and have fitted windows with insect screens. There is also a mini-safe in each room. The bathrooms, for a ship of this size, are roomy with granite basin tops and finished like the staterooms in rich brass and teak.

## PANDAW DINING

Executive chefs have evolved a fusion cuisine combining the best of Asian and Western traditions onboard. Where possible, produce is sourced locally and there will be a choice of Indian, European or vegetarian. Fine dining, excellent service and a hospitable caring management team all help to make a Pandaw experience something very special. The staff to guest ratio is high, ensuring an excellent level of service and care.

## PANDAW STYLE

There are no hidden extras on a Pandaw cruise such as additional charges for unscheduled sightseeing trips; complimentary coffee and tea are available all day on the sun deck and mineral water is not charged for. Nothing on a Pandaw cruise is compulsory. Passengers are welcome to join the escorted shore excursions, do their own thing or just stay onboard. Though there is space for those who seek silence, a Pandaw cruise can also be a convivial experience with a group of like-minded travellers exploring a little known area in the charming and historic atmosphere of a Pandaw.

## COSTS PER PERSON FOR A 14 NIGHT/15 DAY CRUISE

Maiden Voyages USD3,995 per person sharing a main deck cabin  
Scheduled Voyages USD4,995 per person sharing a main deck cabin

## SCHEDULE

Twice a month from October to March – once downstream and once upstream.  
Exact dates online at [www.pandaw.com](http://www.pandaw.com)

## PRE AND POST CRUISE EXTENSIONS

Online we offer online a two night stay at the the Taj Mahal Hotel in Delhi which includes Delhi sight seeing a full day excursion by rail to Agra. You can also book an extra night before or after your cruise in Calcutta. From Calcutta we highly recommend a trip to Darjeeling, a delightful former British hill station with its famous 'toy train' mountain railway.

## SECURITY

Whilst carrying out our various reconnaissance visits Bihar state we found everyone we met delightful and very friendly. We are assured by the authorities of all necessary protection whilst cruising through Bihari waters.

## FLIGHT CONNECTIONS

Both Delhi and Calcutta have direct flights to and from Europe or via Dubai with Emirates. Recommended domestic airlines are Kingfisher and Jet Airways, both of which offer a service second to none and have international flights to London.

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