

5* Mekong Majesty: Vietnam, Cambodia & Angkor Wat

7-NIGHT CRUISE WITH 2 NIGHTS HO CHI MINH CITY PRE-CRUISE AND 2 NIGHTS SIEM REAP POST-CRUISE

Lively Ho Chi Minh City, once known as the “Pearl of the Orient,” offers a vibrant mix of old and new and provides the perfect start to your incredible journey through Vietnam and Cambodia. Cruise along the mighty Mekong, discovering a glimpse into another era; one where people still happily honor the timeless traditions passed down through the centuries from their ancestors. Throughout your trip, immerse yourself into the culture and heritage with visits to rural villages, historic pagodas and colorful markets. Be treated to a special blessing by monks in Buddhist monastery, and witness skilled artisans who create exquisite handicrafts and delicacies. Experience all this and more on this life-enriching cruise along the Mekong.

OVERVIEW

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DESTINATION</u>	<u>ACTIVITIES</u>
1	HO CHI MINH CITY	Hotel check-in
2	HO CHI MINH CITY	City tour and Chu Chi Tunnels
3	HO CHI MINH CITY	Morning visit Ben Thanh Market Transfer to My Tho EMBARKATION Welcome Dinner
4	CAI BE	Local boat ride Visit local workshops OR local workshops and active walking tour to historic Kiet House Local boat ride to Sa Dec Visit to local market and temple
5	TAN CHAU	Trishaw ride to craftsmen’s workshops OR Trishaw ride to craftsmen’s workshops and active walking tour to Evergreen Island OR Tra Su Forest and Sanctuary* **You will need this information for your <u>visa applications</u> : Exit Point from Vietnam: Song Tien Landport Entry point to Cambodia: Phnom Penh Border Crossing from Vietnam to Cambodia
6	PHNOM PENH	Royal Palace and National Museum OR Royal Palace and Central Market Killing Fields and Genocide Museum
7	OU Dong	Buddhist Blessing Ceremony Tuk tuk tour
8	OKNHATEY VILLAGE	Visit a Silk Village and local school
9	ANKGOR BAN	Walking tour Wat Nokor OR Phnom Pros and Phnom Srei “Twin Mountains” visit
10	KAMPONG CHAM	DISSEMBARKATION Motorcoach transfer to Siem Reap Hotel check-in

11	SIEM REAP	Angkor Wat and Banteay Srei
12	SIEM REAP	Angkor Thom in the morning Return flight home

ITINERARY DETAILS:

Day 1, HO CHI MINH CITY. Ho Chi Minh City, still affectionately referred to by locals as Saigon, is Vietnam’s former capital. Once known as the “Paris of the Orient,” it is now an industrial, cultural and educational hub.

Day 2, HO CHI MINH CITY. Always bustling, Ho Chi Minh City is a city of contrasts blending old and new, and east and west. In the morning, explore some of the city’s most famous landmarks, including the former Presidential Palace, the Central Post Office, Notre Dame Cathedral and the War Remnants Museum. In the afternoon, visit Chu Chi, an immense underground network built during the Vietnam War. (B,L)

Day 3, HO CHI MINH CITY - MY THO - EMBARKATION. In the morning, visit Ben Thanh Market—one of the oldest and most iconic structures in Ho Chi Minh City. Transfer via motorcoach from Ho Chi Minh City to AmaDara at My Tho Port for your river cruise and meet your fellow travelers at a Welcome Dinner as the ship cruises to Cai Be. (B,L,D)

Day 4, CAI BE - SA DEC. Take a local boat to Cai Be. You will have an opportunity to visit candy and rice paper making workshops, or you may also choose to add an active walking tour to the historic Kiet House followed by a visit to candy and rice paper workshops. Later in the day, journey to Sa Dec, a sprawling town on the Mekong Delta, where French writer Marguerite Duras spent part of her youth. You will visit the colorful market, Cao Dai Temple, home to the unique religion of Caodaism in Southern Vietnam. It is a fusion of Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Confucianism. (B,L,D)

Day 5, TAN CHAU - BORDER CROSSING. Enjoy a visit to Tan Chau, a small Mekong River town unspoiled by tourism. Be treated to an authentic experience on a traditional “xe-loi” (trishaw) ride around the town, with stops at silk-making and rattan mat workshops. You may also choose the trishaw ride with visits to craftsmen’s workshops, followed by an active walking tour to “Evergreen Island.” As a third alternative, explore the stunning Mekong Delta on an intimate tour through Vietnam’s Tra Su Forest and Sanctuary. Board a traditional sampan boat and glide through this diverse ecosystem that includes more than 70 species of birds, including the painted stork and oriental darter, and lush greenery encompassing majestic cajuput trees, lotuses, water lilies and a carpet of bright green moss in the rainy season that appears to glow as you gently drift through it. Later in the day, cruise from Vietnam to the Cambodian border en route to Phnom Penh. (B,L,D)

