

ESCORTED TOUR

BENGAL & ASSAM

WITH

NICK VAN GRUISEN & CHRIS CALDICOTT

19 SEPTEMBER - 9 OCTOBER 2025



MV Mahabaahu



BENGAL & ASSAM WITH NICK VAN GRUISEN &CHRIS CALDICOTT

19 SEPTEMBER - 9 OCTOBER 2025

CONTACT Sophie Lonsdale- Escorted Tours Consultant

 DIRECT LINE
 020 7386 4683

 TELEPHONE
 020 7386 4620

EMAIL Sophie.lonsdale@theultimatetravelcompany.co.uk

NICK VAN GRUISEN

Raised in Northumberland, in the 1970s Nick spent five years as a professional guide in Botswana and southern Africa. He then joined the Tiger Mountain group, pioneering cultural, trekking and wildlife holidays throughout the Indian subcontinent. He founded Worldwide Journeys and Expeditions in 1991, from which The Ultimate Travel Company emerged in 1998.

CHRIS CALDICOTT

Since travelling to some of the most remote parts of the world as Photographer-in-Residence to the Royal Geographical Society, Chris Caldicott has continued his globetrotting lifestyle as a freelance photographer, writer and lecturer specialising in food and travel. He has had several books published about food, travel and the spice trade and visited 118 countries on assignments to capture evocative images and write about memorable experiences for publications such as Vanity Fair, Condé Nast Traveller, The Sunday Times, Harpers Bazaar, Tatler, House and Garden and The Telegraph.

QUALITY OF SERVICE

We like to think that our success has been built on a simple formula - to deliver a high standard of service before, during and after each holiday, a duty of care and commitment to you, and value for money. We aim to be totally flexible in our approach, as this allows us to create the holiday that you want and one that is easy and enjoyable to plan.

However, if you feel that there are areas in which we could improve our service to you, please do not hesitate to contact either our Managing Director Nick Van Gruisen, or Executive Director Rowan Paterson, on 020 7386 4646.

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



DETAILED ITINERARY

DAY 1: FRIDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER

LONDON / DUBAI

Suggested flights (not included in the cost of the tour) with Emirates via Dubai departing London Heathrow at 14.20 hrs.

DAY 2: SATURDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER

DUBAI / KOLKATA

Arrive in Kolkata at 08.15 hrs. On arrival, transfer to the Taj Bengal Hotel, a landmark hotel located in the Alipore neighbourhood, a short walk from the iconic Victoria Memorial.

Light lunch at the hotel. Leave on a walking tour of the heart of British Kolkata, Dalhousie Square taking in the classical Post Office, site of the notorious Black Hole, past the Writers' Building built in 1780 and resurfaced in 1880 and St. Andrew's Kirk. Move on to view the exterior of Government House, seat of the Viceroys, a building based on Kedleston Hall, and past the old Town Hall. Visit St. John's Church modelled on St. Martin's in the Fields and designed by James Agg stuffed with fascinating tombs both within and without. Continue to the famous white marble Victoria Memorial, designed by Sir William Emerson in 1921. It has an excellent display on the history of the city and a gallery of pictures by British artists, such as Zoffany, who came to India. Explore Kumartuli, a potters quarter in North Kolkata famous for sculpting Indian Gods and Goddesses out of clay for different festivals in West Bengal throughout the year. Welcome drinks and dinner at the hotel.





DAY 3: SUNDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER

KOLKATA / GUWAHATI

Early morning transfer to Kolkata for a domestic flight to Guwahati. Transfer to board the MV Mahabaahu, where 18 nights are spent on a full-board basis. Immediately after boarding, the ship peels away from the

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



Pandu Port on its south-west journey towards the southern edge of India's international boundary. Gather on the sundeck as we sail under the famous Sarai Ghat Bridge where the decisive battle of ending the Mughal rule in Guwahati was fought by the Ahoms in 1671.

Lunch on board. Afternoon at leisure. Dinner on board.

DAY 4: MONDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER

DHUBRI DISTRICT

Optional morning yoga on deck. Enjoy a talk on Assam and the Brahmaputra.

Lunch on board. Afternoon at leisure. This evening, we visit the 'last village' of Indian territory in Assam's Dhubri district. On returning to the ship, gather for a talk on Sikhism and the Sikh Temple, Shri Guru Teg Bahadur Singh Ji Gurudwara. We close the evening with a bonfire and drinks on a deserted island, followed by dinner on board.





