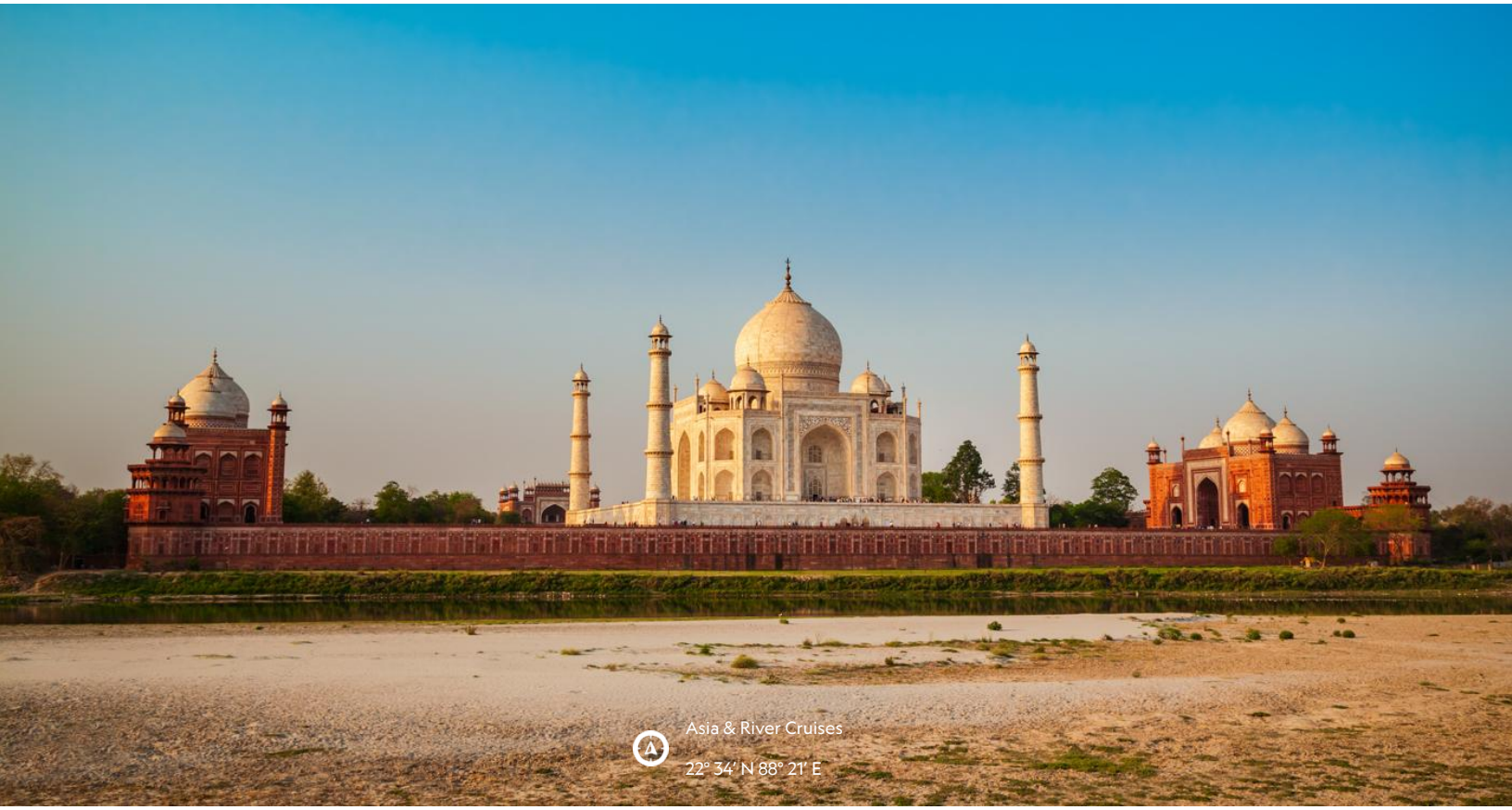


India by Land and River: Taj Mahal, Safaris and the Brahmaputra

Experience a diverse swath of India on a grand journey that pairs the country's most renowned attractions—Taj Mahal and Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve—with lesser-known treasures in Kolkata and the Brahmaputra River region. Venture out on jeep safaris to spot a parade of wildlife in two exceptional national parks. Visit ancient temples and monasteries, connect with welcoming Assamese people in remote riverside villages and learn what it takes to cultivate world-famous teas. As you explore by land, air and river aboard the intimate *Charaidew II*, you'll develop a richer understanding of this vast nation in its bustling cities and in seldom-visited regions where the natural world is on full display.

From
$ 24,500 / per person
Does not include flights

DATES Feb and Mar	**DURATION** 18 Days
SHIPS *Charaidew II*	
STARTS AT New Delhi, India →	**ENDS AT** Kolkata, India

Minimum Age Requirement: Any children booked on *Charaidew II* voyages must be at least 18 years old at time of embarkation.

Booking Deadline: Due to Bandhavgarh National Park permit request deadlines, bookings for this trip must be made at least 180 days prior to departure date. Guests can book the 11-day *India Expedition: Kolkata, Kaziranga and the Brahmaputra River* for requests within 180 days of departure. A passport is needed at the time of booking (valid 6 months after completion of the trip).

Highlights

- Experience four distinct regions of India in one comprehensive land and river cruise adventure: Bandhavgarh National Park, Agra, Kolkata and Assam
- Explore Agra Fort, Taj Mahal and Kaziranga National Park, three renowned UNESCO World Heritage sites
- Embark on jeep safaris through Bandhavgarh and Kaziranga National Parks to search for rare species like the Asian one-horned rhinoceros, Asian elephants and the elusive Royal Bengal tiger, along with abundant birdlife
- Enjoy the cultural treasures and rich history of Kolkata, including markets filled with artisans crafting intricate clay idols

New Delhi
Agra
NEPAL
BHUTAN
Kaziranga National Park
Guwahati
Bandhavgarh National Park
Jabalpur
Kolkata
