

# Luxury Mekong Cruise Holiday - 12 days

(Saigon – Cai Be – Tan Chau – Phnom Penh – Tonle Lake – Siem Reap)

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## Itinerary Overview

Day	Destination
Day 1	SAIGON ARRIVAL
Day 2	SAIGON CU CHI TUNNEL – CITY
Day 3	SAIGON - MY THO - CAI BE
Day 4	CAI BE – SA DEC – TAN CHAU
Day 5	TAN CHAU – BORDER CROSSING – PHNOM PENH
Day 6	PHNOM PENH
Day 7	PHNOM PENH – KAMPONG CHAM (MEKONG)
Day 8	KAMPONG CHAM (MEKONG) – KAMPONG CHHNANG (TONLE)
Day 9	KAMPONG CHHNANG – TONLE LAKE
Day 10	SIEM REAP
Day 11	SIEM REAP - ANGKOR TOUR & SUNSET
Day 12	SIEM REAP DEPARTURE

## Inclusions & Exclusions

INCLUSIONS	EXCLUSIONS
<p><b>Land Tour Inclusions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Overnights at luxury 5* hotels:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Renaissance Riverside in Saigon</li> <li>○ Victoria Resort in Siem Reap</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Vietnam visa approval letter</li> <li>➤ Mekong 8 day full board package by Jayavarman/Jahan Cruise</li> <li>➤ Private Pre/post cruise excursions</li> <li>➤ Local English speaking guides</li> <li>➤ Meals as indicated in the itinerary</li> <li>➤ Port tax</li> <li>➤ Entrance fees for sightseeing mentioned in the itinerary</li> <li>➤ Tours and transfers as mentioned, by air-conditioned vehicles</li> </ul>	<p><b>Land Tour Exclusions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Meals and services other than those noted in the itinerary</li> <li>➤ Vietnam and Cambodia Visa stamping fees</li> <li>➤ Laundry, telephone calls, and personal expenditures</li> <li>➤ Gratuities for guides, drivers, porters, boat crew, and personal, non-itinerary services</li> </ul>

## Detailed Itinerary

### Day 1 SAIGON ARRIVAL

Arrive in Hanoi. Greeted by your guide/driver at the airport. Transfer to your hotel in the city centre for check-in and at leisure in the rest of the day.

**Meals:** N/A

**Accommodation:** Hotel in Saigon

### Day 2 SAIGON CU CHI TUNNEL - CITY

Today, we will spend a full day to visit the city. We start with visit to President Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum and residence. We also visit the famous One Pillar Pagoda nearby. Leaving the President's complex, we continue to visit the Temple of Literature (Van Mieu). Although several Van Mieu can be

found throughout Vietnam, the most prominent and famous is that situated in the city of Hanoi, and was functioned as Vietnam's first university

After lunch in a local restaurant, we go to the Museum of Ethnology, which is an excellent museum containing the ethnic costumes of the various minorities of Vietnam, as well as relics, tools and even full size replicas of their homes and buildings.

**Meals:** Breakfast/Lunch

**Accommodation:** Hotel in Saigon

### Day 3 Saigon – My Tho – Cai Be

We gather before noontime at our welcome lounge in Saigon. Lean back with a drink as our staff welcomes you and collects your details for the boarding.

We bid farewell to the hustle and bustle of Saigon and travel 70 kilometers south overland to My Tho to embark your luxury floating home for your coming journey along the Might Mekong.

Upon boarding our crew warmly welcomes you and you check in to your prepared staterooms. The ship set sail and your fascinating journey of exploring the Mekong can begin. Lunch buffet is served in the restaurant while the vessel steadily glides upstream to reach the overnight spot. Make yourself familiar with all the ship facilities. Now it is time to become one with one of the largest streams in Asia.

The afternoon allows you pastime at your private balcony or join our tea time at the open air bar as the twilight bathes the land of Mekong Delta into a golden haze.

During the time you savor your dinner the ship reaches Cai Be. Cai Be is a charming small town, famous for its Catholic French church and manufacturing of traditional crafts and food products. The floating market of Cai Be is getting smaller every year, since trading on the water is shifting more and more into modern central markets.

