

Cruise Saigon to Phnom Penh

6 Days | Ho Chi Minh City to Phnom Penh



Cruise the mighty Mekong from Ho Chi Minh City to Phnom Penh on board one of the finest Mekong River Cruisers, taking in colourful floating markets and visiting local communities in the Mekong Delta en route to Cambodia's capital, on this 6 day tour of Vietnam and Cambodia.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Cruise the Mekong for three nights on board one of the finest Mekong River Cruisers
- Practice Tai Chi at sunrise on the sun deck
- Learn to cook tasty local cuisine at a culinary class on board
- Cai Be - visit Cai Be's colourful floating market and cottage industries
- Sa Dec - take a traditional sampan to Binh Thanh island
- Tan Chau - explore the town on a traditional xelois, visit a local market and take a boat ride around floating houses and a fish farm
- Phnom Penh - visit the National Museum of Fine Arts, the Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda, Toul Sleng (Security Prison - S21) and the Killing Fields

- Saigon - independently explore the city

What's Included

- 5 breakfasts, 3 lunches and 3 dinners
- 2 nights 4 star hotels
- 3 nights on board the Jahan or Jayavarman River Cruiser, on a full board basis with drinking water, coffee/tea included, taxes, fuel, river pilots and port dues
- Group shore-excursions to Cai Be floating market, Sa Dec, sampan tour of Binh Thanh and Tan Chau
- Private full day tour of Phnom Penh
- All entrance fees
- All transfers and transportation in air-conditioned vehicles
- English speaking local guides for scheduled sightseeing
- Airport arrival transfer on day 1 and departure transfer on day 6

What's Not Included

- International flights and visas.
- Tipping - is an entirely personal gesture. For the River Cruiser gratuities we recommend budgeting 8-10 USD per passenger per day.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Ho Chi Minh City

Arrive in Ho Chi Minh City and transfer to your hotel. The rest of the day is free for you to explore the city. **Overnight - Ho Chi Minh City**

Day 2 : Mekong River Cruise



Ho Chi Minh City - Mekong River Cruising. Transfer 70km south to My Tho this morning where you'll board the luxurious Jahan or Jayavarman river cruiser for your three night cruise along the mighty Mekong River. As the ship plies the Mekong admire the views from your balcony, join tea time in the open air bar or opt for a swim in the pool. Enjoy a buffet lunch and dinner on board before the cruiser docks near Cai Be this evening. Cai Be is a charming small town, famous for its floating market and manufacturing of traditional crafts and food products. **Overnight - River Cruise (B, L, D)**

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Day 3 : Cai Be & Sa Dec



You can start your morning with an invigorating Tai Chi class on the sun deck, just as the sun begins to rise. After a sumptuous buffet breakfast enjoy an excursion to the Cai Be floating market and visit a workshop to learn how rice paste, rice paper and rice wine is made. Back on board your cruiser continues its journey to Sa Dec where you'll set out on a traditional sampan tour to Binh Thanh Island. Binh Thanh is one of the larger Mekong islands where communities have settled and make their living by growing water hyacinths. Wander through the village and gain an insight into rural life in the Mekong.

Returning to the boat you can opt to pamper yourself with a spa treatment or take a dip in our pool on the sun deck. This evening there will be a presentation about life on the Mekong Delta. The cruiser moors near Tan Chau tonight. Dinner is served and afterwards you can join our evening cinema session (offered every night) featuring selected classic movies. **Overnight - River Cruise (B, L, D)**

Day 4 : Tan Chau



Mekong River Cruising - Phnom Penh. Today begins with an excursion to the quiet town of Tan Chau, which you'll explore from the back of 'xelois' - a local vehicle used as taxis in the region. Stop at the colourful local market near one of the ancient temples, where you can barter with the local vendors. Then board

a local boat for cruise around the floating houses to finally reach a floating fish farm. This region is the source of fish production to be sold all over the world and we can see closely how fish farmings works.