INDIA
MYANMAR (BURA
mapbox
© Mapbox, © OpenStreetMap

Day by day

■ DAY 1

New Delhi, India

Arrive in New Delhi, the capital of India, and transfer to the Taj Mahal Hotel. Gather with your fellow travelers this evening for a welcome briefing, reception and dinner at the hotel.

Arrival Time: Arrive before 3:00p.m. local time.
Arrival City: New Delhi, India

Meals included: dinner

◇ DAY 2

Bandhavgarh National Park

In the morning, fly to Jabalpur on the recommended flight; transfers to the airport and luggage assistance will be provided. Upon arrival, drive to Bandhavgarh National Park to your luxury tented accommodations at the Oberoi Vindhyavilas Wildlife Resort. Enjoy dinner at the resort.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAYS 3-4

Bandhavgarh National Park

Enjoy morning and afternoon jeep safaris through Bandhavgarh National Park, which offer chances of spotting tigers, leopards, wild boar and more than 250 species of birds, including the vibrant green bee-eater. Though sightings are not guaranteed, the park boasts a high density of Royal Bengal tigers. Its varying topography and relatively small size create the perfect habitat for these majestic cats to hide, prowl and hunt. Each evening, you'll dine on sumptuous meals and review your adventures with daily Recaps at the resort.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 5

New Delhi

Transfer to Jabalpur and fly back to New Delhi on the recommended flight; transfers to the airport and luggage assistance will be provided. Stay overnight at the Taj Mahal Hotel.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAYS 6-7

Agra

This morning, drive to Agra, home of the Taj Mahal. En route, you'll have a guided visit to the Agra Bear Rescue Facility, the largest sloth bear rescue facility in the world. Established in 1999, it currently houses 110 sloth bears as well as many other species of wildlife. Learn how the facility undertakes advanced research and provides specialized veterinary care for the bears before you enjoy lunch and check in at ITC Mughal. On an evening visit to Mehtab Bagh, one of 11 Mughal gardens along the Yamuna River, you'll have spectacular sunset views and opportunities to photograph the Taj Mahal.

