



#TRAVEL

Sylhet's top 5 boat ride experiences

The air carries a subtle crispness and nature adorns itself in a delicate frosty charm signalling winter is here! And in winter, Sylhet unfolds its enchanting beauty in a new light. As the sun casts its golden glow upon mist-kissed landscapes and the rivers weave through a winter tapestry, there's no better time for a boat expedition in this northeastern haven of Bangladesh.

To make your winter expedition more delightful, we present you a list of 5 boat rides that promise to take you on a journey of awe and wonder.

Ratargul Swamp Forest

The enchanting freshwater swamp forest of Ratargul, located in Gowain River, Sylhet, offers unique boat rides through its mystical waters to nature enthusiasts. Flanked by half-submerged trees and vibrant foliage, a boat ride through the emerald-green waters is nothing short of a surreal experience. As your boat glides through the narrow channels, you will be serenaded by the melodious tunes of exotic birds and occasional sightings of snakes and various insects.

Ratargul Swamp Forest promises an immersive journey into the heart of nature's tranquillity, and to get there, you can hire engine boats, commonly known as trawlers from Gowainghat.

Lalakhal

Surrounded by hills and Meghalaya Mountain ranges, the water of Lalakhal is adorned with shades of blue that defy description. A boat ride on Lalakhal offers a mesmerising experience as you float on the azure waters, surrounded by stretches of greenery and Lalakhal Tea Garden.

Winter should be a perfect time for you to visit. As there is not much water in this season, you will be greeted by calm and transparent blue-green water and the hubbub of migratory birds. With its crystal-clear waters and vibrant birdlife, Lalakhal offers a respite from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

The boat trip typically begins at Sharighat Bridge and to reach here, you can start your journey from Sylhet city. At Sharighat, you will find local boat operators offering their services.

Lovachora

Lovachora, a hidden gem in the captivating landscapes



of Sylhet, invites adventurers to explore its beauty through a serene boat ride. Located at Kanaighat upazila, a boat through the Lova River will offer you a view of lush tea gardens and far-flung hilltops of the Khasia-Jainta mountains of Meghalaya.

To enjoy the boat ride at Lova River, you have to go to Kanaighat Sadar first. Upon reaching Kanaighat Sadar, you can take a boat from the local boat pier to navigate the Lova River, leading you to the pristine beauty of Lovachora. The boat ride itself is a mesmerising experience offering views of lush greenery and serene waters.

Bichnakandi

Bichnakandi, a hidden gem tucked away in the rustic landscapes of Sylhet, offers a boat ride like no other. The journey begins from Hadarpur Bazar Ghat amidst crystal-clear turquoise waters surrounded by limestone hills. The boats, which can be reserved from the ghat, navigate through the serene water, revealing secret hills and submerged bountiful greenery.

As the boat glides smoothly, the surreal beauty of Bichnakandi unfolds, creating a sense of otherworldly magic. The juxtaposition of the boat's gentle movement against the rugged cliffs and pristine waters is a visual symphony that will linger in your memory.

Tanguar Haor

Tanguar Haor, nestled in the Dharmapasha and Tahirpur upazilas of Sunamganj district, Sylhet is a natural wetland, adorned with lush greenery and vibrant aquatic life, offers a unique and enchanting experience for those who embark on its tranquil waters.

Local boat operators are available, ready to assist you in arranging boat rides to explore the breath-taking beauty of Tanguar Haor. To make the most of your Tanguar Haor visit, you can witness the local life and biodiversity of the haor by staying in a houseboat.

Whether you are a nature lover, an adventure seeker, or someone in search of tranquillity, the boat ride at Tanguar Haor promises an experience that will linger in your memory for a long time.

By Ayman Anika

Photo: Farhan Alvee

#PERSPECTIVE

How fog creates Dhaka's most Instagrammable season

Winter in Dhaka is many things — jacket and layer-up season, rooftop BBQ season, and, perhaps most surprisingly, fog season. As the city wraps itself in a misty embrace, everything takes on a cinematic quality. That dusty street you pass every day? Now a moody black-and-white still. The *tong-er dokan* on the corner? A quaint countryside café in the making. Fog turns the city into an unlikely Instagram wonderland, and Dhakaites are leaning into it with a fervour that only they can muster.

Fog has a peculiar, almost mystical tendency to elevate the commonplace to the exceptional. The



rickshaw capital's often hard edges are blurred by the foggy mornings, which also reduce the turmoil, and give the most ordinary images in the city an air of wonder.

The Rickshaw Diaries: A lone rickshaw emerging from the fog becomes the subject of a thousand poetic captions.

The Tree-lined Streets of Dhanmondi: With the fog rolling in, these paths look like a scene out of a dreamy art film, complete with moody lighting and muted colours.

The Bridges of Hatirjheel: At sunrise, when the fog hovers just above the water, it feels like you've stumbled into a Bengali edition of *La La Land*.

It's as if the fog knows the city's residents are secretly romantic at heart.

Fog essentially acts as nature's own Instagram filter. It softens harsh light, dulls unsightly backgrounds, and gives everything a natural glow. For selfie enthusiasts, this means fewer touch-ups and more flawless "golden hour" shots.

A foggy scene always carries a sense of mystery. It's why Dhakaites are suddenly captioning their posts with cryptic lines like, "Lost in the mist, found in the moment." Even if the reality is that they're standing outside Gulshan 2 circle waiting for a CNG.

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