

8 days - Siem Reap - Saigon

High water period - Itinerary

Day 1: Siem Reap – Kampong Laeang (Tonle River)

We greet our guests in the morning at our welcome lounge in Siem Reap. Kick back with a second coffee this morning before we depart on a short bus ride to the pier. we bid farewell to the iconic sights of Angkor and travel a short distance to the shore of Tonle Lake. A local boat brings you to the vessel and your luxurious “home” for the next several days.

As you have lunch, the vessel gently glides over Tonle Lake: the Tonle Sap (Sap means Lake in the Cambodian language) varies from 2,500 sqkm (965 sqmi) in size and 160 km (99 mi) in length during the dry season to an astonishing area of 16,000 sqkm (6,000 sqmi) and length of 250 km (160 mi) in the wet season. Let your soul float while the boat makes its way across the lake During an afternoon tea time you can get to know other travellers. Enjoy our time on the decks or get pampered by our therapists at the Spa.

Before dinner, our expert guide holds a presentation about the geography of the Mekong River and Tonle Lake. If you are in the mood, join in for the nightly cinema in the lounge before retiring to your room.

Dining: Lunch, Dinner

Day 2: Kampong Laeang - Kampong Tralach - Kampong Cham (overnight sailing)

Default Morning Excursion: We are in the midst of the vast Tonle region, one of Cambodia’s amazing ecosystems. We will discover Kampong Laeang this morning, 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 MORNING 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 concrete path

Back on the ship with lunch enjoyed and spectacular views on the Tonle River we sail south to Kampong Tralach. An afternoon tea is served at the bar before we continue with the afternoon excursion.

Default Afternoon Excursion: Once the ship stopped, we enjoy an exciting excursion to discover another part of rural Cambodian 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 a local NGO school and library project. Alternatively, you can choose to visit the nearby ancient 300-year-old temple and Buddha shrine.

OPTIONAL AFTERNOON EXCURSION:

Cycling (Ship 'The Jahan' only, extra cost): 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 concrete path

We are sailing into the early evening offering some onboard entertainment with a fashion show. As we have to make some distance, the ship will sail overnight into the Mekong River.

Dining: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 3: Kampong Cham - Angkor Ban - Prek Bangkok - Phnom Penh

As you wake this morning, the scenery has changed completely.

Default Morning 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)

In light of Bamboo bridge reparation, the following substitute program will be operated until end of Dec 2024: Experience the wonders of Wat Prah Ang Chan, a captivating 12th-century cave temple perched on a hilltop, boasting breath-taking views of the river. The Stueng Trang district is a one of Cambodia's major region famous for fruit and vegetable plantations. Get some insight what and how fruits are cultivated here whilst engaging with an owner. The last stop beholds some local food tasting: Try the ever popular local snack "Kralan" - delectable grilled sticky rice on a bamboo stick.

By bus we continue to Angkor Ban. 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: 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

We are boarding our luxury ship again sailing now downstream again towards Phnom Penh. Before we arrive at Cambodia's capital, we halt at a small silk weaving community.

Default Afternoon Excursion: At the confluence of the Tonle and Mekong Rivers lies the small village of Prek Bangkok, 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:

Cycling: Our cycling tour today takes us 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
Just a short distance of sailing and we arrive in Phnom Penh, where the ship is mooring mid-stream with views on the city opposite.

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 - Border Crossing - Tan Chau

Once the ship departed, the rest of the morning and the whole afternoon is at your own disposal. It is time to switch into cruise mode and hopefully experiences the relaxing cadence this mighty river emanates. The afternoon is perfect for massages, relaxation on a terrace deck sunbed or private balcony kick-backs. Conjure up a spell to merge with the river and float into a state of mild bliss. You also may like to visit the bridge, as the captain always has a little story to share about “his” river. Or, if you are curious to learn more about Khmer gastronomy, join a culinary workshop to sharpen your knowledge about local cuisine.

As you sip drinks and nibble on treats during afternoon tea, we approach the border and finally arrive in Vietnam. From here it is just a short distance to Tan Chau, a pleasant, slow-paced border town with a sizeable Chinese, Kinh and Khmer community. We moor near the city with views on the riverbanks.

Dining: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6: Tan Chau - My An Hung – Binh Thanh Island

Welcome to the fish sanctuary of Vietnam. 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

After back onboard a siesta after lunch, our expert guides offer a presentation about life in the Mekong Delta as the ship continues to My An Hung near Sa Dec province.

Default Afternoon Excursion: My An Hung Village is a wonderful example of a real local village in the Mekong Delta where time stood still. We receive wonderful insights into the private household of a local family and visit the seasonal vegetable fields to understand what the farmers are currently cultivating. A Vietnamese tea tasting at a local family's house is accompanied by a presentation of a variety of fruits that are grown near-by, freshly cut from the tree. An artistic group performs and displays the traditional dragon dance, whilst we can snack on the "vitamin bombs".

No optional afternoon excursion available. Back onboard, the ship sails into the sunset towards our destination for the next day. A complimentary cocktail hour and snacks at the pool with music and dance vibes are offered to enjoy the blue hour before dinner is served.

Dining: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7: Binh Thanh Island - Tan Phong Island – My Tho

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 head out to one of the larger islands in the Mekong known as Binh Thanh.

Default Morning Excursions: 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 MORNING EXCURSION:

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

Default Afternoon Excursion (any ship): 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 AFTERNOON 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

Afterward, the ship makes its final journey to My Tho, offering some little farewell party vibes along the way.

Dining: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8: My Tho – Saigon

Enjoy your last breakfast aboard your floating home. We disembark the ship after breakfast and take a bus transfer from My Tho to Saigon. It is only around 70 kilometres on the highway, and you arrive in Saigon by mid-morning.

We hope you enjoyed this fascinating river cruise, just as our crew does every single time. Moreover, take the enchanting memories and friendships along with you and share the stories of this amazing river - the Mighty Mekong.

Dining: Breakfast

