

8 days - Saigon - Siem Reap

Low water period - Itinerary

Day 1 - Saigon - My Tho - Tan Phong Island (Cai Be)

We welcome our guests in the morning at our Saigon welcome lounge. Relax with a second coffee while our staff collects your details. We bid farewell to the hustle and bustle of Saigon and travel 70 kilometers south overland towards My Tho to embark on our vessel. After checking into your luxurious floating "home," the sailing on this major Asian waterway begins.

A lunch buffet is served in the restaurant as the vessel steadily glides upstream. As twilight bathes the Mekong Delta in a golden haze, take the opportunity to get to know your fellow travelers and join in our official welcome with canapés and prosecco.

During dinner, the ship will likely reach Tan Phong Island area near Cai Be, where we anchor midstream. This is your first glimpse of the bustling area where we will begin our Mekong adventure on land tomorrow. Join us for some late-night entertainment in the evening cinema, featuring interesting classic movies or thrilling documentaries.

Dining: Lunch, Dinner

Day 2 - Tan Phong Island - Binh Thanh Island - Tan Chau

Wake early to embrace the stunning dawn scenery, a time when the Delta's inhabitants have already been active for hours. Energize yourself with our daily morning Tai Chi class before indulging in a lavish breakfast buffet. By local boat, we gain access to the secluded island of Tan Phong, a small island situated in the midst of one of the expansive Mekong River tributaries flowing toward the nearby sea.

Default Morning Excursion: During a visit to a workshop in the town of Cai Be, we'll have the opportunity to observe the production of rice paper, rice cookies, rice wine and coconut candies. This is a very interesting manual process involving manual labour and special production technics. After the workshop we are heading to Tan Phong Island, a smaller island in the middle of the vast Mekong. We are visiting a local family and their fruit garden offering us various kind of tropical fruits to taste. A buggy ride through the island let us have a glimpse of the local day to day life as it unfolds. We stop at another family's house. They are specialized in weaving of water hyacinth plants into artistic crafts by hand.

OPTIONAL MORNING EXCURSION:

Culinary: Via tender we head towards Tan Phong Island to visit a workshop where we can see skilled workers weaving dried water hyacinths into artistic crafts. We explore some parts of the local island life during a 15-minute motorized buggy ride along small pathways, eventually stopping at a house of a local family to visit their orchard. Get to know various kind of fruits the Mekong Delta has to offer and engage in an interactive cooking experience with the local family preparing some local dishes together.

Cycling: This cycling tour offers a ride over the scenic Tan Phong Island. Cycle along well-maintained and flat concrete paths winding through orchards of rambutan, longan, and jackfruit. We stop and visit a local business family business producing charming handicrafts from water hyacinths. The tour continues for 3 km along a canal to a local temple for a refreshing break under a banyan tree before continue the ride to a tropical fruit farmer's home for a tasting.

Distance: 12km / Duration: approx. 90 min / Terrain: flat on concrete path

Relax and enjoy some time on your private balcony or at the bar as we continue our voyage upstream. In the afternoon, we arrive at the Sa Dec region and anchor near one of the larger islands in the Mekong known as Binh Thanh.

Default Afternoon Excursion: This island is home to several communities that sustain themselves by cultivating water hyacinths. Strolling through the village, you'll gain profound insights into local life and witness the complete traditional mat-making process. Additionally, you'll have the opportunity to meet a local elderly couple who have spent their entire lives on this island. They enjoy engaging in conversations with foreign visitors.

OPTIONAL AFTERNOON EXCURSION:

Culinary: Not available.

Cycling: Once on the shore, the cycling discovery around the island begins with interesting stops at scenic backstreets, rice paddies, and some island's distinctive houses offering great photo opportunities. The cycling tour leads to the village of Long Ta, which is famous for its scarf weaving. We return to the pier taking our tender boat back to the mother ship.

Distance: 7 km / Duration: approx. 60 min / Terrain: flat on concrete path

Before dinner, join us in the lounge for a presentation about life on the Mekong Delta as the ship sails toward our mooring spot for the night in Tan Chau.