The following morning, you'll again enjoy wonderful light for photography during a sunrise visit to the Taj Mahal. Later in the day, explore Agra Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, as your guide illuminates its storied history dating back to the 16th century as both a fortress and home to many royal families.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAYS 8-9

New Delhi / Kolkata

Drive to New Delhi and fly to Kolkata on the recommended flight; transfers to the airport and luggage assistance will be provided. Formerly

known as Calcutta, it was founded in 1690 by the East India Trading Company and served as India's capital under the British Raj for over 125 years. Enjoy two nights at The Oberoi Grand Hotel or ITC Royal Bengal Hotel.

Venture out early into Kolkata to beat the heat and legendary Indian traffic. As the city wakes up, take in its bustling streets as people commute to work or head to the River Hooghly where they cleanse and purify themselves. You'll witness this cleansing ritual amongst the colorful riverside flower market where all the city's religious flowers originate.

Explore the roots of the British Raj in India alongside Armenian and Portuguese churches, as well as Jewish synagogues, in and around Dalhousie Square. See the famous Writers' Building—the former HQ of the infamous East India Company, the magnificent Governor's House and the almost forgotten Charnock Mausoleum. Break for a cup of tea and a snack during the walk.

Next, visit North Kolkata, "The Black Town," where a parallel culture influenced by the Europeans flourished among the pioneering families of Bengal. Explore the four ornate temples of the Jain Temple Complex, with its shimmering mirrors, ceramic tiles and chandeliers brought to India by rich merchants from Persia, Japan and Europe.

After, you'll go to the Bengali Quarter, the bastion of Bengali culture, featuring the home of multi-talented Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore. The house, now a museum, showcases the life of his family in 19th century Bengal and their involvement in the Bengali Renaissance, the Brahmo Samaj movement and the Freedom Struggle of India.

Following lunch, visit Kumartuli, where giant, lifelike religious idols are beautifully created out of river clay and adorned with intricate accoutrements for the city's numerous festivals. End this jam-packed day with a visit to the Motherhouse, Mother Teresa's home and the center of her Missionaries of Charity, where you'll witness her modest tomb and the spartan room where she lived and died.

Dinner is served on Day 8; breakfast, lunch and dinner are served on Day 9.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 10

Kolkata / Jorhat / Embark Ship / Brahmaputra River

Travel by air from Kolkata to Jorhat on our recommended flight; transfers to the airport and luggage assistance will be provided. Jorhat is a major city in the remote Indian state of Assam, home to unique cultures, world-famous tea, rich biodiversity and the mighty Brahmaputra River. Drive a short distance this afternoon to Neamati Ghat to embark the charming *Charaidew II*. With many places almost inaccessible on foot, your river voyage is a perfect way to experience the 'real India' in this often-overlooked corner of the country. Settle into your cabin before getting to know the ship and her crew during a welcome briefing, reception and dinner.

Meals included: dinner, lunch, breakfast

◇ DAY 11

Majuli Island

Greet the day with morning yoga on the top deck before a visit to Majuli Island, one of the world's largest river islands and home to the Mising, Deori and Sonowal Kachari people—a microcosm of Assamese cultures.

Seldom visited, Majuli is a stronghold of the peaceful neo-Vaishnavism religion and their elegant *satras* (monasteries), dating back to the 15th century, have played a crucial role in preserving Assamese art, culture and tradition. Visit a monastery at Auniati with its eclectic

museum, then attend a dance performance at Kamalabari monastery before returning to the ship for an afternoon of sailing and onboard presentations.

