

WILD FRONTIERS



Nagaland Festival Tour (Recce Tour)

Unlike much of India, most of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Nagaland have remained off the busy trail of mainstream tourism. For years, access to the area was restricted for political and security reasons, but now that the situation has relaxed, we are delighted to guide you around this little-known, stunning part of India. We will be sleeping in traditional bamboo houses and camping in tents, but also enjoying the comfort of a beautifully restored old tea bungalow. We will visit the forest lands of Kaziranga National Park teeming with wildlife and birds and the tranquil verdant acres of Assam's tea gardens; we will float along the meandering bends of the mighty Brahmaputra and experience the buzz and hubbub of a great Indian metropolis - the ubiquitous, wonderful mayhem and colour that seem to define all of India. And we will raise a fitting finale to the trip at the amazing Naga Hornbill Festival. From the animist tribal villages that we'll discover on foot, to ancient cultural capitals, North-East India is there to be explored.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Elephant ride in Kaziranga National Park
- Camping on an island after a day sailing down the Brahmaputra River
- Visiting the amazing Hornbill Naga Festival
- Exploring Namdapha National Park
- Staying in a beautiful tea bungalow & watching the tea harvesting process

Duration: 18 Days

Average group size: 5 - 12

Start: Sat 17 Nov 12

Finish: Tue 04 Dec 12



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Why Wild Frontiers?

As a young, innovative company, Wild Frontiers is delighted to have been voted one of the 'Top 10 Tour Operators' by the readers of both Wanderlust and National Geographic Adventure. We are frequently asked what makes us different from other tour operators, and feel that the factors below answer this important question.

The Traveller's Ethos: WF is a company that has been set up by travellers for travellers, and our ethos is to help adventurous souls get to incredible and inaccessible places in safety and as much comfort as local conditions allow. We are firm believers that travelling is all about the experience and it's the details that make the trip - we specialise in drawing on our own extensive local knowledge and array of contacts to give our clients the very best experience possible.

Personal Service: Our London office is manned by experienced expedition leaders and every trip we run stems from their extensive knowledge - in short, we run the kind of trips that as passionate travellers, we like to do ourselves! When you ring our office, you can be guaranteed to chat to someone that knows the trips and the terrain, and is able to offer sound and practical advice.

Authentic Experiences: Our unique, original itineraries allow our clients to take journeys that venture beneath the surface of the region. Unlike the plethora of 'world specialists' out there who purport to know a hundred destinations, we concentrate on the locations we know and love. We don't run the same tour over and over, thus running the risk of creating a 'tourist circuit' and spoiling untouched regions. Instead, we rarely run any tour more than a couple of times a year and they are on routes we have discovered for ourselves, meaning we are able to give a truly authentic, off-the-beaten-track experience.

Be the First: Our style of travel is all about exploration, and nothing excites us more than opening up new routes to genuine travellers. We keep abreast of new destinations and are often the first to return to places that have vanished from the tourist map. We were the first back into Pakistan after 9/11, the first to return to Kashmir after a decade of tourist isolation, and the first to run a commercial travel trip to Afghanistan for almost 30 years. Since then we have helped bring Colombia, Yemen and Georgia back into the tourist fold, specialising in groundbreaking reconnaissance trips and imaginative expeditions.

Small Group Size: We believe it is imperative to keep the group sizes small. Most trips are limited to a maximum of approximately 12 travellers, thus giving you more access to fragile cultures, better opportunities to interact with local people, and the knowledge you are making less of an impact while there.

Cost of Tours: We believe in an honest, upfront pricing system so you know exactly what the tour will cost before you book. We avoid local payments, 'optional extras' or forcing our clients to split every meal bill. Our tours are provided on a predominantly full board basis, with mineral water, government permits, entrance fees and transport all included.

Added Value: We aim to give our clients the very best (not the least expensive) experience through whatever facilities are available to us. We always try to provide accommodation that is interesting, characterful and convenient, and transport - another important part of any tour - that is as varied and comfortable as possible.

