

# ASSAM: BRAHMAPUTRA RIVER CRUISE



## Dancing Monks & Riverine Culture

**ABN Sukapha: BRAHMAPUTRA DOWNSTREAM | NEAMATI GHAT TO SILGHAT**

*The Brahmaputra river valley is not only blessed with abundant forest cover, but also a unique culture that's rooted in a simple, agrarian, self-sufficient way of life for the Assamese people.*

*On this boutique expedition cruise down the Brahmaputra river, discover one of the highlights of Assam - Majuli, one of the world's largest river islands and a microcosm of Assamese culture that can be accessed only by ferry or country boats. Furthermore, we will be crossing Kaziranga National Park on your left with expansive views of the flora and fauna of this scenic park. You may be lucky enough to spot wildlife on these banks, especially the royal Bengal tiger who loves to bask in the winter sun. And no trip to Assam can be complete without a taste of its delightful cuisine and tea, so there'll be plenty of interesting dishes to try from indigenous cuisines and - of course - lots of cups of the finest tea-garden fresh tea!*

*From travel to the indigenous food, from luxury cruising to immersive culture, come experience Assam in its most authentic form*

### ITINERARY

#### **Day 1- 16 December - Jorhat Arrival (L)**

*Today, you will arrive into Jorhat airport.*

On arrival, the transfer from the airport to Neamati Ghat will be arranged for you.

You will board your boat today. This will be your home for the next 4 nights

The rest of the day will be at leisure. Lunch, Hi Tea & Dinner will be served to you onboard the ship.

*With a maximum group size of 24 guests, the ABN Sukapha has 12 upper deck cabins. The cabins are bamboo-paneled, air-conditioned and roomy with en suite bathrooms. There is a spa and a saloon with a library. The dining room is on the main deck and a spacious sundeck at the very top. Furniture on board is locally made; objet d'arts in the saloon are from Bengal; and fabrics are all locally sourced by the finest artisans in all of the state.*

**The crew onboard your ship:** *We believe that tourism should operate in partnership with local people, ultimately providing employment and economic benefits for the community as well as helping to place a value on the cultural and natural heritage of a destination. You will find that our crew onboard are all locals from the region that have been trained in-house and our managers are professionals from the hospitality trade that personally train and skill our crew members.*

*Additionally, 5% of the proceeds from every booked cabin is contributed to ABN Foundation that supports causes in education, environment and community development along the two rivers we operate in.*

Overnight on board the **ABN Sukhapa**.



**Day 2- 17 December - Set Sail (B,L,D)**

Today, whilst we enjoy a fresh cup of tea / coffee and snacks, we will sail down to **Majuli**, one of the **world's largest river islands**.

A microcosm of Assamese culture, Majuli represents rural idyll in Assam. A stronghold of the peaceful religion of neo-Vaishnavism, the elegant island satras — some for celibate monks, some for families — showcase a unique way of life where the faithful live simply, offering worship through gayan-bayan (songs and musical instruments) and readings.



We will visit a monastery at Auniati with an eclectic museum, and then enjoy a Sattriya performance by the ‘dancing monks’ at Kamalabari monastery. Later, return to the vessel and start sailing downstream before mooring for the day.

### **Majuli River Island-**

*Majuli is rich in culture, treasured for its centuries-old neo-Vaishnavite monasteries, known to stage dramas and make the Assamese folk theatre masks of bamboo and clay. Brahmaputra river cruises often stop at the island for village walks and birdwatching. In mid-November, people visit Majuli for raas leela performances over three days.*

*The island covers an area of 880 sq km, ranging between 10-15km in width—it is estimated that about a third of its area has been eroded by the Brahmaputra in the last 40 years. Majuli is home to 1.68 lakh people, most of whom belong to the Mishing tribe, and also the Deori and Sonowal Kachri tribes. The fertile soil yields many varieties of rice, some of which are unique to the island. Majuli is also home to the acclaimed “ Forest Man of India ”, Jadav Payeng who single handedly planted a forest on a neighbouring eroding island over 40 years to prevent it from further erosion.*

Overnight on board the ABN Sukhapa.

### **Day 3- 18 December – Sailing down the Brahmaputra (B,L,D)**

Cruise in the morning with an optimistic chance of spotting endangered Gangetic dolphins. Late morning we shall take time to pause and walk through a bankside village, getting an insight into the life of rural Assam.

### **Riverine village lifestyle of Assam**

There is time to pause and visit a riverside village, with its lush green fields of vegetables and corn. Your accompanying guide and accompanying naturalist will brief you as you observe the simple riverine lifestyle of locals in Assam on foot.

