

# Aqua Mekong Cruise - 8 days

(Siem Reap – Prek Toal – Chhnok Tru – Kampong Chhnang – Koh Chen – Phnom Penh –  
Chau Doc – My An Hung – Sa Dec – Cai Be – My Tho – Saigon )

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## Itinerary Overview

Day	Destination	Meals
Day 1	SIEM REAP - EMBARKATION	L/D
Day 2	PREK TOAL – MOAT KHLA	B/L/D
Day 3	CHHNOK TRU – KAMPONG CHHNANG	B/L/D
Day 4	KOH CHEN – KOH OKNHA TEY	B/L/D
Day 5	PHNOM PENH	B/L/D
Day 6	BORDER CROSSING – CHAU DOC – MY AN HUNG	B/L/D
Day 7	BINH THANH/SA DEC – CAI BE	B/L/D
Day 8	MY THO - DISEMBARKATION	B

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

## Travel Map



## Detailed Itinerary

### Day 1

### SIEM REAP - EMBARKATION

Gather at our Siem Reap meeting point then board our air-conditioned bus for the scenic 45-minute countryside ride to the dock on the Tonle Sap Lake for check-in to your 3-story, five star Mekong abode. Settle into your floating retreat, with its window wall conferring an endlessly captivating panorama. Enjoy these private Mekong moments on your California king bed, terrace or daybed.

Dinner on overnight on Aqua Mekong Cruise

**Meals:** Lunch/Dinner

**Accommodation:** Aqua Mekong Cruise

## Day 2

### PREK TOAL – MOAT KHLA

Set off by skiff into the 22,000-hectare Prek Toal Core Bird Reserve, one of the largest freshwater bodies in Asia and the last refuge in Southeast Asia for large waterbirds like the spot-billed pelicans, milky stork, black-headed ibis and the elusive masked finfoot. After lunch, we visit the floating village of Moat Khla, accessible only by water, and attend a Buddhist blessing ceremony in this isolated community.

Dinner on overnight on Aqua Mekong Cruise

**Meals:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

**Accommodation:** Aqua Mekong Cruise

## Day 3

### CHHNOK TRU – KAMPONG CHHNANG

Explore remote villages around the Tonle Sap Lake, designated as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1997. In Chhnok Tru, we “slide” into an ice factory and learn from locals what it’s like to live in a town where schools, churches, pagodas, and even the karaoke bar and police station all float. We continue learning about Khmer riverside life in Kampong Chhnang, the ‘Port of Pottery’ so called because archaeological findings here date to the 6th century.

Dinner on overnight on Aqua Mekong Cruise

**Meals:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

**Accommodation:** Aqua Mekong Cruise

## Day 4

### KOH CHEN – KOH OKNHA TEY

This morning, we visit Koh Chen, a silversmith village known for its fine craftsmanship. Keep an eye out for their famous silver bowls, regularly chosen by Cambodia’s king as gifts for visiting dignitaries. In the afternoon, we set off for the Mekong’s ‘silk islands’ where renowned weavers allow us to wander freely, admiring their intricate craftsmanship. Biking is optional for those who wish to explore deeper into the island.

Dinner on overnight on Aqua Mekong Cruise

**Meals:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

**Accommodation:** Aqua Mekong Cruise

**Day 5**

**PHNOM PENH**

We show off the Cambodian capital to our passengers by motorized tuk-tuk, the Royal Palace, Silver Pagoda and the National Museum of Cambodia, home to the world's largest collection of Khmer art. For those who wish, we visit the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide and the Killing Field or shopping at Russian Market. Together we celebrate the onward journey towards the heart of this mighty river with a Khmer Apsara performance, an indigenous tradition memorialized on the temple walls at Angkor Wat.

Dinner on overnight on Aqua Mekong Cruise

**Meals:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

**Accommodation:** Aqua Mekong Cruise

**Day 6**

**BORDER CROSSING – CHAU DOC – MY AN HUNG**

Say 'Good Morning, Vietnam' while we cross the border and sail towards Tan Chau, a vibrant border town where we take the local rickshaw called xe loi for a trip around town or pedal 18 kilometers on the peaceful island of Long Khanh. In the afternoon, we visit a typical Mekong Delta village called My An Hung where we will walk through verdant plantations. We will be invited to a local's home to taste local fruits while hearing traditional folk songs performed by villagers, followed by a unique Unicorn dance. Biking option is also available for those who wish to explore on wheels.

Dinner on overnight on Aqua Mekong Cruise

**Meals:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

**Accommodation:** Aqua Mekong Cruise

**Day 7**

**BINH THANH/SA DEC – CAI BE**

Begin the day at Binh Thanh mat weaving village or opt to visit Sa Dec where we will peruse the vibrant market and see the famous house of Marguerite Duras' legendary lover, Mr. Huynh Thuy Le. We continue downstream for Cai Be, zigzagging in our sampan past lone fishermen on their long tail boats. Later, our skiffs moor at a wooden pier. Here in Cai Be, walk or bike ride among high-roofed open courtyard houses, some dating back more than 100 years, and currently inhabited by gracious locals who will invite us to glimpse their property.

Dinner on overnight on Aqua Mekong Cruise

**Meals:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

**Accommodation:** Aqua Mekong Cruise

## Day 8

## MY THO – SAIGON - DISEMBARKATION

Disembarkation. En route to Ho Chi Minh, we stop at [Vinh Trang Pagoda](#), one of the largest Mahayana Buddhist temple in the region. You will notice the mixed architectural style and see three large buddha statues plus an impressive collection of bonsai trees.

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Accommodation:** n/a

## Inclusions & Exclusions

### **Inclusions:**

- Transfers from/to the hotel to/from the meeting point for embarkation
- Full board in the selected room
- All meals on board
- Drinks on board : Mineral Water, non-alcoholic beverages, local beers and local wine during meals
- All excursions and entrance fees with English speaking guide as per included excursions in the itinerary
- The services of an English-speaking Cruise Director

### **Exclusions:**

- Overseas flights
- Beverages other than those mentioned above
- Tipping/gratuities for land services
- Visa arrangements
- Insurance

## 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.