Our clients: Your companions can make or break a trip, and it's lucky therefore that our clients are our greatest asset. Travelling to remote regions is not for everyone, and as such we tend to attract open-minded travellers looking for genuine experiences, and a desire to reach those hard to get to places.

Responsible Travel: Awarded 5 star status by AITO (Association of Independent Tour operators), responsible tourism has always been an integral part of our company ethos and our adventures are designed with the local people, culture and eco-system in mind. For further details please refer to the RT section on this dossier.



Day 1: D starts in Guwahati: The tour starts this afternoon at our hotel in Guwahati for an introductory chat before heading out for our first night's dinner.
Hotel (D)

Day 2: Guwahati - Kaziranga: After breakfast we drive to Kaziranga National Park (250 Kms /approx 5½ hrs), enjoying the scenery as we go. Upon arrival we will have a quick lunch and then head out on a Jeep safari to the central range of the park for some wildlife spotting, so remember your binoculars!
Comfortable Lodge (B, L, D)

Day 3: Kaziranga: Another day in Kaziranga National Park, looking out for a wide range of animals: our last group here saw a tiger and her cubs!
Comfortable Lodge (B, L, D)

Day 4: Kaziranga - Dibrugarh: In the early morning we'll leave to ride elephants into the Park in search of the Asian one-horned rhino, not to mention Hog, Deer and wild Buffalo. The park itself was declared a world heritage site 25 years ago and celebrated its centenary as recently as 2005. The credit for it goes to Lady Curzon who persuaded the British Indian Government of the time to create a National Park, and for that we are grateful! After our ride into the park we will return for breakfast and then drive on to Dibrugarh (270Km - approx 5½ hrs) breaking up the journey en route with a visit to the Ahom Dynasty remains at Sibsagar.
Heritage Tea Bungalow (B, L, D)

Day 5: Dibrugarh - Namdapha: After breakfast we take a short drive to Digboi where we will visit the war-grave cemetery, which is beautifully maintained by the War Graves Commission. We then visit the Oil Museum which was constructed in order to celebrate the township's centenary and is well worth a visit; especially since this is where the first oil wells in Asia were sunk. Besides displaying technological relics it presents a very illustrative idea of life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Assam. After lunch, we proceed along the old Stillwell Road to Namdapha National Park which is nestled in the remote Jungle hills on the border with Myanmar.
Very basic Forest Lodge/ Camping (B,L,D)

Day 6: Namdapha: Today we can enjoy a day of walking through the forests and spotting wildlife. Starting after breakfast we'll set off with our forest guard to Haldibari which is approx 6km away, then come back in the evening to Deban forest lodge. This is not a tough day but one to relish away from the vehicles.
Very basic Forest Lodge/ Camping (B,L,D)

Day 7: Namdapha: Another day to enjoy the national park.
Very basic Forest Lodge/ Camping (B,L,D)

Day 8: Namdapha - River Island: After an early start driving out of the park to the road head we go on to the Brahmaputra River at Dhola which will take around two hours. Once we are there we hop aboard our very own riverboat and head down

river to our campsite on an island right in the middle of this mighty river. While most rivers on the Indian subcontinent have female names, this river has a rare male name, meaning "son of Brahma"
Wild camping (B, L, D)

Day 9: River Island - Dibrugarh: After breakfast we will continue sailing south to the regional capital at Dibrugarh and to the traditional style and comfort of the Tea Bungalow at Mancotta and Chowkidinghee for the night.
Heritage Tea Bungalow (B, L, D)

Day 10: Dibrugarh: We'll have a morning visit to the tea plantation and see how tea is produced from picking to the case. The afternoon will be to relax and explore and perhaps ride one of the proprietor's wonderful horses.
Heritage Tea Bungalow (B, L, D)

Day 11: Dibrugarh to Mon: After breakfast we'll drive the 180km to Mon which can take up to 8 hours. On the way we will cross the state border into Nagaland, one of the smallest but extremely mountainous states in India, where the allied forces finally stemmed the flow of the Japanese army from Burma and the people are known for their tattooed faces and bodies.
Very basic hotel (B, L, D)

