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WONDERS OF THE HIMALAYAS - RIVER AND LAND TOUR

Explore the mystical Eastern Himalayas on this new cruise and land tour with Pandaw. Discover the Kingdom of Bhutan including the famous cliff-top monasteries and the unique way of life that remains largely unchanged and un-influenced by the modern world. From Bhutan, travel to North Eastern India and Assam for a 7-night river expedition along the Brahmaputra River, including jeep safari at Kaziranga National Park. The newest Land & Cruise Tour from Pandaw is a true expeditionary adventure that is not to be missed. Note: Medium fitness is required for a soft hike in Bhutan. The weather in Bhutan and Assam can be very cold during winter months. Please check the average temperatures for your departure date and pack accordingly.

ITINERARY

DAY 1 ARRIVAL PARO

Welcome to Bhutan! Pick up at Paro international airport. After Lunch in the city, drive on a winding road to Thimphu (one hour), the capital of Bhutan.

Visit Tashichho Dzong, Bhutan's most impressive building and seat of the Druk desi or 'Dharma Raja', the head of Bhutan's civil government which has been combined with the kingship since the creation of the monarchy in 1907. It houses the throne room of His Majesty the King of Bhutan and is the summer residence of the venerated monastic community. The current Dzong is the impressive result of a redesign of the original medieval structure sanctioned by the Third King, His Majesty King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, when he moved the capital to Thimphu from Punakha.

Meals: lunch depending on arrival time

DAY 2 THIMPU

After breakfast visit the Memorial Chorten, also known as the Thimphu Chorten, a large Tibetan-style Buddhist Monastery with golden spires and bells. It was built in 1974 to honor the memory of the third King, Jigme Dorji Wangchuck.

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Continue to the Folk Heritage Museum, National Institute of Zorig Chusum and the National Library of Bhutan, Junghi Paper Factory, National Institute of Traditional Medicine and Bhutan Postal Museum.

Meals: breakfast at hotel

DAY 3 THIMPU - PUNAKHA

After breakfast, we take the Dochula pass, located 30 km from the capital, on the way to Punakha which offers a 360-degree of beautiful panoramic view of the Himalaya mountain range. Visit Chimi Lhakhang, a monastery dedicated to Lama Drukpa Kinley or 'the Divine Madman'. An accomplished master of Mahamudra Buddhist Tradition, he is also known as the 'Mad Saint' for his unorthodox ways of teaching Buddhism by singing, humor and outrageous behavior.

Continue to Drukpa Kinley, also a cultural icon in Bhutan around whom countless yarns, fictions, stories and legends have been spun. In founding the site, it is said that Lama Kunley subdued a demon of Dochu La with his "magic thunderbolt of wisdom" and trapped it in a rock at the location close to where the chorten now stands.

Meals: breakfast at hotel and lunch box

DAY 4 PHUNAKA - PARO

After breakfast, visit the Punakha Dzong, also known as

Pungtang Dechen Photrang Dzong (meaning 'the palace of great happiness or bliss'), the administrative centre of Punakha dzongkhag. Constructed in 1673, it is the second oldest and second largest dzong in Bhutan and one of its most majestic structures.

Drive to Paro then and visit the National Museum and Paro Dzong. The National Museum of Bhutan is housed inside the revamped circular Ta-dzong building, an ancient watchtower above the Paro Dzong. This unusual round building is said to be in the shape of a conch shell. The original building was constructed in 1656 and then converted into a museum in 1968, housing some of the finest specimens of Bhutanese art, including masterpieces of bronze statues and paintings gathered from different parts of the country.

Meals: breakfast at hotel

DAY 5 PARO TAKTSANG SOFT HIKE

Drive to Satsam Chorten for a soft hike to Taktsang Monastery. The name Taktsang means "Tiger's Nest". The monastery is perched on a rocky ledge with a sheer drop of nearly 800m, overlooking the Paro Valley and the river. It is said that in the second half of the 8th century, Guru Padma Sambhava known as the second Buddha in Bhutan, meditated at the spot where the monastery is situated having alighted there on the back of a flying tigress.

The hike takes about 4 hours back and forth. Once you reach the view point of the monastery you have the option to visit the

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monastery which takes another hour hike.

DAY 9 TEZPUR

After visit a Farm House where your dinner will be arranged with the local family.

Afternoon exploration of Tezpur by trishaw we visit the De Parbatia temple with its richly carved portals and Cole Park with its collection of medieval carvings collected from across the region.

Meals: breakfast at hotel and dinner with local family

DAY 10 NAMERI NATIONAL PARK

DAY 6 PARO - GUWAHATI

After breakfast transfer Paro International Airport for your flight to Guwahati. Free time in the evening to relax.

After an early breakfast, 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 down the Jia-Bhoreli River through the park. Enjoy the breath-taking scenery and bring your binoculars for a chance to spot some birdlife. After lunch, take a village walk before returning to the ship. We are treated to a traditional Assamese folk dance before dinner and moor at Silghat for the night.

Meals: breakfast at hotel

DAY 11 KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK

DAY 7 GUWAHATI

After breakfast, transfer to your ship.

Jeep safari to Kaziranga, with an area of approximately 430 sq kms, this UNESCO World Heritage site is home to the world's largest population of the Indian One-Horned Rhinoceros as well as the Indian Wild Water Buffalo. It also has the highest density of Royal Bengal Tigers with one every five sq. km however these remain extremely illusive and are unlikely to be spotted. The park is an incredibly rich biodiversity hotspot with its marshy swamps and thickets of elephant grass which supports large populations of Indian elephants, Indian bison, swamp deer, and

Meals: breakfast at hotel

Transfer to ship from airport and explore this pleasant Assami city visiting the Nilachai Hill temple and Commonwealth Graves. Late afternoon cast off upriver.