DAY 5: TUESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER

DHUBRI / DONGRAGAT

This morning, we sail upstream to Dhubri where we walk to the Gurudwara (the Sikh temple) which is located close to the bank of Brahmaputra. Today, we will learn about the Sikh religion, the world's fifth-largest religion. Visit Gurudwara "A place of worship", where the community gathers to participate in devotional activity that typically includes recitation (path) of scripture, singing of scripture to musical accompaniment (kirtan), and its exegesis (katha). At the closing of the devotional session, a supplication (ardas) is made in which the Sikhs remember their history, seek divine blessings. Return to the ship and sail towards Dongraghat. Lunch and dinner on board.

DAY 6: WEDNESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER

DONGRAGHAT

Optional morning yoga on deck. Day spent sailing to Dongraghat. Morning talk on Manas National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and Tiger Reserve located in the Himalayan foothill Bhabar area in Western Assam.

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



Lunch on board. Afternoon at leisure. This evening, enjoy a demonstration in wearing Bodo Dress followed by dinner on board.

DAY 7: THURSDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER

MANAS NATIONAL PARK

Early morning departure for a morning elephant safari in Manas National Park, known for its rare and endangered endemic wildlife such as the Assam Roofed Turtle, Hispid Hare, Golden Langur and the only known population of Pygmy Hogs in the world. Manas is famous for its population of the Wild Water Buffalo. After breakfast, enjoy a jeep safari up to the border of Bhutan and to see the Manas River.

Lunch at a local restaurant and enjoy a traditional Bodo tribal performance. Venture out again in the jeeps to explore a different route through the Bansbari Range. Return to the ship for dinner on board.





DAY 8: FRIDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER

SUALKUCHI

A day of sailing towards Sualkuchi. Enjoy a talk on Sualkuchi, the silk hub of Assam, and spend the day watching the lush countryside go by.

Lunch on board. This evening, enjoyed a tribal themed dinner on board.

DAY 9: SATURDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER

SAULKUCHI

Depart for Sualkuchi where we are received by the tribals with a lot of pomp and show. Explore the Sualkuchi Weavers' Village located on the northern banks of the Brahmaputra. It is endearingly referred to as the "Manchester of Assam" due to the vast number of cottage industries there that are involved in handloom. The quality of the Muga and Pat silks, as well as the Eri silk and Endi cloth from this area, is well known. We take an e-rickshaw to the silk processing and weaving area for an insight into all that goes into silk production.

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



Enjoy an authentic Assamese lunch and a hands-on cooking demonstration of an Assamese dessert. Visit a local museum for sculpture art and walk through a market with silk weaves. Return to the boat for dinner on board.

DAY 10: SUNDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER

SARAIGHAT BRIDGE

The ship sails early from Sualkuchi and under the Saraighat Bridge towards the north bank of the river. Enjoy a talk on the Auniati Satra. Take the tenders to the shore and then the tuk-tuks to the Auniati Satra. The Monks of the Auniati Satra are 'Udaseen Vaishnavs', that is, they are celibate and focus entirely on the worship of Krishna, the Supreme God. Children of 5 years are initiated into the Satra and formal education of these young priests becomes the responsibility of the Satra. They can leave the Satra at 18 or continue in the fold. Explore the Vaishnav Monastery, the living quarters of the monks, and witness Satriya performances. Return to the ship and sail upstream towards the South Bank of the Brahmaputra.

Enjoy a home-hosted traditional lunch and cooking demonstration at the home of a local Assamese family. Late afternoon, return to the ship. Dinner on board.





DAY 11: MONDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

GUWAHATI

Early morning departure for a local tea estate for a walk through the tea estate before a relaxed breakfast. Explore the factory and indulge in tea-tasting. This factory produces Orthodox tea, whereas most factories in Assam produce CTC Tea. The term 'Orthodox Tea' refers to tea that is brewed traditionally. This tea is made using a traditional procedure that includes plucking, withering, rolling, oxidation and drying. Each batch of tea processing is time-consuming and requires skill and expertise. Visit the State Emporiums in Guwahati which deal in hand crafted items of Assam.

Return to the ship for lunch on board. Afternoon at leisure as we sail out of Guwahati. Dinner on board.

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



DAY 12: TUESDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER

TEZPUR

Morning talk on Ayurveda, the ancient and traditional medicine system of India.

Lunch on board. Afternoon at leisure. This evening, visit a local village and meet the village folk and peep into their homes to understand the impermanence of their lives on the flooding Brahmaputra. Return to the ship for dinner on board.