Charaidew II will tie up on a sandy riverbank this evening, and you'll go ashore for stargazing, cocktails and chef-prepared treats such as tikkas and kebabs around a roaring beach campfire.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 12

Village Visit / Biswanath Ghat

This morning, explore another Assamese village. Friendly locals will greet you with smiles as you stroll their riverside community, learn about their day-to-day life and share stories from your home with them. Spend the rest of the day sailing along the Brahmaputra. Attend naturalist presentations or enjoy some time in the spa. This afternoon, approach Kaziranga National Park. Scan the banks and fields from the ship's deck for colorful birdlife, wild buffalo, elephants or, if you're lucky, a rare sighting of tigers or endangered Gangetic dolphins. Anchor for the night at Biswanath Ghat.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAYS 13-14

Biswanath / Kaziranga National Park / Silghat

Visit Biswanath, known for its friendly people and Ahom-period Shiva temples, before sailing to Silghat. From there you'll drive to Kaziranga National Park for jeep safaris. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the park is home to the world's largest population of Indian one-horned rhinoceros, as well as the Indian wild water buffalo. It also has the third highest density of Royal Bengal tigers in the country (please note tigers roam Kaziranga's tall grasslands, but sightings are never guaranteed—their elusiveness is part of what makes this wilderness so wild). With its marshy swamps and thickets of elephant grass, the park supports large populations of Indian elephants, Indian bison, swamp deer and capped langurs. The park is also an Important Bird Area, and you'll have a chance to spot an array of birdlife including the oriental honey buzzard, black-shouldered kite, white-tailed eagle, hornbills and bee-eaters.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 15

Kaliabor Tea Estate / Singri Pahar

This morning, visit the Kaliabor Tea Estate in Silghat, where you'll learn more about the history of growing and processing of Assam tea. Engage with expert tea tasters who will hold a tasting session to help you discover the nuanced flavors and aromas of the different types grown in Assam. After lunch, attend informative presentations and a cooking demonstration, or relax and reflect aboard the ship as you sail to Singri Pahar for the night.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 16

Pandu

This morning, sail past jungle-covered hills on the south bank of the Brahmaputra River. Enjoy a presentation on Mekhla Chador, a traditional style of Assamese women's attire. In Pandu, drive up to Nilachal Hill to visit the ancient Kamakhya temple which is dedicated to the Mother Goddess and known for its unique architecture and cultural significance. Stroll around the temple's exteriors, soaking in the rich history and spirituality that define this sacred place. Spend your final night aboard *Charaidew II* sharing memories at the farewell reception with a guest photo slide show before dinner. Dock at Guwahati for the night.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

■ DAYS 17-18

Guwahati / Disembark Ship / Kolkata

Disembark in Guwahati after breakfast and transfer to the airport to fly to Kolkata on our recommended flight; transfers to the airport and luggage assistance will be provided. Check in at Taj Taal Kutir (or similar) for an overnight stay. The next morning, transfer to the airport for flights home.

Departure Time: Depart anytime on Day 18.
Departure City: Kolkata, India

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included on Day 17; breakfast is included on Day 18.

Downstream

New Delhi, India → Kolkata, India

2027 DEPARTURE DATES

Aboard *Charaidew II*

18 Feb				
04 Mar				

2028 DEPARTURE DATES

Aboard *Charaidew II*

24 Feb				
09 Mar				

Alternative Routes

Visit Expeditions.com for more information.

2027 Departure Dates

25 Feb

2028 Departure Dates

02 Mar

Charaidew II

GUESTS	CABINS
34	17

Explore India's Brahmaputra River aboard a stylish and comfortable river ship

The *Charaidew II* is a testament to luxury river cruising in India, blending modern comfort with traditional Assamese charm. Her extra-shallow draught and low profile allow for navigation to less-traveled areas of the Brahmaputra River—a holy body of water whose banks are home to incredible wildlife as well as small, rarely visited communities—making her the quintessential home base to explore one of India's most captivating regions.

Just 146 feet long with three decks, and tastefully adorned with traditional Assamese décor, the *Charaidew II* provides an intimate atmosphere to explore this rich yet seldom-visited region.

