



**Pandaw Cruises**

**EXPEDITION No 41**

# **NAGALAND'S HORNBILL FESTIVAL AND BRAHMAPUTRA EXPEDITION**

**16 NIGHTS**

Nagaland is known as the land of festivals and each December, the Hornbill Festival takes place in Kohima uniting the various Naga tribes for a yearly celebration of the culture and traditions of the region. Famed for its fierce and distinct Naga Warriors, Nagaland is a must-see for travellers in India's North East and for the first time Pandaw is offering a guided tour of this unique annual celebration, combined with a 10 night expedition along the mighty Brahmaputra River.

This special one-off departure sails in December and is the perfect way to experience the once-in-a-lifetime festival and experience North East India with Pandaw.

This is a group tour exploring the Hornbill Festival across multiple days followed by a 10-night Brahmaputra expedition. Transportation to and from the festival site and excursions each day are provided as a group by coach or car but our local guides and vehicles will be on hand to support those who wish to return early. This is a flexible tour which may change depending on specific festival activities at time of visit or group consensus.

**YOUR SHIP - [RV KINDAT PANDAW](#)**

## **[MORE IMAGES OF THE RV KINDAT PANDAW](#)**

**Cruise Price Includes:** Land - Hotels and meals off ship as noted. Entrance to the Hornbill Festival, transfers and expert guides. 1-way 2nd class train ticket from Dimapur to Guwahati, all taxes and fees. Onboard - Meals onboard your ship from lunch on embarkation to breakfast before disembarkation, transfer to/from Ship, entrance fees, guide services (English language), gratuities to crew, main meals, local mineral water, jugged coffee, teas & tisanes plus our India complimentary drinks package.

**Cruise Price Excludes:** Land - Flights, laundry, Indian visa costs, meals and drinks not noted on the itinerary, Insurance, personal expenses, tipping for guides and service providers, any special phot/video permits required. Onboard - fuel surcharges (see terms and conditions), all beverages except local mineral water, jugged coffee, teas & tisanes, tipping for cruise guide and drivers.

**Note:** We suggest to change money at a bank at the international airport before exiting.

Hotels offered in Kohima will be booked based on availability due to high demand during the festival. All guests may not be staying in the same hotel. If you have any special requests for your hotel please inform us at time of booking and note these may not be possible due to the festival. La Colline Resort Kohima or Similar.

# UPSTREAM ITINERARY

---

## DAY 1

### ARRIVAL KOHIMA

---

Arrive at Dimapur Airport or train station on your own arrangements, if you require assistance getting to Dimapur, we can assist with this also. Upon arrival you will be greeted by your guide and transferred to Kohima by coach with the group. Rest of the evening at leisure or join our expert guide who will give a talk on the Battles of Kohima and Imphal of the WWII's Burma Campaign in the evening with welcome dinner.

Overnight in Kohima

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

---

**DAY 2**

## **KISAMA HERITAGE VILLAGE**

---

The first part of today's tour will give you an introduction to Nagaland and its people through a guided tour of Kohima town. Some of the places to visit include Kohima village, Nagaland State Museum and the Kohima War Cemetery, one of the most iconic WWII battlefields in the world also known as the 'Stalingrad of the east'. Post lunch in Kohima, you will be driven to Kisama Heritage Village – the main venue of the Hornbill Festival. Experience all the vibrant activities in this 'festival of festivals' where our expert guide will show you around the venue and the festivities. Once you have had your fill, our vehicles will be on hand to take you back to your hotel for the evening.

Overnight in Kohima

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

---

**DAY 3****KIGWEMA AND NIGHT CARNIVAL**

---

After breakfast, prepare yourself to spend the day at the festival venue. There is never a dull moment at the venue of the Hornbill Festival with dances, music, food, drinks, different people from several tribes with their colorful attires, traditional sports and many other exciting things. Try out the traditional Naga food items for lunch and if you are interested, visit the neighbouring Angami village of Kigwema which has a rich heritage. After taking some rest in your hotel at Kohima, our group returns to visit the bustling Night Carnival in the town where we try out another set of local food items for dinner or if preferred, relax at the hotel.

Overnight in Kohima

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

---

**DAY 4****KHONOMA GREEN VILLAGE**

---

After breakfast, you will be taken to Kisama Heritage Village to enjoy the Hornbill festival again. Each day is a different experience during the festival and you can enjoy the colorful dances and several traditional games performed by members of various tribes. In the afternoon we venture away from the main festival and visit Khonoma, also known as 'India's first green village', and an important home of the Angami tribe. On reaching this village which is full of history, you will be able to see the Naga age-group houses (Morungs), forts, ceremonial gates and the Angami way of living through an engaging village walk. We return to Kohima and if time permits, stop by Maj. General John Grover's memorial in Jotsoma village. You can visit the Night Carnival again today, if interested.

Overnight in Kohima

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

---

**DAY 5****MOUNT PULIEBADZE**

---

A late start today, after breakfast, for a short hike to Mt. Puliebadze (2300 m) just outside Kohima. This is a moderate trek between 1 to 2 hours, depending on one's fitness. While walking up Mt. Puliebadze, one can imagine the much harder climb embarked upon by the allied soldiers looking to rout the Japanese upon Aradura Spur during the battle of Kohima in the WWII. A hike on the legendary Mt. Puliebadze is always a good way to connect with nature and you will also get to enjoy spectacular views over Kohima and the surroundings from the peak. A picnic lunch will be arranged at the base of Puliebadze. For those not up for a hike, a visit to the local market can be arranged. In the afternoon we depart Kohima and drive to Dimapur for our last overnight in Nagaland.