DAY 13: WEDNESDAY, 1 OCTOBER

JAHAJ GHAT

This morning, we have a talk on the wildlife in India and Kaziranga National Park. Late morning, enjoy a demonstration on how to tie a Kshatriya Dhoti or Warrior Dhoti which are often worn to do yoga or used as formal wear during the day with a long Kurta.

Lunch on board. Stroll out to Jahaj Ghat and take a tuk-tuk to the temple. Walk around the premises of the temple and then go in to pray to the living Shivling. The Mahabhairav Temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and was built by King Banasur. The Shivling of the temple is said to be made of 'living stone' which grows slowly over the years. Walk through a local vegetable market then return to the ship with fresh produce for dinner on board.



DAY 14: THURSDAY, 2 OCTOBER

SILGHAT

This morning, drive to a tea estate for a tea-talk with the professionals and visit to the tea factory. Here, we see the CTC Tea production and understand the difference between Orthodox and CTC. We visit a hidden gem tucked in the Brahmaputra valley nurtured by local communities of Eastern Himalayas— A bio-diverse Ark with an elusive natural and cultural paradise tended to with care over the years and allowed to flourish through the passion and knowledge of the local botanists.

Lunch at the estate before walking through the local village. Return to the village for dinner on board.

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



DAY 15: FRIDAY, 3 OCTOBER

KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK

Early morning departure to Kaziranga National Park and then board the Jungle Jeeps for our safari at the Western Range. Post-safari, we drive towards Silghat past the paddy fields fed by the Brahmaputra. We reach the jute mill to visit this co-operative where you see the complete process from fibre to a gunny bag.

Return to the ship for lunch on board. Enjoy the sail upstream from the sundeck as we sail through Kaziranga along the hills that are extensions of the Shillong Plateau on the southern bank of the river. The Diphlu River that flows along the Diphlu range joins the Brahmaputra close to the Bishwanath Ghat area. This evening, get together on a deserted island for a bonfire and BBQ before dinner on board.

DAY 16: SATURDAY, 4 OCTOBER

BISHWANATH GHAT / BISHWANATH CHARIALI

This morning, leave for Bishwanath Ghat, a sub-urban village on the banks of the Brahmaputra. This is sprinkled with temples and is a cosmos of weavers, fishermen, farmers, boat makers. A Shiva Dol (temple) from the times of Ahoms looms over and a promenade along the outcrop of rocks and swinging country boats add beauty to the area.

Return to the ship for lunch on board. Sail towards the Eastern Range of Kaziranga. Explore the shores of Agoratoli, the Eastern Range and observe how the river carves Kaziranga each year. Look out for a water buffalo suddenly pulling itself out of the water or an elephant family coming down to quench their thirst. Dinner on board.





DAY 17: SUNDAY, 5 OCTOBER

MISHING VILLAGE

Enjoy a talk on Majuli and Shivsagar. Visit the Mishing dwellings on non-permanent islands that are at the mercy of the river Brahmaputra. We visit some Mishing Chang Ghars (homes), built on bamboo scaffolding with bamboo mats for floor, walls and roof. Mishing villagers have a unique culture of weaving ethnic colourful designs with home spun and home dyed cotton threads. They use the space under the bamboo scaffolding of their homes for weaving. Time at leisure as we sail towards Majuli. This evening, learn about ethnic Assamese wear and enjoy an authentic Assamese dinner on board.

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



DAY 18: MONDAY, 6 OCTOBER

CHARAIDEO / SHIVSAGAR

Depart for Shivsagar and the serene royal burial grounds (A UNESCO World Heritage Site). Visit one of the tallest Shiva Temple in the country, The Shiva Doul, which was built by Queen Ambika in 1734. Continue to Moidams, the ancient burial mounds of the Ahom royalty and aristocracy.

Return to Shivsagar for lunch at a local restaurant. Visit the monuments of Talatal Ghar, which are the remains of a royal palace, and then Rang Ghar, a place where the royals held meetings and watched performances. Return to the ship for dinner.





DAY 19: TUESDAY, 7 OCTOBER

MAJULI ISLAND

Early morning departure for the Hollongapar Gibbon Sanctuary; home to the only Ape in India – the Hoollock Gibbon. The upper canopy of the forest is dominated by the Hoollong Tree, while the Nahar dominates the middle canopy. The lower canopy consists of evergreen shrubs and herbs. Walk through the thick evergreen forest with a naturalist. Continue to a planter's home in a tea-estate for a home-hosted traditional breakfast. Return to the ship for some time at leisure.