Day 12: Mon: We'll have a full day in the Mon district, first driving to the prominent Shangnyu village which is ruled by the Chief Angh. There is a wonderful wooden monument measuring 8ft in height & 12ft in breadth which is covered in carvings of both humans and animals and is believed to have been carved by heavenly angels. Next we visit the village of Mon itself and here we will also find tattooed Konyaks. Following a relaxed lunch we will move on to Chui village situated about 8km away, which still retains much of its old world charm. We can see the mansion belonging to the Angh and plenty of other houses which are built in the traditional Konyak style with palm leaf roofing and the main pillars jutting out. Our final stop on what is a pretty busy and varied day is at Langmeing where they still keep human skulls from the days of head hunting.
Very basic Hotel (B, L, D)

Day 13: Mon to Mokokchung: After breakfast we start our journey to Mokokchung. We will travel through some fascinating parts of India with scenery to enjoy all around us. Mokokchung sits at an altitude of 1350 metres above sea level and is a wonderfully picturesque village with a white water river running nearby. It is also the cultural centre of the Ao Nagas who live in the many surrounding villages.
Very basic Hotel (B, L, D)

Day 14: Mokokchung to Kohima: we will rise early and drive for around 7 hours to Kohima so that we can have lunch and spend the afternoon looking around this fascinating settlement. Upon entering the village we pass through an enormous wooden gate that is adorned with a scimitar of horns and buffalo head. We will visit the museum, and Catholic Cathedral with the biggest wooden cross in Asia, but what will stay with you longest is our trip to the War Cemetery. This was the last post for the allied forces against the Japanese forces in World War II and is beautifully maintained by the War Commission. As we exit we pass an epitaph that reads: "When you go home tell them of us and say for your tomorrow we gave our today."
Basic hotel (B, L, D)

Day 15: Kohima and the Hornbill Festival: Nagaland is known as the land of festivals as each tribe celebrates its own festival with dedication and passion. To encourage inter-tribal interaction and to promote cultural heritage of Nagaland, the Government of Nagaland organizes the Hornbill Festival every year in the first week of December. The Hornbill Festival is held in the village of Kisama which is about 12 km from Kohima. All the tribes of Nagaland take part, reviving and protecting the rich culture of Nagaland. The Festival is named after the hornbill, the globally respected bird and which is displayed in folklore in most of the state's tribes.

The week-long festival unites one and all in Nagaland and people enjoy the colourful performances, crafts, sports, food fairs, games and ceremonies. Traditional arts which include paintings, wood carvings, and sculptures are also on display. Festival highlights include Traditional Naga Morungs Exhibition and

sale of Arts and Crafts, Food Stalls, Herbal Medicine Stalls, Flower shows and sales, Cultural Medley - songs and dances, Fashion shows, Beauty Contest, Traditional Archery, Naga wrestling, Indigenous Games, and Musical concert.

Basic hotel (B, L, D)

Day 16: Kohima to Kolkata: After breakfast we drive to Dimapur airport which should take around 2 hours, before flying on to Kolkata. In the afternoon we will have the opportunity to explore this great city visiting the Botanical Gardens, the national Library, Victoria Memorial and St Paul's Cathedral. This evening we will stay at the Tolly Club, formerly the city lodgings of the Tea Planters when they came to town, it is now a country club nestled in a verdant sanctuary away from the chaos and noise of the city.

Tolly Club (B, L, D)

Day 17: Kolkata: For those interested we can do a morning visit to the heart of town to see the Writers building, the flower market, the washing ghats, the Howrah Bridge and the north Kolkata mansions before returning to the Tolly Club for lunch. That said, after some fairly basic accommodation over the course of our trip you may wish instead to relax in the comfort of the Tolly club, sit by the pool or perhaps enjoy a spot of tennis or golf. We will then have a farewell dinner at one of the Tolly's restaurants.

Tolly Club (B, L, D)

Day 18: Kolkata: The tour ends with breakfast at the hotel.

(B)

Warning!

