

Fascinating Vietnam, Cambodia & the Mekong River – Northbound

13 Day River Cruise Ho Chi Minh City to Siem
Reap



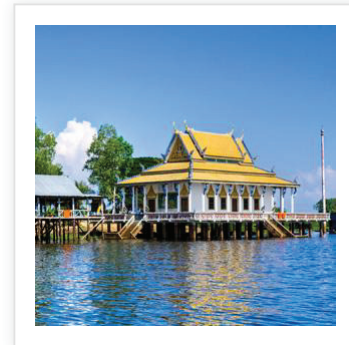
Vacation Overview

On this unique and inspiring Southeast Asia river cruise through Vietnam and Cambodia, you'll be immersed in the cultures and ancient traditions as you sightsee and spend time with locals in the most fascinating places along the mighty Mekong River.

Spend time in the bustling Ho Chi Minh City which combines historic architecture with modern skyscrapers. See the famous landmarks and try your hand in the kitchen—Vietnamese-style, with a cooking class. Go back in time with an excursion to the Cu Chi Tunnels where you'll have an opportunity to walk through a section of the immense underground tunnel system used extensively during the Vietnam War. Embark on your river cruise along the Mekong River and immerse yourself in the local cultures with a visit to a colorful market, the home of a local family making handcrafted sampans, and a workshop to learn how rice wine and traditional candies are made.

In the capital of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, tour the National Museum and Royal Palace with its striking Silver Pagoda. On a hilltop at the site of the 8th-century temple of Wat Hanchey, take in the stunning views before walking through the rural village of Angkor Ban to visit with welcoming schoolchildren. Go on an ox cart ride amongst rice paddy fields and witness the daily lives of farmers.

The grand finale of this memorable Southeast Asia river cruise vacation is a stay in Siem Reap, home to the phenomenal Temples of Angkor with an intricacy and architectural grandeur unmatched in the world. See the splendor of the Bayon temple featuring some 200 mysterious faces carved in its many towers. Then enjoy an inspiring Aspara dance performance—a perfect ending to this remarkable and cultural journey!





Itinerary

Day 1 HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM

Welcome to Ho Chi Minh City, still known as Saigon to many. Hotel rooms are available for mid-afternoon check-in.

Day 2 HO CHI MINH CITY

Motorbikes, Monuments, and Mouthwatering Cuisine

CLASSIC Take a Walking Tour of Ho Chi Minh City's historic landmarks, including a stop at the Rex Hotel for a refreshing drink at the rooftop bar where the U.S. Military held the infamous "Five

O’Clock Follies” during the war. Then visit the War Remnants Museum and bustling Ben Thanh Market.

DISCOVERY For lunch, participate in a hands-on Vietnamese Cooking Class. Learn to prepare several local dishes and how to recreate them at home. Last, but not least, sample your delicious creations!

Explore the city further during free time this afternoon.

This evening join your traveling companions for a special welcome dinner at a local restaurant.

 Breakfast  Lunch  Dinner

Day 3 **HO CHI MINH CITY. EXCURSION TO CU CHI TUNNELS**

Secret Passageways and Underground Hideouts

CLASSIC Drive out of the city for a Guided Visit to the Cu Chi Tunnels—an extraordinary network of tunnels more than 120 miles in length—used as a hideout and secret village by the Viet Cong.

Enjoy free time this afternoon and evening. Consider stopping for a drink at the famous rooftop bar at the Caravelle Hotel.

 Breakfast

Day 4 **HO CHI MINH CITY (EMBARKATION)**

Your Suite Ship® is Ready for Boarding

Transfer to the port on the Saigon River for embarkation. Get acquainted with the ship and relax before your welcome reception this evening.

AFTERNOON/EVENING CRUISE TO VINH LONG

 Breakfast  Lunch  Dinner

Day 5 **VINH LONG–CU LAO GIENG**

Sweets, Sampans, and Spires

DISCOVERY Board a sampan this morning for a local Workshop Visit in Vinh Long to see how rice paper, rice wine, and traditional candies are made.