Back on board the cruiser your journey continues to the Vietnamese-Cambodian border. Relax and enjoy a fascinating and leisurely cruise through the deep Cambodia countryside towards Phnom Penh. A culinary class is offered this afternoon, where you can learn to cook tasty local cuisine. Dinner is served before the cruiser docks in Phnom Penh and this evening you're free to head out and explore the Cambodian capital before spending your final night on board. **Overnight - River Cruise (B, L, D)**

Day 5 : Phnom Penh sightseeing



Your cruise comes to an end this morning with a transfer to your hotel in Phnom Penh. Located on the banks of the Mekong River, Cambodia's energetic capital is noted for its beautiful colonial architecture and historic sites. Take in the highlights of Phnom Penh on a full day sightseeing tour today. Starting at the National Museum of Fine Arts, housing the world's finest collection of Khmer sculpture, continue with the Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda, famed for its lavish decorations – the floors are paved with silver tiles and statues of Buddha are encrusted with thousands of diamonds.

This afternoon come face to face with the horrors of the Pol Pot regime on a visit to Toul Sleng (Security Prison - S21), a school that was gruesomely transformed into a torture chamber under the Khmer Rouge, and the

Killing Fields, where over 10,000 people were executed. **Overnight - Phnom Penh (B)**

Day 6 : Phnom Penh

Your journey comes to an end today with a transfer to the airport for your onward travel. Arrangements can be made for you to continue your holiday through to Siem Reap to see the breathtaking temples of Angkor.(B)

HOTELS

Highlighted below are some of the hotels which we frequently use on this tour, though we reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.

Liberty Central Hotel

The brilliantly located Liberty Central is a modern hotel with stylish, well-appointed rooms and suites and a good range of facilities and amenities. The Central Restaurant offers Western, Asian and Vietnamese specialities and the hotel's health centre, spa and pool are ideal for a spot of rest and relaxation. Guests can enjoy coffee and freshly baked pastries at the Bistro Bar.



RV Jahan Cruise

Named after the former Indian emperor Shah Jahan, the Jahan is one of the Heritage Line's most romantic cruisers. The superior staterooms are designed with warming red tones complimented with stunning white furnishings. All staterooms have private balconies and queen size beds. The Jahan cruise boat benefits from a whole host of excellent amenities on board including the stylish East India Club, a great place to relax and sip a delicious beverage and the elegant Observatory. The boat also has an onsite Apsara Spa and outdoor pool.

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RV Jayavarman Cruise

Named after Angkor's most highly respected kings, the Jayavarman tastefully combines the art deco charm of France in the 1930s with the enchantment of Indochina. The en suite cabins are beautifully designed with traditional wooden carvings, stunning artwork as well as full length windows opening onto private balconies. The boat itself benefits from a number of bars, restaurants and onboard Aspara Spa as well as an outdoor pool to relax by as the boat cruises along. The friendly and professional staff look forward to greeting you on board.



Queen Grand Boutique Hotel

The perfect blend of traditional architecture and contemporary style, the Queen Grand Boutique Hotel is appropriately situated near to the Royal Palace. Guest rooms are designed with a touch of Khmer style but with a modern flare. The hotel also benefits from an onsite restaurant and bar, rooftop jacuzzi and Sky Bar. Located very close to the iconic Royal Palace, one of Phnom Penh's top sights.



Health Requirements - Cambodia

You should seek medical advice before travelling to Cambodia from your local health practitioner and ensure that you receive all

of the appropriate vaccinations. As a guide Tetanus, Typhoid, Hep A, Diphtheria and Polio are recommended.

There is the risk of malaria in parts of Cambodia so it is very important to check with your doctor before you go, to see whether malarial medication is required for the areas you are visiting. Yellow fever is not present in Cambodia but a yellow fever vaccination certificate is required from those travelling from an infected region.

Water

Tap water in Cambodia is not considered safe to drink. It's recommended to only drink bottled mineral water, which is readily available in hotels, shops and restaurants.

Health Requirements - Vietnam

You should seek medical advice before travelling to Vietnam from your local health practitioner and ensure that you receive all of the appropriate vaccinations. As a guide Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Typhoid and Tetanus are strongly recommended.