Early lunch on board. Disembark to visit the island of Majuli; the largest inhabited river-island of the world. Enjoy some Satriya and folk performances as well as the mask-making and pottery which are famous art forms of Majuli culture. Look out for Open-billed Storks nesting all over Majuli and Adjutant Storks, Whistling Ducks, Bar-headed Geese and Weaver Birds are spotted easily. Explore the local bazaar before returning to the ship for dinner on board.

DAY 20: WEDNESDAY, 8 OCTOBER

JORHAT / KOLKATA

Morning at leisure. Optional nature walk

Early lunch on board. Transfer to Jorhat Airport for a domestic flight to Kolkata. On arrival in Kolkata, transfer to the Taj City Centre Hotel, a 5-star hotel a short drive from the airport, where one night is spent. Dinner under own arrangements.

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



DAY 21: THURSDAY, 9 OCTOBER

KOLKATA / DELHI / LONDON

Transfer to Kolkata Airport for suggested flight (not included) Emirates flight via Dubai departing Kolkata at 09.45 hrs arriving London Heathrow at 20.15 hrs.

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



M.V MAHABAAHU FACT SHEET

The MV Mahabaahu cruise ship has been rated by the Travelinsider Magazine of Qantas Australian Airlines as being one of the Top Ten River Cruise Ships of the World and the overall cruise experience on the Brahmaputra River has been rated as one of Top Fifty Adventure Experiences of the World by the Sunday Times of UK.

It is a 23 cabin ship with four categories, a swimming pool, a boutique SPA, a passenger elevator through four of the five decks, a restaurant, lounge, bar and a small open gym. The ship is a class certified vessel, operates with three engines and is a double bottom.





Recreational facilities on board include:

- A well-stocked library.
- Various board games.
- Swimming pool on the first deck.
- Spa and Salon on the lower deck.
- Sun deck.

The ship's complement consists of 30 staff including:

- Captain/Master
- Cruise Director
- Marine Engineer
- Guide/Naturalist
- Hospitality Manager
- Navigational Crew
- Hospitality Crew

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



The chefs devise local/Indian and Continental cuisine menus using locally sourced ingredients. All meals inclusive of tea and coffee served in the main indoor dining restaurant. Given advance notice, all dietary requirements can be catered for, along with the guest preferred alcoholic beverages.

Imported alcoholic beverages, laundry, massages, salon and phone calls/internet (when available): are extra and subject to additional charges.





ACCOMMODATION

All cabins incorporate satellite TV, personal safe, mini bar, in-house telephone and en-suite bathrooms. All the cabins and the restaurant/lounge are centrally air-conditioned.

There are 23 aesthetically designed twin and double cabins as below:

- 2 Suites with balcony 283.2 sq ft (includes the cabin, bathroom and balcony)
- Luxury cabins with balcony 230 sq. ft (includes the cabin, bathroom and balcony)
- 7 Deluxe cabins with balcony 206 sq. ft (includes the cabin, bathroom and balcony)
- 12 Superior cabins without balcony 150 sq.ft. (includes the cabin and bathroom)



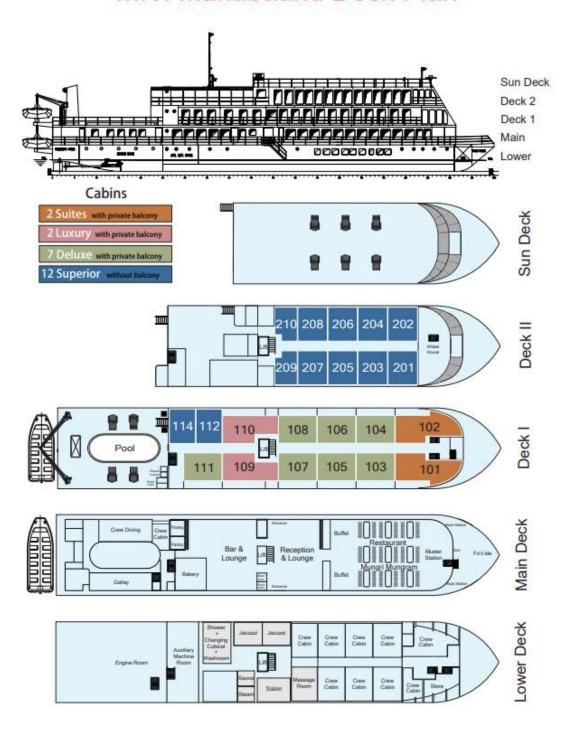


Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



M.V. Mahabaahu Deck Plan



Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620





Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620





Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



TOUR PRICE

COST:

SUPERIOR WITHOUT BALCONY $\pounds 6,585$ PER PERSON DELUXE WITH BALCONY $\pounds 7,285$ PER PERSON LUXURY WITH BALCONY $\pounds 7,785$ PER PERSON SUITE WITH BALCONY $\pounds 8,895$ PER PERSON SINGLE SUPPLEMENT $\pounds 2,275$ PER PERSON $\pounds 3,275$ PER PERSON

Please note we have not included the cost of the flights in the tour price. Please contact us for prices should you wish to book them through us.

PRICE INCLUDES

- accommodation throughout as shown in the itinerary
- · all meals on board the MV Mahabaahu
- 1 lunch and 1 dinner in Kolkata
- all entrance fees, visits and excursions as per the itinerary
- soft drinks and tea / coffee
- all transportation as detailed in the itinerary
- local English-speaking guide/s
- gratuities to driver/s; gratuities to guide/s; gratuities in restaurants; porterage
- the services of your tour leader throughout
- domestic flights as shown in the itinerary (including 10kg excess baggage per person)

PRICE EXCLUDES

- alcoholic drinks
- international flights
- travel insurance
- items of personal expenditure (e.g. telephone calls / laundry etc.)
- visa fees
- government levies or taxes introduced after costing and publication of this programme on 02/02/2024

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



AIRLINE TICKETS

As a tour operator we have access to special airfares. While these offer good value, they do carry certain restrictions applied by the airline. Please ask us for details.

Note: If you are thinking about using air miles to upgrade to a premium cabin on the flights, please check with us first as fare restrictions might not permit this.

AIRLINE SEATING

The rules governing the pre-booking of seats vary from airline to airline. Some allow us to pre-book seats immediately and without charge, some only once the tickets are issued but with charge, and others only when you check in either on line or at the airport.

We will clarify the rules for your specific carrier(s) with our confirmation documents. In the event that seating cannot be arranged until tickets are issued (normally six weeks prior to departure) and you prefer not to wait, we can issue your tickets earlier provided you are happy to pay in advance for the flight costs in addition to the required deposit for the holiday.

However, please be mindful that the majority of our discounted fare tickets, once issued, are non-refundable and will attract fees should you wish to make any date changes. Nor will you be allowed to change the actual flight routing.

BOOK WITH CONFIDENCE

You will probably be aware of the difficulties many travellers faced with obtaining refunds when their holidays were disrupted or cancelled as a result of such events as ash cloud and political unrest and are again facing now because of the Coronavirus pandemic. By booking your travel arrangements with us, not only are you guaranteed the peace of mind that comes with full financial protection but also all the round the clock assistance we are able to provide, should the need arise.

Should there be restrictions in place during the immediate lead up to the trip that prevent you from travelling, we will either postpone it or offer you an alternative. If neither of these two options are acceptable, we will offer you the choice of a Refund Credit Note, redeemable on a specified date and fully protected by our ABTA bond, or a cash refund of all monies paid.

CHANGES TO THE ITINERARY

Please note, that certain elements of this itinerary, and/or the order of events, may well be subject to alteration due to circumstances beyond our control

FITNESS TO TRAVEL

Whilst we do not impose any age limitations on joining a tour, participants must be reasonably fit. The very nature of the sightseeing involved in our tours (and the difficulties of direct access by coach in various places) means that a considerable amount of walking and standing is unavoidable on almost all tours. We regret that our tours are not suitable for people who have difficulty in walking, may require wheelchair

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620

Escorted Tour

Bengal & Assam



assistance at any time, or are unable to keep pace with the group. If you are in any doubt as to the suitability of a tour, please make this known to us before you book and we will advise you accordingly. The Ultimate Travel Company reserves the right to decline a reservation without necessarily giving a reason. Your tour leader may also refuse to take participants on particular excursions if they feel that the rest of the group will be held up.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotels are chosen on the basis of category, character and location. The majority will be at least 4 star, otherwise the best available. The projected size of the group will often rule out the use of luxury boutique hotels. Sometimes the style of hotel will mean that not all rooms are of the same size or have the same outlook.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

No vaccinations are required for entry into India however if you have travelled within a yellow fever infected area during the previous six days prior to arrival you will require proof of inoculation. The following inoculations are recommended: Typhoid, Hepatitis A and B, Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio. Malaria is present throughout most of India so anti-malaria prophylactics are advised.

