



ChaloHoppo

“Of Stories, Stillness and Strength”

A CHAPTER FROM MANIPUR

(5N/6D)



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INTRODUCTION

Cradled between Nagaland and Myanmar, Manipur - “the land of jewels” - takes its name not from gems or gold, but from the quiet richness of its valleys and the enduring grace of its people. This small yet layered state sits at a crossroads of South and Southeast Asia, where hills and valleys have shaped distinct worlds of language, faith, and tradition. The Meitei, Naga, and Kuki communities together shape the land’s character – each adding their own stories, festivals, and traditions to the region.

Once an independent kingdom known as Kangleipak, Manipur was ruled by its own line of monarchs until the British annexation in the late 19th century. During the Second World War, the quiet valley of Imphal became the site of one of the fiercest battles in the Eastern theatre - a turning point that left deep scars on both land and memory. In the decades that followed, Manipur continued to find its footing within the Indian Union, navigating questions of identity, autonomy, and belonging that still echo today.



Yet beyond the weight of history, life here has always found expression in art and ritual. The Meiteis worship goddesses through graceful dance and music that blur the line between devotion and performance. It was on these very plains that polo, known locally as Sagol Kangjei, was first played - a sport born of rhythm, teamwork, and the bond between rider and horse.

To the south lies Loktak Lake, stretching like a mirror to the sky, where floating islands drift quietly across the water. Life here moves to the rhythm of the lake - fishermen returning home at dusk, fires glowing in stilted huts, and the soft sound of oars breaking the stillness. It's a landscape that feels both fragile and eternal, much like Manipur itself.

In recent years, the state has seen both progress and pain. Periods of peace and revival have been shadowed by unrest, as communities grapple with long histories and unresolved divides. Yet beyond the headlines, life carries on in its own quiet ways - sometimes interrupted, often resilient - in the laughter of women trading at Nupi Keithel, in the serenity of Loktak's waters, and in the gentle rhythm of prayer and song that still threads through the valley.



This chapter is an invitation to see Manipur with care and curiosity - to listen rather than look, to move at the pace of its people, and to witness a land where beauty and complexity coexist. For in Manipur, grace is not the absence of struggle, but the way life endures beside it - in its stories, in its stillness, and in its quiet strength.



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Walk through Nupi Keithel – Asia’s largest all-women market – where generations of Manipuri women have traded, led, and built a legacy of resilience and enterprise.
- Visit Imphal’s landmarks, from the world’s oldest polo ground to the Manipur State Museum, and pause at local eateries that capture the valley’s quiet, everyday rhythm.
- Step into living history at the Commonwealth War Cemetery and the Imphal Peace Museum, where stories from World War II and the Japanese-INA campaigns are preserved with dignity.
- Experience the calm grandeur of Loktak Lake and Keibul Lamjao National Park – the only floating national park in the world and home to the endangered sangai deer.
- Drift across Loktak’s shimmering waters, walk on floating phumdis, and enjoy a meal on Sendra Island as the sun sets over the lake.
- Explore Kangla Fort, the ancient seat of Manipur’s kings, and wander through its temples, relics, and colonial-era bungalows steeped in history.



- Visit Andro Heritage Village to witness the art of traditional pottery, taste local rice brews, and experience the enduring hospitality of the Meitei people.
- Drive to the Marjing Polo Complex and Kiyong Temple, where heritage, legend, and sweeping views of the valley come together.
- Spend time in Kakching village, walking through paddy fields, visiting its small museum, and sharing a home-cooked meal in a garden overlooking the green hills.

DAY WISE BREAKDOWN

| Day | Starting Point | Ending Point | Distance & Time | Experience | Stay | Inclusions |
|-----|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Imphal Airport | Imphal | 30 min drive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit Nupi Keithel (Asia's largest women-run market) • Explore State Museum and Polo Ground • Local Manipuri lunch | Imphal stay (boutique homestay/hotel) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Accommodation (twin-sharing) -local guide -ChaloHoppo Trip Leader |
| 2 | Imphal → Loktak Lake | Imphal | 50 km / 1.5 hrs each way | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit Commonwealth War Cemetery • Imphal Peace Museum • Boat ride at Loktak • Lake & Keibul Lamjao NP • Lunch at Sendra Island • Visit INA Museum | Imphal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Breakfast -Entry tickets -Local guide -Private vehicle |
| 3 | Imphal → Andro Village | Imphal | 25 km / 1 hr each way | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore Kangla Fort, Andro Heritage Village, Santhei Natural Park • Local lunch • Evening prayers at Shree Govindajee Temple | Imphal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Breakfast -Lunch -Cultural site entries -Guide |
| 4 | Imphal → Heingang → Sekmai | Imphal | 60 km circuit / 2 hrs total | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit Kiyong Temple • Marjing Polo Statue • Relax by Sekmai River • Sunset view from Imphal Tower | Imphal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Breakfast -Private vehicle -Local guide |
| 5 | Imphal → Kakching | Imphal | 45 km / 1.5 hrs each way | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit Khongjom War Memorial • Kakching Museum • Paddy field walk • Village lunch at hilltop garden | Imphal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Breakfast -Guided walks -Transfers |
| 6 | Imphal Airport | Imphal Airport | 30 min drive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit RKS Art Gallery (if time allows) • Transfer to airport | — | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Breakfast |