Malaria in Vietnam

Areas with malaria: Rural only, except none in the Red River Delta and the coast north of Nha Trang. Rare cases in the Mekong Delta. None in Da Nang, Haiphong, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), Nha Trang, and Qui Nhon. Estimated relative risk of malaria for travellers: Low

Water

The tap water in Vietnam is generally considered safe to drink, but as a precaution against stomach upsets you may want to drink bottled mineral water, which is readily available from shops, hotels and restaurants.

Climate

Cambodia has a tropical monsoon climate with two seasons; Rainy season from May to November, when the countryside is lush and green, and dry season from late November to April, when there are long days of glorious sunshine and clear skies. Temperatures in Cambodia remain fairly constant and warm throughout the year, apart from in the north,

when winters (December to March) are generally colder.

Vietnam has a varied climate due to its geography. The south is hot year round and has two seasons: The wet season lasts from May to October, with brief, daily showers. The dry season from November to April is generally sunny and humid. In the north, the summer months (May to October) are hot and there is the occasional burst of heavy rain. In the winter (December to February) temperatures drop in the north and it can be damp. The coastal region of central Vietnam is blessed with long months of sunshine, although there is rainfall in November and December. At this time there can also be some typhoon activity in the central coastal region.

Time & Voltage

Cambodia and Vietnam are 7 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time(GMT).

The voltage in Cambodia is 230v. In Cambodia 3 types of plugs are commonly accepted: 2 flat prong plugs (type A), the 2 round pin european plug (type C) and many of the new 4 and 5 star hotels use the British standard 3-pin plug (type G). To cover all bases, it is best to pack an international travel adaptor!

The voltage in Vietnam is 220v. In Vietnam 3 types of plugs are commonly accepted: 2 flat prong plugs (type A), the 2 round pin plug (type C) and many of the new 4 and 5 star hotels use the British standard 3-pin plug (type G). To cover all bases, it is best to pack an international travel adaptor!

Currency - Vietnam

The official currency in Vietnam is the Vietnamese Dong.

Euro, British Pounds, US Dollars and other major currencies can be exchanged locally at the airport, bureau de changes or banks. US Dollar notes are widely accepted and shopkeepers use both currencies interchangeably. You can often pay for items in USD and receive your change in USD notes and coins in VND. Make sure that your USD bills are crisp and clean and you

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will have no problem using or exchanging these throughout your stay. ATM machines can be found in all major cities though it is not common to pay with credit card in restaurants, cafes or shops for purchases. It's advisable to request bank notes in smaller denominations, as it can sometimes be hard to get change from large notes and smaller notes are handy for smaller purchases and gratuities.

Traveller's Cheques are not recommended as they're often difficult to exchange and incur high fees.

Currency - Cambodia

The official currency of Cambodia is the Cambodia Riel but USD is also widely accepted and sometimes preferred in larger stores and supermarkets.

Pound Sterling, US Dollars, Euro and other major currencies can be exchanged in Cambodia at various bureau de changes in major cities and towns. However foreign currency is also widely accepted and often desired more so it can give the shopper more buying power. ATMs can be found in all larger towns and cities and some five star hotels. We recommend you take a mixture of cash (preferably USD) and credit/ debit cards for ATM's. It's advisable to request bank notes in smaller denominations, as it can sometimes be hard to get change from large notes and smaller notes are handy for smaller purchases and gratuities.

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Essential Packing

- Lightweight cotton garments. Ladies will need to have their shoulders and legs (to below the knee) covered when visiting the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh and Angkor Wat. Please pack accordingly
- Comfortable walking shoes in addition to flip flogs/ thongs
- DEET based mosquito repellent & antihistamine cream
- Bring a 2 flat prong (type A) and a 2 round pin (type C) electrical adaptors. A universal adaptor will cover all bases

- Lightweight, fold up raincoat/ poncho/ umbrella
- Two spare passport photos & a photocopy of your passport
- A small daypack for your day-to-day needs
- Sunglasses, hat, sunscreen, swim costume and torch

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