DAY 8 SAILING

Sail all day making headway against strong currents through the lush Assami countryside. Get acquainted with your crew and guide with onboard activities such as lectures and food demonstrations.

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capped langurs.

Besides wildlife, Kaziranga National Park is also a birding paradise. A few of the bird species found here are the oriental honey buzzard, black-shouldered kite, white-tailed eagle, Himalayan griffon to mention a few. In the afternoon we set sail again downstream.

DAY 12 VILLAGE LIFE

As we sail along the vast Brahmaputra River downstream, riding the strong currents, we stop for a walk through a typical Assamese village and learn more about their simple lives.

DAY 13 TEA GARDEN & SILK VILLAGE

Early morning visit to Noonmati Tea Garden on the outskirts of Guwahati to witness the tea producing process. After lunch sail down past Guwhati to moor at Sualkuchi, a major centre for weaving in Assam. We learn about the entire silk making production from the cocoon, to spinning and weaving to make the typical saree worn by Assami women.

DAY 14 ARRIVAL BAGDOGRA

Dock at Guwahati.

Following breakfast transfer privately for your flight to Bagdaogra. Receive a warm Pandaw welcome on arrival into Bagdogra Airport, and journey by road to your accommodation.

Spend the rest of the day easing into your magical surroundings or step outside and stroll the main square and mingle with Nepalese, Bhutanese, Tibetan people and domestic Indian tourists.

Meals: Dinner

Accommodation: The Elgin Darjeeling / Deluxe Room

DAY 15 DARJEELING

Darjeeling's rich tapestry of cultures is yours to explore today. Hop aboard the UNESCO World Heritage-listed small-gauge Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, or "Toy Train", for a breathtaking ride to Ghoom, the world's second highest railway station. The toy train is a marvel of engineering passing through many small towns and is India's oldest mountain railway route. Explore Ghoom Monastery, with its colourful prayer flags fluttering in the wind before returning to town.

Continue to the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, founded in 1954, just after Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay first scaled Everest. Visit the Darjeeling Zoo, home of the Snow Leopard Breeding Centre. Then see locals making handicrafts and carpets at the Tibetan Refugee Centre.

Meals: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: The Elgin Darjeeling / Deluxe Room

DAY 16 DARJEELING TEA ESTATE

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Itineraries are subject to change.

Depart early by road, through lush tea gardens to the sublime Glenburn Tea Estate situated on a hillock above the banks of the River Rungeet. Unwind on the the 1,600-acre private estate before an introduction to the specialised art of growing and crafting Glenburn Tea. Visit the tea fields, interact with the tea pickers and follow the journey of "two leaves and bud" into the tea factory, ending with a tea tasting session to discover the incredible variety of flavours and aromas that come from a single bush through the different seasons. Learn why this region is home to almost a quarter of India's tea production.

Enjoy a lunch at the Bungalow followed by a gentle afternoon hike or some down time on one of the peaceful verandas soaking in the views. In the evening take drinks by the bonfire, followed by a sit-down four course dinner with your hosts and other guests in residence.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Glenburn Tea Estate / Suite

DAY 17 DEPART BAGDOGRA

Following a leisurely breakfast, leave the snow-tipped peaks and terraced tea plantations of Darjeeling behind and transfer privately to Bagdogra Airport for your onward journey.

Meals: Breakfast

Please note:



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YOUR SHIP: KINDAT PANDAW

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VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

Kindat Pandaw is a very shallow draft vessel that can go just about anywhere anytime, it is big enough to carry 30-40 passengers with lots of outdoor deck space. The ship has quality mountain bikes for your independent exploration. ACCOMMODATION 8 upper deck, 10 main deck, 170 square feet, finished in teak and brass, AC with individual control, Premium mattresses, Multi-configuration plugs, 24h laundry service WINING & DINING Bistro style dining room with outside seating and air-conditioning inside, Local master chef heading an experienced international culinary team, Semi-buffet breakfast, semi-buffet lunch, and seated theme dinners, Daily lean & light menu options, Complimentary local mineral water, jugged coffee, teas & tisanes, Extensive wine list with premium wines, Welcome drink on arrival, Welcome cocktail, Farewell reception, Theme dinners, 24hrs hospitality bar, Onboard bakery with daily freshly baked breads and rolls ON EXCURSIONS Admissions, Shoe cleaning after excursions, Bottled drinking water, We give away aluminium water bottles, Cold towel service after excursions, Refreshing drink following excursions, 1st aid trained assistant guide to follow all tours and excursions, Quality mountain bikes available for independent exploration SAFETY &

SECURITY All onboard crew is trained and certified as per international marine standards, Fire alarm system in all cabins, public areas and back areas, Fire fighting system in all ship areas, Expert marine superintendent, 24 hrs watch on duty **ONBOARD STAFF** Captain, River Pilot, First Officer, Chief Engineer, 1st Engineer, Electrician, Bosun & nautical crew, Ship manager, Housekeeping, Dining, Bar keeper, Chefs, Local tour guides **PUBLIC SPACES** Guest relation desk, Library with contemporary and classic



literature

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PRICING

ADDITIONAL CHARGES:

Port Taxes & Fees 65 USD pp