We drop anchor mid-stream and overnight near Cai Be.

**Meals:** Lunch/Dinner

**Accommodation:** Jahan Cruise / Jayavarman Cruise

### Day 4 Cai Be – Sadec – Tan Chau

Everyday, we offer to our guests an invigorating Tai Chi class on the sun deck. Set in your day like many local people do around Asia just as the sun begins its gentle glow.

A sumptuous buffet breakfast is the perfect start in your first exploration day in the Mekong Delta.

The morning tour takes you Cai Be. Cai Be still hosts a small floating market for boat to boat trading of local goods such as fruits and agricultural products. Our guide explains the particularities of this long lasting dealing culture. Each boat has a special marker to let buyers know what goods they are selling.

Cai Be is a rustic town criss-crossed by and many water canals. We go on-shore to visit a workshop where we learn about and observe how rice paste, rice paper, rice cookies or rice wine is manufactured. Cai Be and its surrounding areas are covered by palmtrees and hence the region is also famous for the production of coconut candies. With our local boat we continue to cruise through the lush and green canal network and can observe farmers working in the fields.

Back on board lunch is served and you have some time for yourself afterwards to either enjoy a true Vietnamese coffee at the bar or simply watch the life on the riverbanks floating by.

In the afternoon, we reach the area of Sa Dec. We embark a traditional sampan and tour towards Binh Thanh Island. This island is one of the larger ones in the vast stream of the Mekong. Some communities have settled here and make their living by growing water hyacinths. We visit exclusively one of those untouched areas. By wandering through the village we get a deep understanding of the native life. But moreover we can follow the whole process of ratt making. You can even try yourself the weaving which is still done manually. We will meet also an old local people who shares with us their story on this island and they are happy for any chit-chat with you.

Back on board you may like to pamper yourself with a spa treatment or take a dip in our pool on the sun deck. Our expert guides offer a presentation on the "Life on the Mekong Delta" as the ship continues sailing to Tan Chau-the boarder town to Cambodia. We moor mid-stream near Tan Chau.

Dinner is served and afterwards you can join our evening cinema session (offered every night) featuring selected classic movies.

**Meals:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

**Accommodation:** Jahan Cruise / Jayavarman Cruise

## Day 5

### Tan Chao – Border Crossing – Phnom Penh

Welcome to the fish sanctuary of Vietnam. Begin your day with a hearty breakfast at the dining hall or in the quiet sanctuary of your balcony.

Brace yourself for an excursion around Tan Chau, a pleasant, slow-paced town near the Cambodian border with a sizeable Chinese, Kinh and Khmer community. Once arrived on-shore we hop on "xelois" to explore Tan Chau. A xelaoi is a local vehicle which is still used as taxi in this region. We slowly move around the streets to see all the workshops, houses and domiciles. Get to feel the laid back vibes of this place. We stop at the colorful local market near one of the ancient temples. This is the best time you can interact with the vendors of this friendly town to make your own bargain experience. We board our local boats and cruise along floating houses to finally reach a floating fish farm. This region is the source of fish production to be sold all over the world and we can see closely how fish farmings works.

Back on board our "home" we sail towards the Vietnamese-Cambodian border. Get ready for a fascinating and leisurely cruise through the deep Cambodia countryside towards Phnom Penh.

The whole afternoon is at your own arrangements. This is the cruise part when even the last passenger will turn into cruise mode and hopefully experience the therapeutical influence this mighty river radiates. It is time for massages, time for sun bed relaxations, time for private balcony kick-backs - forsooth the time to merge with the river.

A culinary class is offered during the afternoon to sharpen your knowledge and skills on the local cuisine. Some may like to do a flying visit at the bridge - the captain always has a story to share about "his" river. "The Highway Blues" beckons as we float into a state of mild bliss and before you totally drift away join our afternoon high tea for some treats.

