

Saigon – Siem Reap by Mekong Princess Cruise

Itinerary Overview

Day	Destination	Meals
Day 1	SIEM REAP – KAMPONG CHAM – EMBARKATION	L/D
Day 2	ANGKOR BAN – PHNOM PENH	B/L/D
Day 3	PHNOM PENH – KILLING FIELDS	B/L/D
Day 4	BORDER CROSSING – HONG NGU – GIENG ISLAND	B/L/D
Day 5	HOA AN VILLAGE – CAN THO	B/L/D
Day 6	CAN THO – CAI RANG FLOATING MARKET – BEN TRE	B/L/D
Day 7	BEN TRE – HO CHI MINH CITY	B/L/D
Day 8	SAI GON PORT – DISEMBARKATION	B

Note*: B: Breakfast / L: Lunch / D: Dinner

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1 SAIGON – EMBARKATION

Early this morning, transfer by motor-coach from Siem Reap to Kampong Cham and embark the RV Mekong Princess for lunch. After enjoying the afternoon at leisure, enjoy a Welcome Reception and Cambodian Welcome Dinner on board.

The Mekong Princess cruise sails to Angkor Ban and docks overnight.

Meals: Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Princess Cruise

Day 2 ANGKOR BAN – PHNOM PENH

We start the day with a visit to the charming and authentic town of Angkor Ban. Here, we witness the daily life of the local people, starting with a visit to the pagoda with a special blessing ceremony for our guests by local monks, then we keep going on visiting to a local family's home, to meet them and discuss their lifestyle. We continue through the village to the local school where we join the children in their classroom and experience what their typical school day is like. Ship sails to Phnom Penh and docks at the center port.

This afternoon, local cyclo drivers meet you for an exciting city tour of Phnom Penh. You begin your ride along the riverfront to the Royal Palace, where a leisurely walk takes you through the grounds, with opportunities to visit the Throne Hall and Moonlight Pavilion. Upon crossing into the second section of the complex, you walk amongst enormous stupas and spirit houses, on the way to the famous Silver Pagoda, home of Cambodia's Emerald Buddha and Maitreya Buddha, encrusted with more than 9,000 diamonds. Following a short break, your cyclos take you to the National Museum. Housing the largest pre-Angkorian and Angkorian holdings in Cambodia, the National Museum ends the morning tour with a comprehensive look at many of the artifacts excavated around the Angkor Archeological Area in Siem Reap, as well as other areas around the former Khmer Empire.

This evening before dinner, enjoying the entertainment onboard with a cultural performance including Apsara, Cambodia's national dance, as well as several traditional folk dances. The Mekong Princess cruise docks in Phnom Penh overnight

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Princess Cruise

Day 3 PHNOM PENH – KILLING FIELDS

This morning, private motor-coach take you on a scenic 45-minute drive from the ship, arriving at Choeung Ek, the killing fields depicted in the movie, and the center of the darkest days of Cambodian history. You may walk through the fields, visit the small museum and Memorial Stupa, and learn more about the atrocities committed during the Khmer Rouge regime. On the return drive to Phnom Penh, a stop is made at Tuol Sleng (infamously known as S-21), which was converted by the Khmer Rouge from a large school to a prison and torture headquarters.

The afternoon is free at leisure for your own exploration the charming city of Phnom Penh. The Mekong Princess Cruise docks in Phnom Penh overnight.

**Onboard activity: Lecture of Cambodia's Geography and Life along the Mekong River by your local Cambodian host.*

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Princess Cruise

Day 4 BORDER CROSSING – HONG NGU – GIENG ISLAND

This morning we visit the local island village of Hong Ngu, not far from the Vietnam-Cambodia border. Hong Ngu produces a large number of the traditional, Khmer scarves exported to Cambodia. Woven in many homes around the village, here we have the opportunity to see the weaving process under several homes. Some villagers are also embroidery artists, displaying their art in and around the homes. The inhabitants of this area had only encountered one western visitor prior to the arrival of the RV Mekong Princess, they are especially friendly and welcoming. Guests will also visit the local temple dedicated to a unique religion founded in this area of Vietnam, Hoa Hoa.

In the afternoon, we board sampans that will take us into Gieng Island. After a short walk around the local sampan village, where hundreds of sampans are produced daily by local families, we take a canal drive to explore the untouched floating area with duck farms, monkey bridges, and tropical orchards along the riverside. We will try one of most popular local transportation named "xe loi" (motor trishaw) driving through this island to visit a Catholic Church, built around the same time as the Notre Dame Cathedral in Saigon in the 1870s.