Dining: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 3 - Tan Chau - Border Crossing - Phnom Penh

After our morning Tai Chi session and a delightful breakfast, we embark on an exploration of this area, renowned primarily for its aquaculture.

Default Morning Excursion: Upon disembarking, we immerse ourselves in the vibrant town life of Tan Chau by boarding "xelois" (the Vietnamese word for rickshaws). Your personal xeloi driver leisurely navigates through a network of streets, allowing you to observe workshops, street vendors, shops, and the intriguing day-to-day activities of the locals. Our journey takes us to the local market, where we mingle with residents as they go about their morning shopping routines. Continuing on, we visit a Cao Dai temple and meet with one of the priests, who enlightens us about the unique beliefs and spirit of Cao Dai. Our final destination is a fish farm that has been operated for many years by a local family, who make their livelihood from this distinctive business. Here, we gain insight into the essential knowledge required to manage such a unique enterprise in this region.

OPTIONAL MORNING EXCURSION:

Culinary: Once on-shore, we walk five minutes to the nearby market. Join our guide in selecting and buying fresh ingredients for the upcoming cooking session. We take cyclos for a charming ride through town to the local Cao Dai temple. During a quick visit you get to know some insight into this particular religion as well as the special dietary practices of Cao Dai followers. We head to the temple kitchen for an hands-on cooking class, preparing special dietary dishes in an interactive and culturally enriching experience together with the local kitchen team.

Cycling: By tender we reach the shores of a small island in the Mekong River near Tan Chau. The island's flat terrain will make this ride pleasurable and easy along lush green paths with many mango farms. Enjoy the local life left and right and the many nice fruit gardens. We stop at a small market for a little break and chat with local vendors. We continue our cycling tour with some exciting sightseeing on the way: A frog farm and a workshop specialised in weaving high quality mats.

Distance: 12 km / Duration: approx. 90 min / Terrain: flat on concrete path

Afternoon: Continuing our journey, we ascend the river for the remainder of the day, crossing into Cambodia and heading towards Phnom Penh. The afternoon is yours to enjoy at your leisure. It's time to embrace the soothing rhythm of this river and fully immerse yourself in the "cruise mode." You can opt for a spa treatment, relax on the sun deck, or unwind on your private balcony. As we pass under the bridge, the captain always has an interesting story to share about "his" river. Additionally, our kitchen team invites you to participate in a culinary workshop where you can learn about popular Vietnamese and Cambodian dishes. The boat docks at Phnom Penh, either mid-stream or at the pier.

Dining: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4 - Phnom Penh

Welcome to Phnom Penh, a city once renowned as the "Paris of the East." Despite its rapid development, it has retained much of its rustic charm and elegance. Phnom Penh is a remarkable city with a history and culture that spans centuries, still palpable at every street corner.

Our full-day sightseeing tour begins right after breakfast, allowing us to explore the city's highlights. We'll start with a cyclo ride, meandering through the town and then visit historic places such as the palace and the silver pagoda. Our journey takes us to the "S21" prison, a poignant and dark chapter in Cambodia's history during the Khmer Rouge regime of the 1970s. Afterward, we'll pause for a delightful lunch in town before continuing to visit one of the country's most famous history museums, "Sosoro," and concluding the tour with a leisurely stroll through the city's French quarter, including the iconic and aptly named monument of Wat Phnom.

In the evening, we invite you to an engaging expert lecture in the lounge. To cap off this eventful day, we'll indulge in a delightful open-air barbecue and gala dinner accompanied by a classic Apsara dance performance. Afterward, feel free to explore the city at night, savouring Phnom Penh's vibrant nightlife or taking in the lively river promenade.

Dining: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5 - Phnom Penh – Kampong Tralach – Kampong Laeang – Mid-River (Tonle Sap Mooring)

Before the sun peeks over the horizon, the cruiser sets sail, entering the Tonle River. The Tonle River is a natural wonder of Cambodia, and the scenery on both sides of the river is a true gem.