Overnight in Dimapur

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

---

**DAY 6****DIMAPUR TO GUWAHATI**

---

After breakfast we check out and head to Dimapur train station for your train journey to Guwahati. No journey to India is complete without experiencing one of the most extensive rail networks in the world and this local train journey provides unrivalled views of this mountainous region. The group will travel together by local train with lunchbox provided for your journey to Guwahati. Upon arrival to Guwahati transfer to your hotel for the night and enjoy the evening at leisure.

Overnight in Taj Vivanta Hotel or similar

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

---

**DAY 7****EMBARK GUWAHATI**

---

Check out after breakfast and transfer to your Pandaw vessel via a visit to the 'Kama-khya Temple', devoted to the goddess of desire.

Set sail passing Peacock Island, famous for the endangered Golden Langur. Enjoy an evening welcome dinner and talk.



---

**DAY 8****MYSTICAL MAYANG**

---

Stepping ashore in Mayang, a sizeable village along the shores of the Brahmaputra, we learn about the history of magic and sorcery that was prevalent in the region. We visit the fascinating Mayang museum which explains how various mantras were used for anything from curing ailments to identifying a thief. We are then welcomed into the home of a local Mayang resident for a discussion and perhaps demonstration of some tricks.

---

**DAY 9****SUTARGAON RIVER VILLAGE**

---

Today we stop at a local village consisting of migrant populations that have settled and been provided with official status by the government. Their charming village is the perfect place to learn about life along such a dramatically changeable river.

---

**DAY 10****KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK**

---

Our expedition continues with a visit to the UNESCO accredited Kaziranga National Park where we enjoy a full day Jeep safari searching for Indian One-Horned Rhinos, Buffalos, Elephants plus a host of birdlife, including hornbills and kingfishers. Tiger spotting at Kaziranga is extremely rare despite having the highest density of tigers in the world.

---

**DAY 11****BISWANATH**

---

We sail upstream to Biswanath, a charming riverside village where we stop and explore. Of interest is the Bordol Temple, a brick built temple dedicated to Lord Shiva and built in the 1700s. Enjoy a walk through the village and along the riverfront before returning to your ship.

---

**DAY 12****TOWARDS MAJULI**

---

As we sail upstream toward Majuli, we visit a local village and learn about the Bihu culture. Our chef will entertain us in the afternoon with a cooking demonstration as we continue our sailing before we moor for the evening on a sandbank. Enjoy a special sandbank BBQ dinner with your crew and fellow travellers.

---

**DAY 13****MAJULI**

---

Arrive at the ancient town of Majuli on what is the world's largest river island and home to the ethnic 'Mishing' people. We explore the impressive Satras dating back to the 15th century and meet a family who have been making the famous masks of Majuli for over 150 years. After lunch ashore, we travel to Auniati monestary to witness a special drum performance from the monks.

---

**DAY 14****SAILING**

---

We take a morning stroll through a local village before casting off and sailing toward Nemati Ghat.

---

**DAY 15****JORHAT GIBBON SANCTUARY**

---

Travel 30 minutes from Nemati Ghat to Hoollongapar Gibbon Sanctuary, home to India's only ape and gibbon species, the Hoolock Gibbon as well as the Bengal Slow Loris. This protected area has been reserved for preservation since 1881 and is rich in biodiversity.

---

**DAY 16****SIBSAGAR**

---

We continue to Sibsagar, capital of the Tai-speaking Ahoms who came from Yunan and China in the 13th Century AD. Explore the Shiva Dol, built in 1734 it is the highest Shiva temple in India. We continue our exploration at the Royal Pavilion built by King Pramatta and said to be one of the oldest surviving amphitheatres in Asia.

---

**DAY 17**

## **DISEMBARK**

---

Disembark and transfer from Sibsagar to Dibrugarh for your onward flight. Journey time of 3 hours, except during high water situations where we will sail further and dock near Bogibeel bridge at Dibrugarh. We advise booking your flights for afternoon departure.

# STATEROOM

## The Pandaw stateroom is the most celebrated feature of our ships.

Finished in brass and teak, the main and upper deck rooms are very spacious at 168 square feet (15.6 sqm). Much loved by all our passengers we have ensured that with each ship we build the stateroom remains the same. Our cabins do not have mini-bars, satellite TV's, internet or phones. Pandaw passengers usually want to escape from the tiresome features found in international business hotels.

Many passengers describe life on board a Pandaw more like being a guest on a private motor yacht than a cruise ship. Where we go and what we see is intrepid in extreme. What you come back to is a floating base of discreet comfort, caring service and all the good things one looks for in life. All our cabins have the same size and Pandaw signature amenities. Choose from Main Deck, Upper Deck or Premium Upper Deck (Mekong only).

### **Special to Your Stateroom**

- Fruit and flowers on arrival
- Kimonos and slippers
- Spa-branded amenities
- Unlimited mineral water

# River Conditions Warning!

The rivers you will sail on are subject to seasonal rises and falls of water level, in some places as much as 30 metres. Water levels can change dramatically overnight and a sudden rise can impede our progress upstream considerably and even prevent us from passing under certain bridges. A sudden fall can result in our being unable to get into certain places or go as far upstream as we would hope. Groundings on sandbars are not infrequent and are part of the excitement of any Pandaw expedition. Published itineraries are indicational only and subject to sudden change. In such events alternative itineraries will be provided and we do our best to ensure that if a stop is missed we make up for it with another stop. Passengers are thus forewarned and expected to be flexible and patient. River cruising in Asia can be a dramatic and adventurous experience - not like cruising the controlled waterways of Europe or America. Note also that we operate in areas with little or no developed infrastructure and subject to the strictures of local officialdom. Be prepared for this and it is all more the fun!

## Useful Links

[Terms & Conditions](#)

[General Information & Life on Board](#)

[Visa Information](#)