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Pandaw Expands Hooghly Programme with New Three and Four-Night River Cruises

Kolkata, India – Responding to growing demand for flexible, tailor-made holidays across India, Pandaw Cruises has introduced a series of new [three and four-night Hooghly River itineraries](#), making it easier than ever for travellers and destination management companies (DMCs) to incorporate a river cruise into a wider India journey.

Designed for travellers who may not have time for a week-long river expedition, the new itineraries begin and end in Kolkata and can be seamlessly combined with popular destinations such as Delhi, Agra, Rajasthan, Darjeeling, Assam, and Kerala. The launch reflects a growing trend towards multi-centre holidays, where travellers are seeking a greater variety of experiences within a single trip.

Long-Haul Interest in India Remains Strong

According to [2025 data](#) from India's [Ministry of Tourism](#), long-haul demand for India continues to remain strong. The United States was the country's largest long-haul source market with 1.81 million arrivals, followed by the United Kingdom with 1.07 million visitors. Australia accounted for 540,000 arrivals, while Canada contributed 530,000 visitors, highlighting the continued appeal of India among travellers looking for immersive cultural experiences.

As travellers increasingly move beyond the traditional Golden Triangle, travel advisors are looking for products that can be easily incorporated into bespoke itineraries while offering something unique and memorable. Pandaw's new Hooghly itineraries have been developed with exactly this flexibility in mind.

A Legacy of River Travel

For centuries, the Hooghly River served as the commercial and cultural lifeline of Bengal, connecting royal capitals with international trading ports and shaping the region's history. Today, its banks reveal a rich tapestry of culture and heritage, from the terracotta temples of

Kalna and the traditional brass workshops of Matiari to the magnificent palaces, mosques, and gardens of Murshidabad, the former capital of Bengal.

Guests can choose between a three-night upstream voyage or a four-night downstream journey, each offering an immersive introduction to one of India's most historically significant waterways and a perspective on Bengal rarely experienced through traditional land touring.

Supporting Tailor-Made Travel

"One of the biggest shifts we're seeing is travellers treating India as a collection of regions rather than a single destination," said Yves Van Kerrebroeck, Commercial Director at Pandaw Cruises. "Guests are increasingly combining places like Rajasthan, Darjeeling, Assam or Kerala into one journey, and they're looking for experiences that fit naturally between those destinations. Our new Hooghly itineraries make that possible, giving travel advisors and DMCs a flexible river cruise product that adds a completely different dimension to a wider India holiday."

Van Kerrebroeck said the new departures were developed in response to conversations with Pandaw's destination management company partners.

"We're always looking for ways to work more closely with our DMC partners and support the way they design itineraries. These new short sailings make it much easier to introduce river cruising without asking guests to commit to a week-long expedition, while showcasing a side of Bengal that many international visitors would never otherwise experience."

Expanding India's River Cruise Choices

The new Hooghly itineraries also provide an accessible introduction to Pandaw's style of small-ship river expeditions, allowing first-time guests to experience life on the river before considering longer journeys on the Hooghly, Ganges, Brahmaputra, Mekong, or Irrawaddy.

With these new itinerary options, Pandaw continues to expand its India programme, giving travellers and trade partners more flexibility than ever to discover one of the country's most fascinating and historically significant waterways.

Bookings for the new three and four-night Hooghly sailings are now open at <https://www.pandaw.com/expeditions/kolkata-to-murshidabad-short-cruise>

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About Pandaw

Since 1995, Pandaw Cruises has been the pioneer of river cruises and expeditions in Southeast Asia. With a fleet of 13 ships, the team sails some of the region's most remote waterways, including the Mekong in Vietnam and Cambodia, the Red River in Northern Vietnam, and the Ganges and Brahmaputra in India.

Built in timeless colonial style with teak and brass finishes, each Pandaw vessel offers an intimate, small-ship experience with 14 to 30 cabins. Their ultra-shallow drafts allow us to navigate rivers few others can reach, connecting guests with off-the-map communities and untouched landscapes. On board, guests enjoy the highest passenger-to-deck-space ratio of any cruise ship afloat—ensuring ample room to relax, reflect, and take in the ever-changing panorama.