Dinner is served before we arrive in the capital of Cambodia around 8 o'clock. The boat docks at the pier of Phnom Penh. You are free to go for your first exploration by yourself. Stroll along the river promenade and watch the locals chit-chatting, selling odds and ends or have a drink in one of the numerous bars (kindly inform our crew once you are leaving the ship on your own).

**Meals:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

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**Accommodation:** Jahan Cruise / Jayavarman Cruise

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**Day 6**

**Phnom Penh**

Welcome to Phnom Penh the once called Paris of the East. Despite its rapid development, it has retained a lot of its rustic charm and elegance. It is an amazing town to bespeak centuries of incredible history and culture which can still be felt at many street corners.

After breakfast we bid farewell to our passenger of the Pearl of the Orient Cruise (3-nights).

At the same time we welcome around 8 o'clock our passengers of the Serenity Cruise (4-nights).

We start with a full sight-seeing tour right after breakfast. By bus we visit the Killing Fields at the outskirts of the city and after the centrally located prison "S21". Both historic sites display the sad and cruel chapter of Khmer history when once the Khmer Rouge ruled the country with terror and suppression. Those places have merely changed much since the horrific time back in the early seventies and so it can be heart wrenching. There is the alternative to explore the city during the morning by your own pace individually before re-joining the group.

Lunch we take in a nice restaurant in town. Our exploration of Phnom Penh focuses afterwards on the fascinating cultural heritage of Phnom Penh. The golden edifice of the Royal Palace with its Silver Pagoda and the exceptional Khmer crafts at the National Museum are the afternoon highlights. The day trip ends with a "cyclo" ride back to the ship through the bustling streets of downtown Phnom Penh.

Take some rest in your spacious cabin or join other fellow passengers at the bar for some refreshing drinks before our capturing evening activities start:

It begins with a variety of cocktails served on the sun deck or at the open bar. We move to the lounge which is set up for a captivating lecture about Cambodian modern history, held by a professor of the Royal University of Phnom Penh. Definitely among the highlights of this cruise to receive knowledge out of first hand as our lecturer had a private relation to the former King of Cambodia and many other high ranking politician.

After the lecture a feast of barbecue dinner on the sun deck commences. The dinner is accompanied by an Apsara dance performance. You have to witness the brilliance and richness of this dance along with the soothing sounds of traditional music.

As the evening unwinds enjoy your supper with a good glass of wine and marvel at the skyline of Phnom Penh and the calming flow of the Tonle River.

**Meals:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

**Accommodation:** Jahan Cruise / Jayavarman Cruise

**Day 7**

**Phnom Penh – Kampong Cham**

We depart before the break of dawn from Phnom Penh towards the small Angkor Ban village up the Mekong River. Wake up to the gentle cruise motion and get ready for breakfast in the dining room.

The Angkor Ban village is famous for its unspoiled community and beautiful, traditional houses. It feels like being transported back a hundred years into an era unaffected by modernity. Villagers characterize an unbridled warmth.

Back on board our staff is keen to show you the variety of traditional Khmer fashion. Lunch is served after this performance.

We cruise further up the Mekong to visit a local school to understand more about the education of the young Cambodian generation (the project is funded by an NGO). Those children here are always excited to show their skills in music and art and will bath you in smiles upon your applause. We continue the travel by road to the enchanting pre-Angkorian temple of Wat Hanchey (7th century). This small complex sits on a hill top right on the shore with breath-taking views on the Mekong. Another temple on the way is the tiny, colorful monastery of Wat Nokor. Here we might get the chance to engage in a light banter with some of the monks living in the area.

Relax back on board until dinner is served. The boat moors mid-river near Kampong Cham.

**Meals:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

**Accommodation:** Jahan Cruise / Jayavarman Cruise

### Day 8 Kampong Cham – Kampong Chhnang

We sail downstream the Mekong during breakfast time and stop at the Island of Koh Oknha Tey. This spot in the middle of the Mekong owns its fame for the manufacturing of high class silk products.

By tuk tuk we explore the island with its workshops and learn how silk is processed from its source, provided by little silkworms, to a final top quality product made of original Cambodian silk.

