

# Saigon to Siem Reap

## 9 days | Ho Chi Minh City to Siem Reap



*From high-octane Ho Chi Minh City, take a cruise through the Mekong Delta and explore the ingenious Cu Chi tunnels of the Viet Cong before taking in the highlights of Phnom Penh and Siem Reap in Cambodia. Visit colourful floating markets and royal palaces, explore spectacular Angkor Wat and much more on this 9 day tour.*

### HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

#### Trip Highlights

- Angkor Temple Complex – Marvel at legendary Angkor Wat and see the many faces of the Bayon Temple in ancient Angkor Thom
- Cu Chi Tunnels – Discover the incredible network of tunnels built by the Viet Cong during the Vietnam War
- Phnom Penh – Visit highlights including the Silver Pagoda and Royal Palace, then discover the horrors of the Khmer Rouge at Toul Sleng
- Ho Chi Minh City – Enjoy a walking tour of the city and visit the sobering War Remnants Museum
- Siem Reap – Explore Angkor National Museum on a guided tour and opt to stroll down famous 'Pub Street'

- Mekong Delta – Cruise the maze of waterways on a traditional sampan and enjoy a delicious lunch on Dong Hoa Hiep Island
- NGO Phare Cambodian Circus – Gaze in awe at the incredible performers as you enjoy this celebrated circus show
- Tonle Sap Lake – Sail on Southeast Asia's largest freshwater lake and visit the floating villages of Kampong Phluk

#### What's Included

- Breakfast daily, 2 lunches and 1 dinner
- 8 nights 4 star and special class hotels
- Guided sightseeing - Mekong Delta, Ho Chi Minh City, Cu Chi, Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and the Temples of Angkor
- Sampan boat trips in the Mekong Delta
- Boat trip on Tonle Sap Lake
- Escorted by an English speaking Vietnamese and Cambodian tour guides
- Economy class flight: Phnom Penh to Siem Reap
- Airport arrival transfer day 1 and departure transfer day 9
- All relevant transfers and transportation in private air-conditioned vehicles

#### What's Not Included

- Tipping Kitty: USD\$25-35pp, paid in USD or VND
- Entrance Fees: USD\$110-120pp, paid in USD or VND

- International flights and visas
- Tip for your tour guide. We recommend you allow USD\$3-6 per day, per traveller. Tipping your guide is an entirely personal gesture

### COVID SAFE GUIDE

### DETAILED ITINERARY

#### Day 1 : Ho Chi Minh City

Friday. Hello Ho Chi Minh City (aka Saigon). Upon arrival you'll be met and transferred to our hotel. The rest of the day is free for you to get acquainted with the city. Opt to explore on foot, shop at Ben Thanh Market or visit the grand Independence Palace, with its secret bunker and military command centre beneath!

#### Overnight - Ho Chi Minh City

#### Day 2 : Cruising the Mekong



Ho Chi Minh City – Cai Be – Can Tho. This morning our group will meet up with other On The Go tour groups that have travelled down

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from Hoi An. We've timed our arrangements so that travellers should rendezvous at the same time, though your patience maybe required if the flight is late or the group are delayed. Aboard the bus you'll get to meet each other as we drive to the Mekong. Some tour members will be continuing with you till the end of your tour. Others will be leaving upon our return to Ho Chi Minh City tomorrow.

Often referred to as the 'rice bowl' of Vietnam, the fertile Mekong Delta is famous for its abundant harvests of tropical fruits, flowers and rice, as well as its fantastic views while boating along the canals.

Taking our sampan from Cai Be we'll cruise downstream through the maze of waterways, watching the hubbub of daily life on the river. Passing colourful trading boats, house boats and children swimming we stop to visit some of the local cottage industries that produce popcorn, coco candies and paper along the way. Lunch is served today in a traditional wooden home on Dong Hoa Hiep Island and we spend the night in Can Tho, in the heart of the Mekong Delta. **Overnight - Can Tho (B, L)**

### Day 3 : Mekong & Ho Chi Minh City



Can Tho - Ho Chi Minh City. Early today we visit the ever lively Cai Rang floating market. Watch as melons, pineapples, fresh greens, sacks of rice and children's toys get tossed from one sampan to another at great heights and speed before driving back to Ho Chi Minh City, a thriving metropolis on the move. Sleek sky scrapers, gourmet restaurants, designer malls and swanky bars and spas are scattered between ancient pagodas, colonial era landmarks and lively street markets. On our walking tour of Ho Chi Minh City we'll see the Notre Dame Cathedral and the Old Post Office before visiting the

sobering War Remnants Museum. Evening at leisure. **Overnight - Ho Chi Minh City (B)**

### Day 4 : Cu Chi Tunnels, Phnom Penh



Ho Chi Minh City - Phnom Penh. This morning we visit the famous Cu Chi Tunnels used by the Viet-Cong in their struggle to keep control of the region during the 1960's. As we walk the bush trails you'll see trapdoors, booby traps, living areas, weapon factories and kitchens. We can also safely crawl sections of the tunnels, that have been widened for the tourists and fire weapons of the era (including the M16's and AK47) on the firing range.