Please check recommended practice with your GP, practice nurse or travel health clinic.

PASSPORT AND VISA INFORMATION

British Nationals require a visa for India. This can be obtained through the new online e-Tourist Visa service (currently the easiest and cheapest option), through CIBT (our recommended visa service provider) or directly through one of the Indian Visa Application Centres located throughout the UK.

Passengers should hold a full passport, which should be valid for six months after you return to the UK and should also have at least three empty pages for the visa. Nationals of other countries should consult their local Indian Embassy.

FCO ADVICE

We recommend that you periodically review the travel advice issued by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, which relates to all aspects of your destination.

OTHER

Please ensure that your travel insurance is in order. It is important that you take details of your travel insurance with you since this will contain important contacting information in the case of an emergency.

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



WHY CHOOSE US?

We have been organising bespoke, tailor-made holidays and escorted group tours around the world since the early 1990s. The opportunity that we identified then was for a travel company with the knowledge and enthusiasm of a smaller specialist, but with the range and buying power of a much larger organisation, and we like to think that we have maintained this balance over the years.

More importantly, we try to be an easy and friendly company to deal with, and because most of us have had the good fortune to work abroad, we are able to approach travel in a sensitive and intelligent way.

WHAT WE OFFER?

First-hand knowledge and personal service is at the core of what we offer. Our consultants travel to all the destinations that we feature on a very regular basis, so that the advice you receive is accurate and up-to-date. They will also look after you from the outset and assume full responsibility for ensuring that your travel plans are designed and delivered as requested.

Planning a holiday should be an enjoyable and effortless experience, and we will do all that we can to ensure that this is the case.

OUR REPUTATION

We have grown largely through personal recommendation and repeat business, and so we treat our reputation with care. The directors and owners of the company, led by Nick Van Gruisen, are very much 'hands on' so immediate decisions can be taken to ensure the standard of service that our clients have come to expect is maintained.

LOCAL REPRESENTATION

Equally crucial is the quality of our local associates and suppliers. It is they who look after you on holiday and it is their guides, vehicles and general support service that will determine your enjoyment of it. We therefore take great care to ensure that our ground handlers have the requisite expertise, efficiency and creativity, and also the ability to deal sensitively and swiftly with any situation that might arise. The fact that we have worked together for many years and know each other well is a further bonus.

RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

As a company with a passion for travel, we understand the vital support that tourism can provide to communities and fragile habitats throughout the world. At the same time, we are aware that tourism can have a negative impact and are committed to doing what we can to minimise this risk.

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620



In 2007, an independent body completed an Environmental Audit on all aspects of The Ultimate Travel Company. This covered not only our own practices but those of our worldwide suppliers, thereby ensuring that we all met the necessary environmental and employment criteria.

The audit also measured the carbon footprint produced by our London office and by our international travel, and we now offset this with an annual donation to Social Change and Development, a small but dynamic tree planting initiative in India.

Further initiatives include a 'charity donation' scheme, whereby we ask clients for a voluntary contribution of £10 which we then match. As a result of this initiative, a handful of small overseas charities, and the healthcare, environmental and educational projects that they run, now share an annual donation of more than \$100,000.

If you want further details of these initiatives, please ring Nick Van Gruisen on 02073864646.

EXTRA VALUE

It can be difficult at times to recognise the extra value promised by travel companies. Generally speaking, we all offer the same flight, the same hotel, the same excursion, the same excursion, the same sunset, and at similar prices...indeed in many ways, the same holiday experience!

Here, at The Ultimate Travel Company, we strive to go further. While we believe that the diversity of destination, intimate product knowledge and personal service we offer already sets us apart, we supply all our clients with detailed information on all aspects of their forthcoming journey, a 10% discount voucher at Daunt Books (described by The Daily Telegraph as 'the most beautiful bookshop in London – designed for travellers who like reading') and a welcome home 'surprise'.

Honeymooners can also look forward to a wedding gift on arrival at their chosen destination.

Moreover, we continually monitor your movements while you are away so that we can offer any assistance that might be required, effectively and without delay. And if genuine problems do arise as a result of any error on our part (few as these may be!), we will not shy away from our own responsibilities and our commitment to you.

Contact Sophie Lonsdale – Escorted Tours

Direct Line 020 7386 4683 Telephone 020 7386 4620