DISCOVERY This afternoon, enjoy scenes of daily life on Cu Lao Gieng Island via sampan and local motor cart. Your Guided Excursion starts at a local workshop, where a skilled family hand-crafts sampan boats. Then, visit the home of a local family that makes Vietnamese conical hats, or “Non la,” from materials available to them such as palm leaves and bamboo. These iconic hats are primarily used as protection from the sun and rain but you may also see them used as a basket to carry home goods from the market. Lastly, stop at one of Vietnam’s oldest Catholic churches.

AFTERNOON/EVENING CRUISE TO CHAU DOC

 Breakfast  Lunch  Dinner

Day 6 CHAU DOC–LONG KHANH A–BORDER CROSSING, CAMBODIA

Colorful markets, Charming Locals, and Cotton Weavers

DISCOVERY In Chau Doc take a Guided Walk through the local market and absorb the atmosphere as locals are busy buying and selling fish, meat, and produce. Then embark on a River Excursion down the backwaters of the Mekong. Along the way, see traditional floating homes, speedboat merchants, religious sites, a market selling dried goods, and more.

DISCOVERY After lunch, a sampan brings you to the village of Long Khanh A for a Cotton-Weaving Demonstration of a well-preserved artisan's tradition.

Return to the ship to set sail for the Cambodian border.

EVENING/OVERNIGHT CRUISE TO PHNOM PENH

 Breakfast  Lunch  Dinner

Day 7 PHNOM PENH

Bonjour! French Charm Lives in Cambodia's Capital City

CLASSIC Take a City Tour by private cyclo to visit the Royal Palace with the spectacular Silver Pagoda, and the National Museum featuring an outstanding display of Khmer artifacts.

The remainder of the day is yours to enjoy the city at your leisure. Consider a Guided Optional Tour of a local brewery with free-flowing local beer!

Just before dinner, children from a local orphanage will perform a show featuring local song and dance.

 Breakfast  Lunch  Dinner

Day 8 PHNOM PENH

Shining a Light on a Dark History

CLASSIC This morning, a Guided Visit of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and one of the Killing Fields offers a glimpse into the atrocities inflicted on the Cambodian people by the Khmer Rouge regime.

After lunch, depart Phnom Penh and enjoy some time at leisure on the ship.

AFTERNOON/EVENING CRUISE TO WAT HANCHEY

 Breakfast  Lunch  Dinner

Day 9 WAT HANCHEY–ANGKOR BAN

Water Blessings and Back To School Adventures

DISCOVERY Visit Wat Hanchey, a hilltop temple dating back to the 8th century. Climb or be driven to the top where you will enjoy stunning views of the surrounding area and partake in a traditional water blessing given by local monks.

DISCOVERY After lunch, enjoy a Walking Tour through the rural village of Angkor Ban. Here, you will visit a traditional Khmer house and interact with children at a local school.

EVENING/OVERNIGHT CRUISE TO KONPONG LOUANG

 Breakfast  Lunch  Dinner

Day 10 **KONPONG LOUANG–KAMPONG TRALACH**

Calm in the Cambodian Countryside

DISCOVERY Start your Guided Sightseeing at the silversmith village in Konpong Louang. Here, see talented craftsmen use age-old techniques to turn pure silver into works of art. In Kampong Tralach board an ox cart for a ride through the beautiful Cambodian countryside. Along the way, stop to meet a local farmer and learn about his daily life.

This afternoon, enjoy scenic cruising on the Tonle River.

EVENING CRUISE TO PHNOM PENH

 Breakfast  Lunch  Dinner

Day 11 **PHNOM PENH (DISEMBARKATION)–SIEM REAP**

A Pilgrimage of Inspirational Beauty

Fly to Siem Reap, home to the Temples of Angkor, considered by many to be the most spectacular architectural ruins on Earth!

CLASSIC After lunch, begin your Sightseeing Tour by tuk-tuk to explore the temples. Start at the best preserved and most famous of all the temples: Angkor Wat. Featuring five trademark towers, it is the symbol of Cambodia. Then, visit Angkor Thom, where you will explore Bayon Temple with its 200 striking faces carved in 54 towers and impressive bas-relief sculptures, or:

ACTIVE Visit Angkor Wat, Angkor Thom, and Bayon Temple by bike.