DAY 1- ARRIVAL AT IMPHAL – WHERE WOMEN LEAD THE WAY

Welcome to Manipur, the land where stories are lived as much as they are told. On arrival at Imphal Airport, meet your local guide and drive to your stay in the heart of the valley. After checking in and taking a little time to refresh, step out for your first taste of Manipuri life.

Begin with lunch at a local eatery, where regional favourites like Eromba, Singju, and sweet black rice pudding offer a flavourful welcome to the valley.

Later, walk through Nupi Keithel, the Mothers' Market, Asia's largest women-run bazaar. Hundreds of women, dressed in bright phaneks and shawls, fill the lanes with colour and conversation. They sell everything from handwoven textiles and bamboo baskets to herbs, vegetables, and ritual crafts. Bargaining here feels more like dialogue, filled with humour and warmth. Every face tells a story of resilience and quiet pride, passed down through generations.

Nearby lies the oldest polo ground in the world, where the sport first took shape in Manipur's green plains. If time allows, visit the State Museum, where ancient Meitei artefacts and tribal relics reflect the valley's layered history and artistry.

As evening settles, the chatter of the market fades into soft temple bells and the aroma of incense. By dinnertime, Imphal grows quiet, its streets slowing to the unhurried rhythm of the hills.

OVERNIGHT IN IMPHAL



DAY 2- HISTORY AND HORIZONS – FROM WAR MEMORIES TO FLOATING WORLDS

After an early breakfast, you set out to explore the layers of Manipur's history and its landscapes of quiet grace. Morning mist hangs low over the Commonwealth War Cemetery, where rows of white stones tell stories of courage and loss. Your guide shares how these green hills once became the stage for World War II's eastern front, a memory still held gently by the land.

The road then winds toward Loktak Lake, the air growing cooler and scented with reeds and rain. At the Imphal Peace Museum, letters, relics, and personal stories come together to speak of endurance and reconciliation, a reminder that peace here has been patiently earned.

Soon, Loktak Lake opens up before you, its floating islands, or phumdis, drifting across still waters. Within it lies Keibul Lamjao National Park, the only floating national park in the world and home to the rare Sangai deer, often seen walking delicately over living mats of vegetation. A boat ride lets you glide through this dreamlike world, where water and land seem to merge and breathe as one.

Lunch awaits at the hilltop restaurant on Sendra Island, with views stretching endlessly across the lake. On your return, visit the INA Memorial Museum, where Netaji's tricolour first rose in the northeast wind. As you drive back to Imphal, stilted homes and fishing boats glint in the fading light. Spend the evening at leisure.

OVERNIGHT IN IMPHAL



DAY 3- LIVING HERITAGE – FORTS, VILLAGES, AND FAITH

The morning light seeps softly into Imphal as you wake to the sounds of the valley coming alive. After breakfast, you set out to explore the city's living heritage, beginning with Kangla Fort, once the royal seat of the Meitei kings. Its gates open into a world of courtyards, temples, and quiet corridors where echoes of forgotten ceremonies still linger. Every wall here carries a story of poets, warriors, and priests who shaped this land between rivers and hills.

Leaving the fort behind, you drive toward Andro Heritage Village, where time slows its pace. Earthen houses with bamboo fences line winding paths, and the scent of woodsmoke drifts through the air. Artisans sit by their doorsteps, shaping clay and weaving bamboo baskets, their craft carrying generations of memory. The Panam Ningthou Sanglen, the old chief's residence, stands nearby, a reminder of an era when leadership meant wisdom and kinship.