The British Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) sometimes advises against certain parts of this itinerary. Before choosing to join this trip you should first read the relevant sections of their website (www.fco.gov.uk). If travelling from the UK you will also need insurance that is not FCO sensitive. For more information, please see the Insurance section below or contact us.

Wild Extensions:

Arrive early to adjust to a new time zone or just to get a feel for the country before your tour starts. Explore the

country after your tour on a bespoke Wild Extension or just allow a few days to relax afterwards. Maybe choose all of the above and get cheaper flights mid-week?

A sample of what you could do...

There are so many potential extensions to this trip it is hard to know where to begin. Before the tour you could stop off in Delhi and from there visit the Taj Mahal, Jaipur or any of the other fabulous towns and palaces of Rajasthan.

After the tour you could take some extra days in Kolkata and perhaps visit Darjeeling, Kalimpong or Glenburn Tea Estate.

Contact the office for extension specifics.

TOUR DETAILS

Tour Code: NAG/A

Tour price: All our tours are priced on a LAND ONLY basis, giving you maximum flexibility when deciding how to get to and from your tour.

Single Supplements: These are NOT compulsory for any Wild Frontiers tour. Where single supplements are available please note that a single room cannot always be guaranteed for every night of the tour as depending on the destination, rooms may be limited. On this tour it is difficult to predict where we will be able to guarantee single rooms. Certainly in Dibrugarh rooms are very limited so we suggest you contact the office for advice if you wish.

NB: for those nights when we are camping you will get a single tent.

Flights: If you would like us to send you a quote for the suggested tour flight (see GETTING THERE) or on any alternative flight that may suit you better, please let us know.

In all cases, for the latest prices, please refer to our website or contact the office.

Please remember that all Wild Frontiers tour prices mean NO hidden extras, NO local payments or kitty and NO compulsory single supplements.

WHAT IS INCLUDED?

- Full services of a Wild Frontiers Tour Leader with local guides and drivers.
- Meal plan as detailed in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner) with mineral water as required.
- All transport as in the itinerary.
- All accommodation
- All entrance fees, as per itinerary

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED?

- Visas (if applicable)
- Local airport taxes
- Tips
- Beverages & any costs of a personal nature.
- International Flights
- Airport transfers (unless booking suggested flights through WF office)

GETTING THERE

For this trip our suggested flights (subject to change) are:

16NOV 9W121 LHR-DEL 20:45/09:45+1
17NOV 9W2276 DEL-GAU 13:45/16:10
04DEC 9W2278 CCU-DEL 06:55/09:05
04DEC 9W122 DEL-LHR 13:40/17:40

Key:

LHR - London Heathrow
DEL - Delhi
GAU - Guwahati
CCU - Kolkata
9W - Jet Airways

NB If you wish to arrange your own flights you are completely free to do so and in this case we can arrange any transfers or supplementary accommodation that you may require. **Please note that if you are making your own flight arrangements, we recommend that you only purchase flights that are totally flexible and refundable as due to the nature of adventure travel, itineraries can change at any time. For more information, please refer to our booking conditions.**

PRACTICALITIES

Accommodation: Please note that some of the accommodation on this trip will be extremely basic. It will be in hotels, guest houses, forest lodges, camping, and home stays.

Any accommodation mentioned in the itinerary is subject to availability and if not available substitutes will be of a similar quality.

Transport on this tour includes minibuses, local "jeeps", local river boats, and domestic flights.

Trip Grading:

Adventure Rating ❖❖❖❖❖

Comfort Grade ❖❖❖❖❖

Activity Level ❖❖❖❖❖

Cultural Interest ❖❖❖❖❖

Please note that this grading is an indication only and should you have any concerns please contact the office.

Fitness...

Anyone in a reasonable state of health, with an open mind and a sense of adventure should be perfectly able to cope with this tour.

It may sound obvious but...

Wild Frontiers tours are not always for everyone and it is important to us that the tour you choose is the most suitable. Please therefore take time to read the dossier carefully. All our tours are graded to give an overall picture of the trip but these are only guidelines and you should check the daily itinerary. Should you have any concerns about your ability to partake in any aspect of the tour then please contact the office.