**Tonight, we will enjoy a bonfire and BBQ on a deserted sand bank of the Brahmaputra River.**

**Mising (Miri) Tribe - The indigenous riverine tribe of Assam**

*North – East India is a land of conglomeration of multiple ethnic groups. Among the eight sisters of north – east , Assam is significant where around seventeen tribes reside. Their tradition , culture, dress, language, food habits and unique way of life enriches Assamese society and culture. Next to the Bodo tribe , the Mising formerly referred to as Miri is considered as the second largest ethnic group of Assam. They belong to the Indo - Mongoloid group. Basically they are a riverine tribe. Their marriage system is typical enough. Generally there are different ways that the Mising get married. The traditional religious beliefs of the Mising are animistic in nature. The people of Mising consider themselves to be the descendents of donyi polo. Significantly all rites are performed by the Mibu. But in due course of time many rites and rituals have already been lost from society. Ali – Aye- Ligang and Po:rag are the chief traditional festivals observed by the Mising. The Notable contribution of the Mising tribe towards building a strong democracy is a remarkable one. In this paper an attempt has been made to understand the socio-cultural life of the Mising tribe of Assam.*

Overnight on board the ABN Sukhapa.

**Day 4- 19 December – Sailing downstream to Viswanath (B,L,D)**

Today enjoy a full day of cruise downstream to Viswanath passing through Dhansiri Mukh. Time permitting we shall visit another riverside village before further continuing downstream with Kaziranga National Park on the left bank. Wild elephants may sometimes be spotted and, once, memorably, even a tiger straight from the ship.

**Day 5- 20 December – Sailing towards Silghat; Disembark (B, D)**

During breakfast cruise down to Silghat.

On arrival, we will disembark and bid adieu to the ABN Sukhapa. From here, we will drive for 4 ½ hours to Guwahati. Lunch will be enroute or in Guwahati (cost not included)

In Guwahati, you will be booked at the **Hotel Radisson Blu** or similar for a stay of 1 night.

Dinner tonight will be at the hotel.

Overnight in Guwahati.

**Day 6- 21 December – Departure from Guwahati (B)**

The transfer to the airport as per your flight timings will be arranged for you.

**\*\* Return home with wonderful memories of your holiday \*\***

**Price per person on a twin-sharing basis: Rs 109,500**

**Single supplement: Rs. 41,900**

## **INCLUSIONS**

- 4 nights' accommodation aboard the ABN Sukhapa
- 1 nights' accommodation in Guwahati
- All excursions and entry fees as per the itinerary
- All activity transfers as mentioned in the itinerary on a shared basis
- All meals (Except lunch on Day 5)
- Pick up and drop from airport/hotel
- Services of a tour escort
- Service of an English-speaking guide onboard the ship and during excursions
- Service of an English-speaking naturalist onboard the ship and during excursions

## **EXCLUSIONS**

- Airfare to and from Jorhat / Guwahati
- Drinks from the bar
- Items of a personal nature eg. Laundry, telephone charges, mini bar
- Spa treatment
- Tips, camera fees
- Any Insurance
- Anything which is not mentioned on the includes section
- 5% GST

## **Please Note:**

- All cruising mentioned in these itineraries is subject to river and weather conditions.
  - To operate this journey, we will need a minimum booking of 10 full-paying passengers.
  - We are limited to daylight hours (The winter sun sets at 16:00hrs), winter fog and the flow of the heavy underlying currents of this river.
  - Due to Covid restrictions, we may need to re-plan the itinerary and it may require certain cost adjustments
  - All guests are required to get a Covid Test done and sent to us within 72 to 48 hours prior to departure.
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## **ABN Sukhapa: ONBOARD FEATURES**

- Spacious cabins with individual climate control
- En suite shower/WC with toiletries
- Generous cupboard space and under-bed storage
- Hair drier in each cabin
- High quality linens
- Large sliding glass windows offering panoramic views of the river
- Vast sundeck with sunloungers or steamer chairs
- Spacious air-conditioned saloon with library and recorded entertainment
- Spa with choice of treatments.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Sail on an intimate, contemporary boutique river cruise ship
- An opportunity to see life along the mighty Brahmaputra
- Authentic experiences
- Visit Majuli, one of the world's largest river islands
- Sample interesting dishes from local indigenous cuisines
- Enjoy a bonfire and BBQ on a deserted sand bank
- Stunning scenery including expansive views of Kaziranga National Park



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### **Booking & Cancellation Policy**

- At the time of booking, a deposit of 10% of the total cost will be payable.
- The balance amount is payable by 12th November 2021
- If the booking is cancelled more than 4 weeks before departure, the deposit will be non refundable
- Cancellation between 4 and 2 weeks before departure: the cancellation charges will be 50% of the total cost Cancellation less than 2 weeks before departure: the cancellation charges will be 100% of the total cost
- A full refund will be provided in case you test Covid Positive just before departure