The Mekong Princess Cruise sails to Hoa An and anchors overnight.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Princess Cruise

Day 5 HOA AN VILLAGE – CAN THO

This morning, continue excursion by boat to Hoa An village, where is untouched and well-known with flower growing and handmade craft. Our first stop at flower gardens where we will see many different kinds of flowers and learn how to grow and take care of them. Then, a short walking to a local house and chat with the host to see how they live and work in their daily life.

After a short break, continue our excursion on motor cart to another village. We stop by at the conical hat-making and mat weaving families, have memorable time chatting with local family members and learning how to create products though hands-on experience. Enjoy your walk in the peaceful village with rice fields, fruit trees in between visiting few local families

This afternoon, the ship sails through an area of the Mekong Delta barely touched by tourism to Can Tho city, the capital riverside city of Mekong Delta of Vietnam. Guests will take a short and orientated city tour with visiting to the Zihuang Pagoda (Chua Ong) and enjoying the welcome unicorn dances. Explore yourself on own around the charming city before having dinner onboard. The Mekong Princess Cruise docks in Can Tho overnight.

**Onboard activity: Fruit Carvings & Tropical Fruits Demonstration by our Executive Chef.*

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Princess Cruise

Day 6 CAN THO – CAI RANG FLOATING MARKET – BEN TRE

We begin our morning after breakfast aboard the sampans for a cruise through the fascinating Cai Rang floating market near Can Tho. The sampans will weave in and out of the many boats that sail into the market each morning to sell produce and other items the residents of the Mekong Delta need in their daily lives. As they weave through the market, there will be many opportunities for amazing photographs, while enjoying fresh fruit and the Vietnamese “anti-aging drink,” fresh coconut water. Before returning to the ship for breakfast, we stop at a local noodle factory, where we witness the amazing process of how they are made.

The Mekong Princess cruise sails and anchors near Ben Tre.

**Onboard activity: Lecture of Vietnam, the Past & Present by your local Vietnamese host.*

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Princess Cruise

Day 7 BEN TRE – HO CHI MINH CITY

This morning, sampans take you through a channel lined with mangroves to visit a local coconut candy maker. After watching the candy-making process, walking through the village to visit an orchard where fruits native to Vietnam can be seen in various stages of maturity on the vine. After a fresh fruit tasting, you continue to a pier where you board small, local boats (two guests per boat) for a trip through the narrow creeks lined with Nipah palm before returning to the ship.

The Mekong Princess cruise sails through the beautiful Bassac River to Ho Chi Minh City, where it docks overnight at Saigon Port.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Princess Cruise

Day 8 SAI GON PORT - DISEMBARKATION

After breakfast we disembark the Mekong Princess in Ho Chi Minh City – Saigon Port and transferred by motor-coach to the Meeting Point, the Park Hyatt Saigon Hotel.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: n/a

Inclusions & Exclusions

Inclusions:

- All cruises include group shore-excursions
- Entrance fees
- Transportation
- Tour guide services on board(English speaking)
- Taxes, fuel, river pilots, transfers in Siem Reap from/to the meeting point to/from embarkation/disembarkation point or vice versa.
- Food includes full board (Breakfast, lunch, dinner – buffet or set menu style). Mineral water and coffee/tea (from jug) is included all day.

Exclusions:

- Phnom Penh port tax per passenger of 65 USD.
- Crew gratuities (5 USD per passenger/day are recommended).

- Cambodian Visa (available on Upstream cruise only/37 USD).
- Fuel surcharges if any (see terms and conditions).
- Transfers from/to hotel in Saigon to/from Saigon port

Important Information

River Conditions Warning

The rivers you will sail on are subject to seasonal rises and falls of water level, in some places as much as 30 metres. Water levels can change dramatically overnight and a sudden rise can impede our progress upstream considerably and even prevent us from passing under certain bridges. A sudden fall can result in our being unable to get into certain places or go as far upstream as we would hope. Groundings on sandbars are not infrequent and are part of the excitement of any expedition. Published itineraries are indicational only and subject to sudden change. In such events alternative itineraries will be provided and we do our best to ensure that if a stop is missed we make up for it with another stop.

Passengers are thus forewarned and expected to be flexible and patient. River cruising in Asia can be a dramatic and adventurous experience – not like cruising the controlled waterways of Europe or America. Note also that we operate in areas with little or no developed infrastructure and subject to the strictures of local officialdom. Be prepared for this and it is all more the fun!

For itineraries that include flights in the price of the ticket it should be noted that regional airlines can change departure times or cancel flights at very short notice. In such an event we endeavour to arrange alternative flights but note that this can result in delays often resulting in embarking or disembarking on a different day to that indicated in the itinerary. In such an event the company will cover the cost of hotel accommodation and main meals only, but will not be liable for any claims for compensation for missed days on board a ship, drinks or curtailment of the said itinerary.