Insurance: Insurance that provides cover for emergency repatriation in case of a medical emergency is compulsory for all tours. You should be aware that many standard insurance policies may not cover you adequately for all aspects of a Wild Frontiers trip and so we strongly recommend that you purchase a suitably designed insurance policy. One such policy is the "Wild Frontiers" policy underwritten by Travel & General Insurance Company plc, which is available to UK and Republic of Ireland residents through our website or via the insurance company direct on 0845 408 0583. Under this policy there are two different levels of cover available and for this trip the minimum requirement would be the Standard policy.

Cover explained:

Standard policy: a comprehensive travel insurance policy that provides cover for all Wild Frontiers activities, including trekking up to 6,000m. This policy does not provide cover for travel to areas where the FCO is advising against all or all but essential travel.

Elite policy: provides the same comprehensive level of cover as the standard policy. In addition the Elite policy also provides cover for travel to areas where the FCO is advising against all or all but essential travel. The policy will not provide cover for any claims arising from or relating to the reasons why the FCO is advising against travel.

If purchasing the Elite policy you also have the option to **extend the cover** provided by the policy to include cover for claims arising from a terrorist act in an area where the FCO is advising against travel. You can add this cover to your policy when purchasing online or over the telephone.

These policies are only available to those travelling on a Wild Frontiers holiday.

For more information and to purchase your policy online please visit the Insurance section of our website.

The cover is underwritten by the International Insurance Company of Hannover Limited (IICH), who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority (FSA). Wild Frontiers Limited is an Introducer Appointed Representative of Travel & General Insurance Company plc, details of which can be found at the FSA's website www.fsa.gov.uk.

If you do decide to purchase alternative insurance, then you must ensure that it covers you for every aspect of this trip.

Visas: Visas are necessary for many of the destinations we travel to and while we aim to provide you with the most up-to-date information, requirements frequently change and as such we advise that you check with the relevant embassies or contact our recommended visa agency, Travcour (020 7223 5295) www.travcour.com for the latest advice.

For this tour, UK passport holders do currently require a visa for India.

Non-UK passport holders should contact the relevant embassies for individual requirements.

NB: We will also need to apply for Restricted Area Permits for Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. For these we will need to have copies of the INFORMATION and VISA pages of your passport; 4 passport sized photographs and a signed application form which will be sent by us to you, - as soon as possible and **NOT LESS THAN EIGHT WEEKS BEFORE DEPARTURE**. So you will need to have your Indian Visa applied for and **IN YOUR PASSPORT** by then. The £50 cost of these permits is included in the tour price.

Further details will be sent out to you on booking, however ensuring that correct and valid visas are obtained remains the sole responsibility of the client.

Responsible Travel: Responsible travel and sustainable tourism are fundamental ideas that Wild Frontiers has been committed to since our birth. It is our strong belief that these words should not be simply 'tagged on' to dossiers and websites but should be at the very core of each trip, and our adventures are therefore designed with the local people, culture and eco-system in mind. We believe that a successful trip not only delivers a unique and unsurpassable journey for our clients, but that it also benefits the peoples whose lands we are privileged to visit.

The Wild Frontiers Foundation: In order to facilitate an enduring support structure for the communities we visit, and to show a commitment to these values, Wild Frontiers has set up a charitable foundation through which we can channel funds to both existing NGOs and our own development projects. In addition to organising ethically sensitive tours, having our own charitable foundation allows us to raise money - through the cost of our tours, charity trips and fund raising events - which can then be used to fund various projects in education, sanitation, reforestations and a number of other important issues facing

developing communities. Wherever possible we are happy for our clients to visit these projects to see for themselves where and how this money is being spent. For a full list of partner NGOs please visit our website. Should you wish to donate to the foundation please contact the office for details.

The Environment: Trying to do our bit for the environment, in 2005 we were among the first UK-based travel companies to automatically offset every client's international flight (if booked with us) with a payment to Carbon Clear to help promote sustainable energy.

Climate:

Arunachal Pradesh has a hugely varied climate according to altitude. On this trip at this time of year the average temperature will be from 15 to 21 degrees Celsius. It will be largely dry.