A short walk away, Santhei Natural Park opens into meadows and still ponds. Families picnic under the trees, laughter drifts across the grass, and visitors sip local rice wine beneath the tall pines. You pause here for a simple lunch, perhaps a taste of fresh local dishes, before returning to Imphal as the afternoon light begins to soften.



DAY 3- LIVING HERITAGE – FORTS, VILLAGES, AND FAITH (CONT.)

By dusk, you make your way to the Shree Govindajee Temple. As lamps are lit and chants rise in rhythm, dancers move in circles of light and sound. The evening feels both sacred and familiar, a quiet reflection of Manipur's enduring grace. Return to your stay for dinner and a restful night.



DAY 4- HILLS AND VALLEYS – TEMPLES, STATUES, AND RIVERS

The morning carries a soft mountain chill as you set out toward the eastern hills that cradle the Imphal Valley. The road winds gently upward through sleepy hamlets and green slopes until you reach the Kiyong Temple of Lainingthou Sanamahi. Dedicated to the ancient Meitei god of creation and protection, this hilltop shrine feels suspended between sky and forest. The wind hums through prayer flags, and the faithful bow in quiet gratitude, their voices merging with the breeze.

Descending back into the valley, the bronze figure of the Marjing Polo Statue comes into view on Heingang Hill. The horse and rider stand tall above the plains, a tribute to Manipur's proud legacy as the birthplace of modern polo. Your guide shares stories of Sagol Kangjei, the traditional version of the game once played on these very fields, where skill and rhythm bound horse and rider as one.

By afternoon, you reach the banks of the Sekmai River, where life moves gently. Families picnic under trees, children wade in the shallows, and laughter drifts across the water. You may dip your feet in the cool stream, sip a glass of fresh toddy, and simply watch the day unfold at its own pace.

As evening settles, you return to Imphal. From the View Tower in the city's heart, the valley glows in amber light, the surrounding hills forming a quiet embrace. Return to your stay for dinner and rest, carrying the calm of the day with you.

OVERNIGHT IN IMPHAL



DAY 5- FIELDS OF LIFE - A DAY WITH VILLAGERS IN KAKCHING

The morning begins with sunlight spilling over the valley as you drive south toward Kakching, a land where green fields meet blue skies and life moves gently to the rhythm of the earth. Along the way, a stop at the Khongjom War Memorial offers a quiet moment of reflection. Perched on a hilltop, it honours the Manipuri heroes of the 1891 Anglo-Manipur War. From here, the view stretches endlessly over paddy fields and rivers, a reminder that courage often lives quietly in rural soil.

Kakching welcomes you with the warmth of village life. At the small Kakching Museum, old tools, ornaments, and household treasures tell the story of generations who have worked this land and worshipped its spirits. A guided walk takes you through paddy fields shimmering in the sunlight, across small wooden bridges, and up to a hilltop garden where lunch awaits, with steaming rice, wild greens, and fish fresh from the nearby river.



DAY 5- FIELDS OF LIFE - A DAY WITH VILLAGERS IN KAKCHING (CONT.)

In the afternoon, you take the slower village road back, passing fish farms, roadside gardens, and children cycling home from school. A brief stop at a local pottery house lets you watch artisans at work, their hands shaping clay with practiced ease.

By evening, you return to your stay in Imphal. As the sun dips low, you realise that the true beauty of Manipur lies not just in its monuments or mountains, but in its people, their grace, their craft, their quiet pride. Over dinner, stories and laughter linger a little longer than usual, as the journey nears its end and the rhythm of the valley stays quietly with you.



DAY 6- DEPARTURE AND SOUVENIRS

Your final morning in Imphal begins gently. If time allows, visit the RKS Art Gallery, where Manipuri painters and sculptors bring their homeland to life through colour, form, and imagination. The space feels like a quiet conversation between past and present, where local legends and landscapes find new meaning in every brushstroke and carving.

As your car makes its way to the airport, Imphal unfolds behind you, markets alive with women traders, children walking to school, and distant hills shimmering in the sunlight. You leave with more than souvenirs. You carry the echo of the Sangai's steps on floating land, the warmth of a shared meal in Kakching, and the hum of chants from Kangla Fort.

Manipur doesn't just stay in memory. It lingers, like a song that refuses to fade.