Clothes

We recommend wearing loose and comfortable clothing made of cotton or modern material that can readily cool off sweat and body heat. The type of shoes will depend on the excursion types so best to have both light, open toed shoes as well as good walking/hiking shoes with you. A sun hat is always a good idea to bring along.

Southern Vietnam and Cambodia are warm all year-round, but our other cruise destinations can get chilly during the winter months (Laos, Myanmar or northern Vietnam). Therefore, it is always recommended to bring a pullover or a warm jacket with you during this period.

Many of our cruises include visits to local temples or pagodas. When visiting these holy sites, make sure to wear appropriate clothing which covers your shoulders and knees.

Sea sickness

Generally speaking, the rivers we are cruising on in Southeast Asia are very calm and there is hardly any motion on any of our ships. A bit of motion can occur during monsoon rains with stormy winds, but the amount of motion is much less than one would feel during bad weather on the open ocean.

Sea cruises as we offer in Halong Bay or Lan Ha Bay can sometimes encounter heavier waters and ship motion, although this happens very rarely and port authorities will most likely not allow sailing under any such circumstances anyway.

If you are new to cruising or prone to motion sickness, it does not hurt to bring along some motion sickness medication. Drinking a nice hot fresh ginger tea is a natural remedy and tasty alternative our staff is always happy to make for you.

Food and Beverage

All food and beverage on board is completely safe to eat and enjoy, including the ice cubes you enjoy in your chilled drinks. We do not recommend drinking water straight from the tap anywhere, including onboard. We provide you with complimentary clean drinking water throughout your cruise.

You may want to be bit careful with local dishes as they can be spicier than you are used to from home. Approach new dishes slowly and carefully. If you have a sensitive stomach, then you may like to double check with our chef or onboard managers about specific dishes or meals.

On excursions, it may be a good idea to avoid local foods and snacks unless offered by our tour guides. Besides the above, in general we recommend the following motto for your pre- and post-cruise travelling in the Southeast Asian tropics: boil it, peel it, cook it, wash it or forget it!

Health risks

The most effective protection from personal contamination is ensuring strict attention to personal hygiene and in particular, frequent and thorough hand washing with soap and water and refraining from hand-to-mouth contact. Colds and other viruses can spread quickly in an enclosed area such as a ship. Continue to practice common-sense hygiene and respiratory courtesy. Wash your hands often and cover your coughs and sneeze. It is recommended that passengers carry anti-bacterial hand sanitizer, which does not require rinsing with water. Use sanitizer frequently and throughout the day, particularly after shore excursions and prior to meals. If you have any questions regarding your health or safety, please do not hesitate to ask your cruise director.

Motion sickness can be a problem for some people when cruising, flying or travelling on coaches and trains and it is a good idea to take precautionary measures. Over-the-counter drugs for treating motion sickness can be purchased at pharmacies in most countries, though a side effect can be drowsiness. Alternatives such as ginger tablets and acupressure wristbands are also available and work well for some people.

Visa requirements for Cambodia

Cambodia visas are easily obtained for most travelers on arrival. Note that passports must have a validity of at least 6 months after your last date of travel in Cambodia.

Because travel restrictions across Southeast Asia are constantly changing, we recommend checking with the Cambodia embassy/consulate in your home country for the latest information.

Visa requirements for Vietnam

With the exception of visa exemptions, all travelers must arrange their visa prior to arrival in Vietnam. Passports must also have a validity of at least 6 months after your last date of travel in Vietnam.

Because travel restrictions across Southeast Asia are constantly changing, we recommend checking with the Vietnam embassy/consulate in your home country for the latest information.

Insurance

We recommend at least purchasing travel health insurance which covers both in- & outpatient visits and medical repatriation. Buying additional trip cancellation and interruption coverage may also be beneficial in case you have to cancel your travel plans due to unforeseen circumstances.

Electrical adapters

We always recommend bringing a travel adapter as a standard item in your travel kit. You can borrow an adapter on board, but these may be limited.

Electricity

Indochina Countries use 220V, and a mixture of flat 2-pin, round 2-pin or 3 pin plugs. It is recommended to bring a universal plug adapter.

Tipping

It is customary in Asia to tip service providers such as waiters, at approximately 10%, depending on the service. Tipping is expected - though not compulsory - and shows an expression of satisfaction with the people who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides or drivers we use. Recommendations for tipping drivers and local guides would range from \$3-\$5 USD per person per day depending on the quality and length of the service.