**Please Note: Tra Su Forest visit is capacity controlled.*

Day 6, PHNOM PENH. This morning, you will visit the Royal Palace, the spectacular Silver Pagoda and National Museum, which has an outstanding collection of Khmer crafts. Alternatively, you may wish to shop for unique treasures at the bustling, yellow colored Central Market after you visit to Royal Palace. After lunch on board, the excursion takes you to Cambodia’s infamous Killing Fields and the Khmer Rouge’s grim Tuol Sleng S21 detention center (Genocide Museum). After returning to the ship, enjoy Khmer folk dancing performed by local children in the Saigon Lounge. (B,L,D)

Day 7, OUDONG - PHNOM PENH. Visit Oudong, Cambodia’s former royal capital from the early 17th century until 1866. Today, Oudong is a place of pilgrimage for Cambodians. While here, be treated to a memorable Buddhist Blessing Ceremony at a monastery. You may walk around Oudong’s monastery or take an active walking tour to see panoramic views of the Oudong plain. Later in the day, experience Phnom Penh via a tuk tuk ride and be enchanted by the city’s French Colonial architecture and tree-lined boulevards set amidst monumental Angkorian architecture. (B,L,D)

Day 8, OKNHATEY VILLAGE. In the morning, set sail for Oknhatey Village. Oknhatey is the “Silk Island,” located on the lush banks of the Mekong River and known for its rich tradition of silk weaving. While here, you will visit a local elementary school and observe the traditional silk weaving, an art that has been preserved for centuries. Your cruise continues to sail to Angkor Ban. (B,L,D)

Day 9, ANKGOR BAN - KAMPONG CHAM. Go on a walking tour of Angkor Ban, one of the few villages in Cambodia that was not destroyed under the Khmer Rouge regime in the 1970s. Here people still live in their traditional wooden abodes and keep their old cultural traditions alive. Hundreds of wooden houses stand intact on stilts, shaded with banana trees, among the hustle and bustle of the daily agricultural on-going of the local villagers. After visiting here, the ship sets sail for Kampong Cham, where you will go on an afternoon excursion to Wat Nokor, perhaps the most treasured monument within the ancient complex of Banteay Prey Nokor. Fusing the Old-World with the “new,” this centuries-old temple now boasts a contemporary pagoda within its walls, delighting guests with colorful depictions of the Buddha’s life. Alternatively, visit the Twin Mountains, known as Phnom Pros and Phnom Srei (the male and female mountains). Cap the day off with a festive Farewell Dinner on board. (B,L,D)

Day 10, KAMPONG CHAM - SIEM REAP - DISEMBARKATION. Disembark in Kampong Cham and transfer by motorcoach to Siem Reap, gateway to the Angkor Archaeological Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the former capital of the Khmer empire. You’ll visit nearby Ta Prohm, known as the “Kingdom of the Trees,” for the way in which the temple stones have become intertwined with thick forest vegetation. (B,D)

Day 11, SIEM REAP. Begin your morning exploration of the temple complex at Angkor Wat, the most iconic of all Angkorian temples, built by King Suryavarman II in the early 12th century to honor the Hindu god, Vishnu. You will have the option to take an “early riser” tour to visit Angkor Wat by seeing the color changes of the temple with the natural sunlight or a “late riser” tour if you wish to relax longer in the morning at your beautiful hotel. An afternoon excursion takes you to see the fascinating jewel in the crown of Angkorian art, Banteay Srei, which means “Citadel of Women,” as it has been said that the carving is too fine to have been done by the

hand of man. During the evening, be treated to a special “Apsara Dancing Show” at your hotel, featuring local Cambodian/Khmer folk dancers. (B,D)
Day 12, DEPART SIEM REAP. After breakfast, you will have a guided sightseeing tour of Angkor Thom meaning “the great city” and the last capital of the Khmer Empire. This is home to Bayon Temple, best known for its gigantic smiling stone faces, as well as the Terrace of the Elephants and the Terrace of the Leper King. Later in the day, bid farewell to Siem Reap as you prepare for your return flight home.