PRICING

MAXIMUM GROUP SIZE : 10 ADULTS

“Price on request”



- Accommodation in comfortable homestays, boutique hotels, and eco-lodges on a twin-sharing basis.
- Breakfast on all days except Day 1.
- Lunch on Day 3.
- Guided visits to cultural and historical sites including Kangla Fort, Nupi Keithel, Andro Heritage Village, and Loktak Lake.
- Boat ride in Loktak Lake and guided exploration of Keibul Lamjao National Park.
- Entry tickets for State Museum, Imphal Peace Museum, and INA Museum.
- All transfers and sightseeing in a private vehicle with an experienced driver.
- Local English-speaking guides in Imphal, Loktak, and Kakching.
- ChaloHoppo Trip Leader support.



EXCLUSIONS

- Flights or train tickets to and from Imphal.
- Personal expenses, tips, beverages, and shopping.
- Additional boating or activities not included in the itinerary.
- Any cost arising from unforeseen circumstances, such as weather or road delays.



IMPORTANT POINTS

- **Best time to visit:** October to April, when skies are clear, lakes are full, and festivals abound.
- **Fitness level:** Easy and suitable for families, senior travellers, and those with an interest in culture and soft adventure.
- **Accommodation:** Mid-range lodges, homestays, and boutique hotels with clean facilities and local charm.
- **Connectivity:** Good in Imphal; moderate to weak around Loktak and Andro.
- **Packing essentials:** Comfortable walking shoes, sun protection, light layers, reusable water bottle, binoculars, and a small daypack.
- **Cuisine:** Expect fresh, home-cooked Manipuri meals which are light, balanced, and often flavoured with herbs, bamboo shoots, and fermented textures. Vegetarian options are easily available.