The evening is yours to explore charming Siem Reap, stay to witness the sunset at Angkor Wat, or consider a Guided Optional Excursion to the Cambodian circus.

 Breakfast  Lunch

Day 12 **SIEM REAP**

Roots Carved in Stone and Celebrated in Dance

CLASSIC Continue your Guided Sightseeing of the Angkor Temples at Ta Prohm. Tree roots cover the ruin walls, allowing you to experience the temple with the same wonder as early explorers. Then visit Banteay Srei, a unique temple built on a small scale from red sandstone, which can be carved like wood. En route stop at a local village famous for making Khmer noodles by hand.

Spend the afternoon at your leisure. You may choose a Guided Optional Excursion to further explore Siem Reap or the temple complex by tuk-tuk.

DISCOVERY This evening, a private Apsara Dance Performance brings ancient Khmer culture to life through music, song, and dance.

 Breakfast  Dinner

Day 13 SIEM REAP

Your vacation ends with breakfast this morning.



Breakfast

Vacation Highlights

Day 1 Ho Chi Minh City: Welcome to Vietnam

Day 2 Ho Chi Minh City: Walking tour; visit the famous Rex Hotel for a drink, War Remnants Museum, and Ben Thanh Market; cooking class

Day 3 Ho Chi Minh City: Cu Chi Tunnels excursion

Day 4 Ho Chi Minh City (Embarkation): Onboard welcome reception

Day 5 Vinh Long–Cu Lao Gieng: Visit a local workshop to see how rice paper, rice wine, and traditional candy are made in Vinh Long; visit a sampan-making workshop, a local home to see how Vietnamese conical hats are made, and a Catholic church in Cu Lao Gieng

Day 6 Chau Doc–Long Khanh A–Cambodian Border Crossing: Visit a local market and the religious sites at Sam Mountain in Chau Doc; walking tour of Long Khanh A with cotton-weaving demonstration

Day 7 Phnom Penh: Sightseeing by private cyclo, including the Royal Palace, Silver Pagoda, and the National Museum; afternoon at leisure; show by children from a local orphanage

Day 8 Phnom Penh: Visit the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and visit one of the Cambodian Killing Fields

Day 9 Wat Hanchey–Angkor Ban: Visit Wat Hanchey and partake in a traditional water blessing by local monks; walking tour in Angkor Ban with school visit

Day 10 Konpong Louang–Kampong Tralach: Visit the silversmith village of Konpong Louang; ox cart ride through the countryside, and visit a local farmer's home in Kampong Tralach

Day 11 Phnom Penh (Disembarkation)–Siem Reap: Fly to Siem Reap; visit Angkor Wat, Angkor Thom, and Bayon Temple

Day 12 Siem Reap: Visit Ta Prohm, Banteay Srei, and a noodle-making village; Apsara dance performance

Day 13 Siem Reap: End of vacation

Hotels

Ho Chi Minh City

The Reverie Saigon



Mekong River Cruise Avalon Saigon

Siem Reap



Park Hyatt Siem Reap

Deluxe

The Park Hyatt, Siem Reap is the city's most prestigious address and perfect base to explore the Temples of Angkor. Located in the heart of the city, this award winning hotel blends an elegant and contemporary design to create an enlivening resort and residential feel. From the second you arrive you will be welcomed by true Cambodian hospitality and superb service. The stylish guestrooms offer a refined home away from home with all the amenities one would expect from a deluxe hotel. The luxurious collection of accommodation is matched by stylish dining venues that offer fresh, flavorful, well-presented dishes of French and Indochine inspirations. Lighter fare is also offered at The Glass House, the onsite deli-patisserie. Discerning travelers will appreciate the other amenities on offer. Relax by one of the two pools or in the inviting Living Room lounge and bar, get in a work out in the fitness center, or visit The Spa for holistic therapies and treatments using only locally harvested floral and aromatic ingredients.



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