Assam has a tropical monsoon climate and is generally humid. At this time of year (post monsoon) it is cooler perhaps reaching a min of 10 Celsius at night, and largely dry.

Nagaland largely has a monsoon climate though we are travelling at the "cool dry" time of year and it can be chilly at night as you climb higher into the hills. The temperature is probably between 10 and 26 degrees.

Even at this time of year we can expect rain at any time.

Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO):

The FCO travel advice highlights potential hazards people might experience when travelling abroad. Given the nature of destinations offered by Wild Frontiers it is inevitable that from time to time some itineraries contravene this advice. Whilst WF takes the safety and security of its clients extremely seriously, we will not necessarily cancel a trip because of the FCO advice. It is recommended therefore that clients check this advice before booking and contact us if they have any queries or concerns. Please see our website for further information.

Further information:

When you make a confirmed booking with Wild Frontiers we will send you our confirmation pack with complete pre-departure information giving you details on visas, health and vaccinations, packing lists, suggested reading on the region, insurance, photography and other useful tips to make your trip more enjoyable.

INDIA - THE FACTS



Assam: Home of the Ahom Dynasty at (Sibsagar) that arrived from Thailand in the mid 13th century and ruled to varying degrees until the 18th century. The Burmese moved in, took over and ruled with merciless barbarity until the British threw them out from 1824-25. It soon became the heartland of tea production in India, perhaps in the world, and verdant acres of tea gardens lie either side of the mighty Brahmaputra for hundreds of miles, beautifully tended around tidy colonial Bungalows.

Kaziranga National Park: The Asian one horned Rhinoceros is almost common here and while Tigers remain elusive, their signs are easily seen. The park lies on the flood plain of the mighty Brahmaputra and vast acres of tall grass provide grazing for herds of wild elephant, gaur, and wild Asian buffalo among many others. The nearby forests are lush green and bursting with all kinds of life, the avifauna as so often in India can be breath-taking.



Arunachal Pradesh: Arunachal lies mostly in the verdant foothills of the Himalayas. A huge portion of the population is composed of about sixty animist tribes each of which tends to belong to one of a larger tribal group. The Mitoon, a separate species resembling a cross somewhere between a Yak, water buffalo and cow, lives wild in the forests and yet each one is owned and coaxed to lick salt from its owner's hand from a very early age. It forms important financial and spiritual currency in the culture. Buddhism also flourishes particularly to the west near the Bhutan border.



Namdapha National Park: This remote park lies at the farthest eastern part of Arunachal Pradesh on the Myanmar border in deeply forested and impenetrable hills. It is a wild and beautiful spot renowned for extraordinary bird life but also for a huge variety of flora and fauna. A treat very experienced by only the most intrepid western travellers.

Nagaland: The State of Nagaland was formally inaugurated on December 1st, 1963, as the 16th State of the Indian Union. Inhabited by 16 major tribes along with other sub-tribes, each is distinct in character from the other in terms of

customs, language and dress. It is also the site of the repulsion of the Japanese Army during the 2nd World War and at Kohima the beautifully tended war graves where terrible hand to hand fighting took place are a moving sight. Nagaland presents a curious mixture of traditional tribal cultural interest and modern history.

How to book:

In order to confirm your booking we need to have a completed signed booking form for each client together with a £400 deposit per person. You can either return your booking form to us by post or by booking online at www.wildfrontiers.co.uk

You can contact the office by email to info@wildfrontiers.co.uk or we are very happy to take your call on 020 7736 3968.

Wild Frontiers is a fully licensed and bonded tour operator and our ATOL number is 5975. You can book your holiday with Wild Frontiers in complete confidence that all monies you pay to us for your tour are fully protected.

We are also bonded with the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO). AITO members comply with the highest standards of consumer protection. Every AITO holiday is backed not only by AITO's Quality Charter but also by full financial protection.

We do recommend that you take out adequate travel insurance at the time of booking in the event that you are no longer able to travel as all deposits are non-refundable - full booking conditions can be found on the booking form and online at our website.