Default Morning Excursion: This morning, we'll enjoy an exciting excursion to discover another part of rural Cambodian, Kampong Tralach countryside. Our ox-pulled cart will transport us along the riverside and down winding back roads, flanked by picturesque rice paddies, until we arrive at a small village. Here, we will have the opportunity to learn about the local NGO school and library project. Alternatively, you can choose to visit the nearby ancient 300-year-old temple and Buddha shrine.

OPTIONAL MORNING EXCURSION:

Culinary: Not available

Cycling: Experience another day in the heartland of Cambodia with our biking tour through the picturesque Tonle Region. Pedal through captivating landscapes, encountering treasures like the former royal palace of 'Lungvek' and the venerable Buddha Jade Temple (1560) and just enjoy the timeless rhythms of local life as you witness skilled fishermen casting their nets in the tranquil waters of the Tonle.

Distance: 14 km / Duration: approx. 120 min / Terrain: flat on paved and partly easy dirt road

As we sail upstream, lunch is served, and our crew showcases afterwards various traditional Khmer fashions worn by locals during special occasions.

Default Afternoon Excursion: We arrive at Kampong Laeang, situated just across from the famous pottery town of Kampong Chhnang. Once ashore, we embark on tuk-tuks to travel the heart of rural Cambodian life. During this excursion, we'll explore various locals, discover the art of pottery making, and visit a charming pre-Angkorian temple. From a vantage point, we can enjoy panoramic views of the vast floodplains and lush rice fields (seasonal).

OPTIONAL AFTERNOON EXCURSION:

Culinary: The culinary themed excursion offers in addition to the default cultural excursion the possibility to participate in a cooking demonstration. Get to know how to prepare together the quite famous snack called "Nom Kruak" which is a kind of cake made from white or brown rice. Originally cooked only one side only, the Khmer invented Nom Kruak and cooked it on both sides. This dish is a tasty pre-dinner snack often consumed by locals.

Cycling: Upon disembarking, we hop on our bikes to embark on our local Khmer discovery. Our journey leads us through rice paddy fields and quaint villages where small businesses produce pottery or palm sugar. With flat terrain and mesmerizing rural landscapes, the pedal is easy-going, offering a captivating glimpse into local life unfolding before our eyes.

Distance: 17 km / Duration: approx. 90 min / Terrain: flat on paved and partly easy dirt road

Once back onboard, enjoy a relaxing poolside sundowner cocktail hour with dance tunes before dinner and an evening cinema. We begin our journey downstream, sailing towards Tonle Sap where we will anchor for the night.

Dining: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6 - Kampong Luang - Prek Bangkok – Angkor Ban (Mekong River)

Default Morning Excursion: Start the day with a walking tour through Kampong Luang (Royalism words), the renowned "Silver Smith Village," where the artistry of copper, silver, and bronze

crafting comes to life. Led by an expert guide, you'll witness the delicate transformation of raw materials into stunning handcrafted souvenirs.

As you continue your journey, visit the serene Wat Prang, the Royal Buddhist Temple, where the bones of the "King Father" of Cambodia, are enshrined. This sacred site offers a moment of reflection on the king's legacy, intertwining both history and spirituality. While there, engage with the monks and laymen, learning about their daily lives, rituals, and personal stories.

No optional morning excursion available

Default Afternoon Excursion: At the confluence of the Tonle and Mekong Rivers lies the small village of Prek Bangkong, known for its silk weaving community. This village was also the former residence of the Royal family before they moved to the Royal Palace. However, the real stars in this area today are the silk weavers, artisans who craft silk from the very beginning. We will have the opportunity to closely observe and learn about this intricate silk production process. We conclude this excursion by visiting the heritage house of H.E. Sam-Ei, once a famous architect for the royal family.