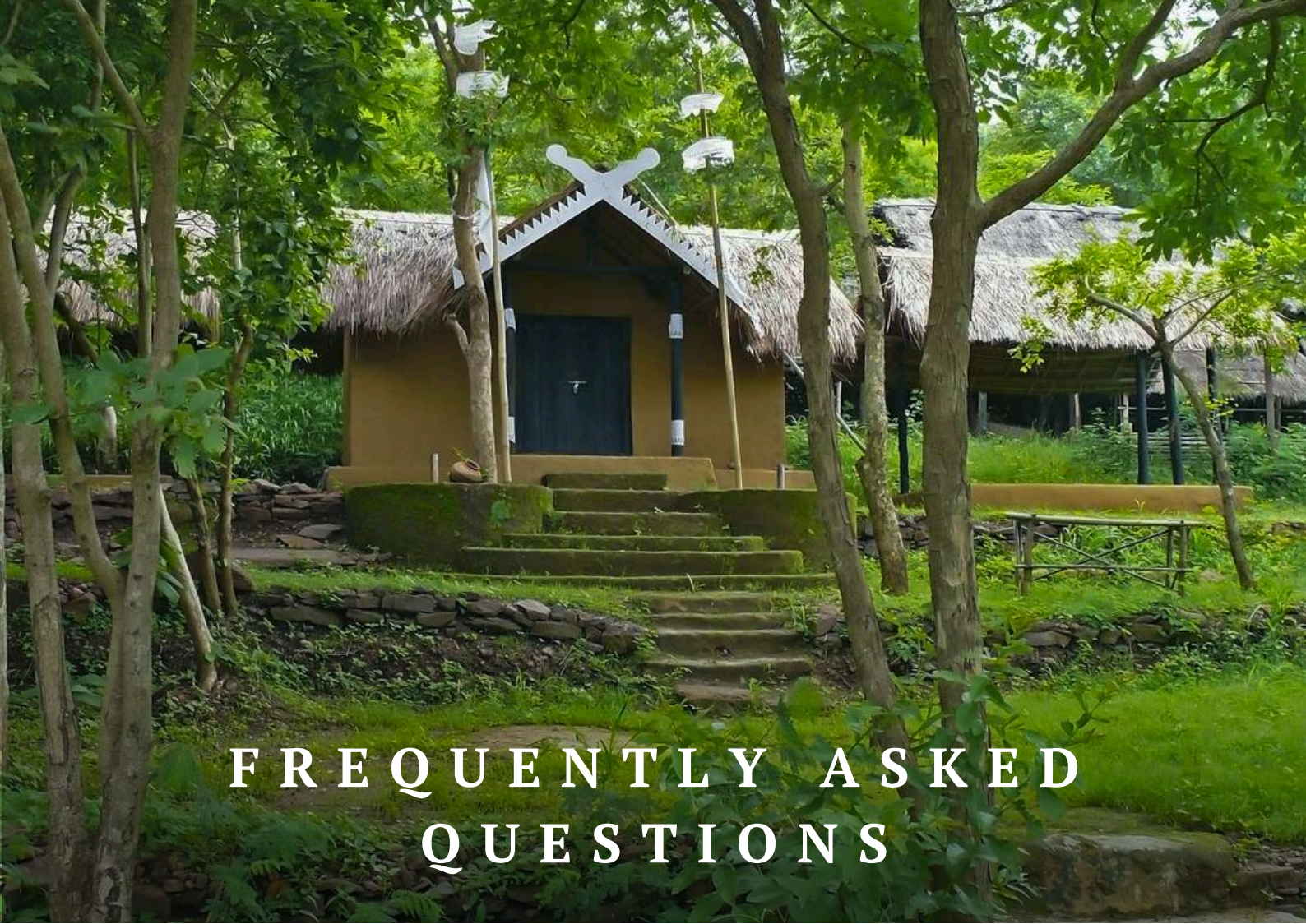


CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY

General Refund Policy

45+ days prior to starting date of the trip - 100% refund of the total trip cost
30-44 days prior to starting date of the trip - 75% refund of the total trip cost
15-29 days prior to starting date of the trip - 50% refund of the total trip cost
8-14 days prior to starting date of the trip - 25% refund of the total trip cost
7 days or less prior to starting date of the trip - No refund

Note - For Fixed Departures (Group Trips) - If you are able to find a replacement for yourself in the group, we'd be happy to provide you with a 100% refund!



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What time does the trip start and end?

The arrivals in Imphal airport start from 9.30 am to 5 pm in the evening.

Is this trip suitable for families?

Yes, this itinerary is family-friendly with gentle activities, cultural visits, and short walks suitable for all age groups.

Can I experience local festivals during this trip?

If you travel between November and March, you might witness festivals like Sangai Festival or Yaoshang, depending on the timing.

Is the Loktak Lake boating experience safe?

Yes. The boats are operated by trained local guides and the activity is safe for beginners and non-swimmers.

What kind of accommodation can I expect?

Boutique homestays and lodges with modern facilities, clean rooms, and local hospitality.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will vegetarian meals be available?

Absolutely. Manipuri cuisine naturally includes a variety of vegetarian dishes, and special dietary needs can be accommodated.

Is it safe to travel in Manipur?

Yes, it is safe to travel in Manipur except in some places. Presently for security reasons, the government is not giving permission to the tourists to travel in certain areas.

What is your cancellation policy?

We have elaborated on all the details of our cancellation policy on Page 20.

What happens if someone books their flights before reserving a slot with us and we are sold out?

It is important to note that booking flights before reserving a slot with us does not guarantee availability. In the event that we are sold out, we cannot be held responsible for any inconvenience caused.

What are the meals that are provided and what about the ones not included?

Outdoor picnic or an experiential lunch will be arranged on Day 3 and 5. On other days, you will visit renowned local restaurants with the Guide that will give you an authentic taste of the local cuisine.

Room Sharing

Rooms are shared on twin sharing basis. In case you are a solo traveller, you will be paired up with another solo traveller of the same gender.

How much money we should carry?

While most of your expenses are taken care of, an additional Rs. 1,000 per day (upper limit) would be more than enough for all your expenses. Activities at Shnongpdeng range from Rs. 250 to Rs. 1000 per activity. You can take a look at our Exclusions to get a better understanding of how much money you may need.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are some of the things I should carry?

Once you sign up for the trip, we will be sending you a detailed list of Things to Carry for the season!

How can we apply for the Inner Line Permit (ILP)?

To visit Arunachal Pradesh, Indian citizens need to apply for an Inner Line Permit (ILP), which can be easily obtained online through the official portal [answer can be similar to WAP/EAP](#). Simply register, fill in your travel details, upload a passport-sized photo and a valid ID (like Aadhaar or Voter ID), select the districts you plan to visit, and pay 500 per district. The e-ILP is usually approved within 24-48 hours. Once approved, download and carry printed copies of the permit, as it will be checked at various entry points and checkpoints within the state.

What makes Loktak Lake and Keibul Lamjao National Park special?

Loktak Lake is the largest freshwater lake in Northeast India. Keibul Lamjao National Park, located on the lake, is the world's only floating national park and home to the endangered sangai deer. You can walk on floating phumdis, drift across the lake, and enjoy a sunset meal on Sendra Island.

Will there be a guide with us during the activities?

Yes, each day's activities will be accompanied by a knowledgeable local guide who will provide insights into the culture, history, and natural wonders of the region.



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