The spacious sundeck and air-conditioned lounge—which features floor-to-ceiling windows—serve as both social hubs and comfortable observation stations to take in the natural beauty of the Brahmaputra's riverbanks. With touches of colonial elegance brought to life by traditional Assamese designs on hand-woven cotton fabrics, *Charaidew II*'s décor reflects a sense of homecoming to Assam. Local dance and song performances, as well as culinary demonstrations, provide guests with immersive onboard experiences throughout their voyage.

A combination of Western and traditional Indian cuisines, as well as traditional Assam teas, are served on board. Guests can also enjoy a wide selection of wines, spirits and beer.

Cabin Categories

Category 1

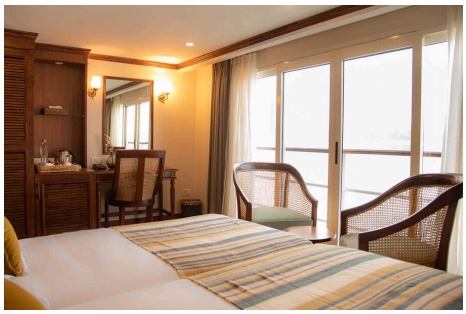
MAIN DECK **#15-18**

These 170-square-foot cabins feature a French balcony with floor-toceiling glass doors. The cabins each have a queen bed (cannot be separated), desk with chair, ensuite bathroom, ample storage space including under-bed storage and individual climate control.

Category 2

UPPER DECK **#3-12, 14**

These 240-square-foot cabins feature a French balcony with floor-to-ceiling glass doors. The cabins each have two twin beds (cannot be pushed together), desk and chairs, ensuite bathroom, ample storage space including under-bed storage and individual climate control.



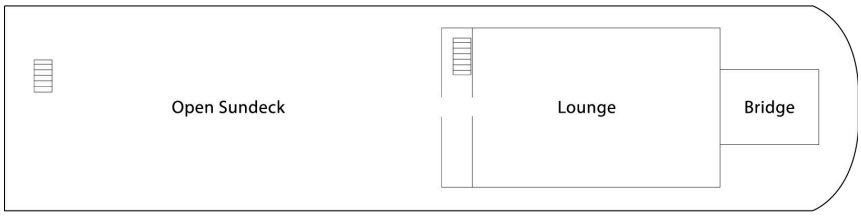
Category 3

UPPER DECK **#1-2**

These expansive 350-square-foot cabins feature a French balcony with floor-to-ceiling glass doors as well as a private balcony with seating area. The cabins each have a king bed (cannot be separated), ensuite bathroom with floor-to-ceiling windows, seating area with couch, ample storage space including under-bed storage and individual climate control.

Deck Plans

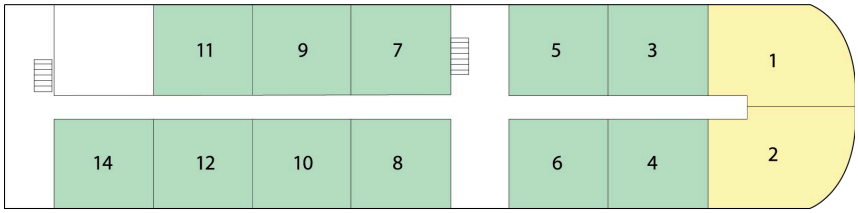
Sun Deck



SUN DECK

Upper Deck

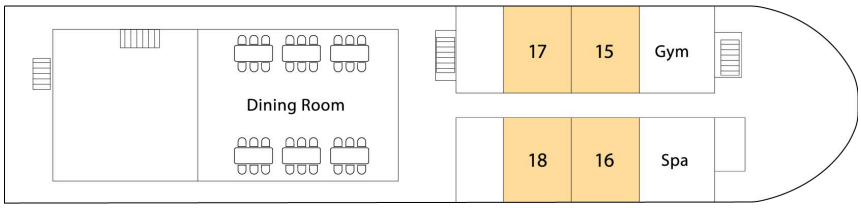
- Category 2
- Category 3



UPPER DECK

Main Deck

- Category 1



MAIN DECK

Ship Amenities

Public Areas

The spacious sundeck and air-conditioned lounge—which features floor-to-ceiling windows—serve as both social hubs and comfortable observation stations to take in the natural beauty of the Brahmaputra's riverbanks.