Before lunch our expert guides offer a presentation about "Geography of the Mekong and Tonle Sap".

After lunch a Monks' blessing ceremony on board will deliver spirits and wishes for our health and prosperity for all.

The cruiser continues its journey, passing the confluence of Mekong and Tonle River towards Kampong Tralach. Gliding through leafy swaths of this jungle-like landscape we reach Kampong Tralach. Cacophonous children waive enthusiastically while bringing their livestock for a bath in the meandering river. Live to see all this life - which is so much different than ours - by a local ox cart ride.

The boat find its anchor spot later in the Tonle River near Kampong Chhnang allowing you to observe the interesting and close-by life on shore until dinner is served in the restaurant.

**Meals:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

**Accommodation:** Jahan Cruise / Jayavarman Cruise

### Day 9 Kampong Chhnang – Tonle Lake

Wake up early to witness this spectacular water-world in the break of dawn. Our morning Tai Chi class has the perfect backdrop today. Breakfast buffet is served in the restaurant.

We are now at Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia's "water world", where everything is on sticks balanced on water rich soil. This is the most fascinating cruise part in Cambodia.

We take a local boat to the shore. With mini buses we head to a rural village nearby and go on a walking tour. Our guides introduce the village specialities – Khmer style pottery and the making of palm sugar. Definitely you should bring home some. Before returning to the boat we explore the local floating villages and wetlands of the region.

Back on board lunch is served as your floating sanctuary cruises gently along the narrow and meandering Tonle, towards the Great Tonle Lake. The river opens up to a vast "sea" - known as the biggest fresh water lake in Asia. This lake can only be crossed during high water season (approx. from End-July to Mid-November). Let your soul float and your eyes wander while the boat makes its way

towards Siem Reap.

In the afternoon we serve a high tea at the bar and as the sun sets, our crew invites for a farewell event. Enjoy your dinner and some dance and music afterwards together with the crew.

The boat moors mid-like near Siem Reap.

**Meals:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

**Accommodation:** Jahan Cruise / Jayavarman Cruise

#### Day 10

#### Siem Reap Disembarkation

The Tonle Sap (The Great Lake) is the flowing heart of Cambodia, giving love and life to millions of people. It has more fishes than any other lake in the world and is home to an incredible variety of birds, including rare – and endangered – feathered life. Free for personal activities.

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Accommodation:** Hotel in Siem Reap

#### Day 11

#### SIEM REAP ANGKOR - SUNSET

Pickup at the hotel at 8:00 and we will take you to visit to the city of Angkor Thom. At first we will start visit Bayon temple it's the highlight temple in the center of Angkor Thom city with 49 towers which every tower has 4 faces so that's mean all towers have 196 faces of Budhhistsatva Avalokitesvara and we walk to the next temple nearby called Baphoun which is Hindu temple built before Angkor Wat in 11st Century but the big Reclining Buddha behind built in 16th Century & continue to Royal Enclosure nearby with visit Elephant & Liper King Terrace as still in complex of Angkor Thom then we continue to outside Angkor Thom complex to visit Ta Prohm temple on small circuit road the one with a lot of gigantic root of trees over the temple and It's the place where Hollywood film company made a Movie "Tom Raider".

After busy couple hours in the morning around 12:30pm we'll have lunch at a local restaurant.

After lunch already around 1:30pm or 2:00pm in the afternoon we'll visit the world famous Angkor Wat temple. It really is amazing! Afterward continue to Phnom Bakheng climb the hill and temple for enjoy watching sunset view. After sunset when getting dark then we climb down the hill and return to your hotel or guesthouse by 6:00pm or 6:30pm.

Note\*: Due to the limited number of tourists on Phnom Bakheng so we will require or take you to climb up Phnom Bakheng a bit earlier then you will take a bit more longer waiting for sunset.

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Accommodation:** Hotel in Siem Reap

#### Day 12

#### SIEM REAP DEPARTURE

Today, you are free till airport transfer for departure flight. Trip ends!

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Accommodation:** Hotel in Siem Reap