OPTIONAL AFTERNOON EXCURSION:

Culinary: Not available

Cycling: Our cycling tour takes you to the wonderful former royal palace of "Lavea Em" (1601-1618). Pedal at ease through picturesque landscapes, punctuated by captivating stops at historic pagodas, vibrant silk weaving workshops, and bustling local markets. Indulge in a delightful tea break at the residence of H.E. Sam-Ei, adding a touch of elegance to your cycling adventure.

Distance: 14 km / Duration: approx. 120 min / Terrain: flat on concrete path

The rest of the day is spent sailing up the Mekong to our overnight location. Enjoy a relaxing poolside sundowner cocktail hour with dance tunes before dinner and an evening cinema.

Dining: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7 - Angkor Ban – Kampong Cham - Stueng Trang

The morning Tai Chi session sets the mood for the day as we begin our tour of Angkor Ban.

Default Morning Excursion: This place includes a monastery with a delightful local village behind it. You'll have the chance to meet monks during their morning class and engage in friendly conversations with the villagers. As we meander through the village, we'll get as close as possible to the local way of life, collecting wonderful memories of Cambodia's rustic lifestyle.

This village is truly a gem to explore offering photographic and touching moments whilst interacting with the local community.

OPTIONAL MORNING EXCURSION:

Culinary: Today, the culinary themed excursion is offering a nice highlight. In addition to the visit of the Angkor Ban village (see default excursion) the group is going to visit the house of Mr B. who used to work years ago as a young chef aboard the ship Jayavarman. When he got married, he moved to his wife's home village. Together with his "mom-in-law" and the "chef" in the household (his wife), we prepare and cook a century old soup recipe called "Samlor Korko". The soup is kind of a fish soup made with many vegetables, spices, herbs, roasted rice, accompanied with a duck egg omelette.

Cycling: Today's journey with our cycling tour, starts with a tranquil monk meeting that sets the tone for the day. As you cycle through verdant seasonal vegetable fields, picturesque old local houses dot the landscape, offering glimpses into Cambodia's heritage. Witness skilled blacksmiths at work to understand the more about traditional craftsmanship. Conclude your adventure with a delightful pause, sipping on ice-cold local beer or indulging in the refreshing taste of freshly pressed sugar cane juice.

Distance: 10 km / Duration: approx. 120 min / Terrain: flat on concrete path

We sail to Kampong Cham during lunchtime.

Default Afternoon Excursion: We are in the vast Mekong River at the town of Kampong Cham, which is an important trade and transportation hub but it still maintains scattered small hamlets around the outskirts where the community's rhythm blends with the skilled hands of artisans. For instance, in Cheung Kok, locals craft various handmade items, whether it's food, fashion, or other everyday goods. (The nearby Bamboo bridge, which is erected seasonally, serves as more than just a passageway; it's a gateway to the past)

OPTIONAL AFTERNOON EXCURSION:

Culinary: Not available

Cycling: Embark on an appealing cycling adventure from the quaint town of Kampong Cham to the idyllic island of Koh Pen and get a sensation of the enchanting rhythms of Khmer life as you pedal through vibrant vegetable fields and verdant tobacco plantations. Along the road we can see the daily routines of local farmers, artisans or Khmer bee master passionately raising honey bees to make a living. The journey along scenic paved and unpaved roads is another venture to know more about life in the Cambodia's natural countryside.

Distance: 16 km / Duration: approx. 120 min / Terrain: flat on concrete path

Afterward, the ship makes its final journey, mooring mid-river near Stueng Trang with some farewell and party vibes along the way.

Dining: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8 - Stueng Trang - Siem Reap

Enjoy your final breakfast aboard our floating sanctuary. We disembark the ship and transfer by bus to **Siem Reap**, which takes approximately 4 hours. To keep you entertained during the journey, our guides will share interesting insights about Cambodia and the region we pass through. We hope you've enjoyed this captivating river cruise as much as our crew does every single time. Take the enchanting memories and friendships with you and share the stories of this amazing river - the Mighty Mekong.

You will arrive in Siem Reap in the early afternoon.

Dining: **Breakfast**