Meals

A combination of Western and traditional Indian cuisines, as well as traditional Assam teas, are served on board. Guests can also enjoy a wide selection of wines, spirits and beer.

Cabins

French balconies are standard across all cabins, and the sumptuous Category 3 cabins feature an additional private balcony plus floor-to-ceiling windows in the ensuite bathrooms for sweeping river views. Amenities include hair dryer, minibar, safe, tea/ coffee facilities, bathrobe and slippers.

Wellness

Soothing massages and spa treatments are offered in the ship's spa, and guests can observe wildlife and rural village life from the gym.

Special Offers

COMBINING OFFERS

Certain offers may be combinable, up to two savings opportunities, except where noted otherwise. For example, travel with a group of 8 or more on back-to-back expeditions, and take advantage of both savings.

10% OFF BACK-TO-BACK VOYAGES

Save 10% on consecutive departures, applicable on voyage fares only and not valid on extensions or airfare. Valid for new bookings only, subject to availability, and may not be combined with other offers. Call for details.

CELEBRATE LIFE'S MILESTONES

Celebrate a milestone with a group of eight or more and enjoy a special amenity package including: 5% savings on voyage fares, custom group photo, US$150 shipboard credit for the group, and other special gifts. Milestone celebration to be communicated at time of booking.

INCLUDED IN PRICE

All accommodations aboard ship and in hotels per itinerary; meals and beverages aboard ship (excluding certain premium brands of alcohol); meals on land as indicated, accompanied by nonalcoholic beverages; hors d'oeuvres aboard ship, drinking water throughout; excursions per itinerary, including entrance fees and photography fees, arrival and departure airport transfers for any flights into and out of New Delhi and Kolkata; gratuities to all service staff, including guides and ship's crew; guidance and company of our leading expedition staff; assistance of a Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic certified photo instructor; presentations by expedition staff and expert guest speakers; Wi-Fi aboard ship; complimentary reusable water bottle; onboard physician consultations; and 24-hour access to lounge and other shared spaces onboard ship. Unused services or items included in our programs are non-refundable.

NOT INCLUDED IN PRICE

Airfare* (except flights when indicated as included); pre- and post-expedition extensions; additional hotel nights (except when indicated as included); spa treatments, Wi-Fi in hotels (if not included by hotels), and phone services (except when indicated as included); travel protection plans; passport, visa, and immigration fees; and items of a personal nature, such as souvenirs, and laundry in hotels.

*Recommended flight costs include flight(s) that take place during the date range of your trip to transport travelers from one itinerary destination to another. This cost also includes ground transportation, luggage transfer, and airport assistance. If you prefer to arrange your own flights privately, have alternate means of transport, or wish to modify at a later time, please contact an Expedition Specialist at 1.833.400.0831

Additional costs associated with medical services outside onboard physician consultation.

TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN

We strongly recommend our guests to take advantage of our Travel Protection Plan. This plan offers comprehensive coverage to protect you from cancellation fees, costs incurred due to trip delays/interruption, damage or loss of baggage, medical assistance, and evacuation during your travels. Our Travel Protection Plan is available for U.S. residents only, and may be purchased any time prior to final payment due date, Travel Protection premiums are non- refundable once plan is purchased. Learn more about our Travel Protection "Plus" Plan: https://www.expeditions.com/terms-conditions/travel-protection-plan/

CANCELLATION POLICY

Review our cancellation policy: https://www.expeditions.com/cancellation-policy/