After crossing the Moc Bai/Bavet border to Cambodia we drive to the capital of Phnom Penh. Once deemed the 'Pearl of Asia', Phnom Penh offers a bustling mix of Asia's past and present, a city quickly taking its place amongst the trendy capitals of the region. **Overnight - Phnom Penh (B, D)**

### Day 5 : Royal Palace, Crimes of Pol Pot



Today we'll enjoy a full day sightseeing tour of Phnom Penh starting at the National Museum of Fine Arts, a graceful terracotta building of traditional design housing the world's finest collection of Khmer sculpture. We 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.

We later come face to face with the horrors of the Pol Pot regime as we visit Toul Sleng (Security Prison - S21), a school that was gruesomely transformed into a torture chamber under the Khmer Rouge, and visit the Killing Fields where over 10,000 people were executed. **Overnight - Phnom Penh (B)**

### Day 6 : Siem Reap & Angkor Wat



Phnom Penh – Siem Reap. Hotel check out and transfer to the airport for our included flight to Siem Reap. After time to freshen up we visit the Angkor National Museum - a fascinating archaeological museum dedicated to the collection, preservation and presentation of Angkorian artefacts and Khmer civilisation, with collections mainly dated from Khmer Empire's Angkor period circa 9th to 14th-century.

This afternoon we explore incredible and iconic Angkor Wat, easily the most famous and best-preserved of all the temples within the Angkor complex. It is a massive three-tiered structure crowned by five lotus-like towers rising 65 meters from ground level. Believed to be the largest religious building in the world, Angkor Wat contains thousands of wall carvings and extensive bas-reliefs. Spend the evening at leisure. There are plenty of great bars and restaurants in the compact city centre which is easily navigated on foot. **Overnight - Siem Reap (B)**

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## Day 7 : Angkor Thom & NGO circus project



Early this morning opt to see Angkor Wat bathed in the spectacular golden light of sunrise. Later we drive out to see the well-preserved temples of Banteay Srei, stopping at an exotic butterfly sanctuary and the a village of Preak Dak along the way.

At Preak Dak each of us will have the opportunity to plant mango or jack fruit saplings as part of our tree planting initiative, operated in conjunction with this community. The majority of villagers here are on low incomes and by providing them with trees that bear fruit, they are able to feed their families and make an income by selling the fruit. It's also a way of offsetting carbon emissions - a win all round. We're hoping to plant some 3,000 trees and cover an area of 15-20 hectares, providing the village of 200 with a sustainable source of income.

We return to the Angkor Temple Complex this afternoon to explore the ancient city of Angkor Thom. Surrounded by an 8m high wall Angkor Thom was the last capital of the Great Khmer Empire under the reign of Jayavarman VII. In Angkor Thom we will see the fabulous Bayon Temple, Baphuon, the royal enclosure, and the Terraces of the Elephants and the Leper King. The last stop on our tour of the Angkor Complex is Tra Prohm Temple, which unlike the other temples here has been left in the same ruined state that it was first discovered in. Swallowed by the jungle, vast muscular roots envelop the crumbling towers and walls whilst the trees' foliage dapples the temple in shadow.

This evening you're guaranteed to be entertained watching the incredible Phare Cambodian Circus. The Phare NGO circus project trains street kids to become very

talented circus artists and the popular show blends circus skills with interpretations of modern life and issues in Cambodian society.

**Overnight - Siem Reap (B)**

## Day 8 : Tonle Sap lake



This morning we drive to Kampong Phluk, a cluster of three villages of stilt house built within the floodplain of Tonle Sap lake about 16 km southeast of Siem Reap. We'll see houses built on soaring stilts which hover over the Tonle Sap Lake whilst nearby, the petrified trees of a flooded forest are revealed whenever the water level drops. After a boat trip on the lake and lunch, we return to Siem Reap where the afternoon is free for you to spend at leisure. Perhaps pick up some last minute souvenirs at the central market or head down to lively Pub Street.

Note: Between Feb - July the water levels at Kompong Phluk village maybe too low to go boating, if so, we will visit Chong Kneas floating village where it will still be possible to go boating. **Overnight - Siem Reap (B, L)**

## Day 9 : Free time Siem Reap

Saturday. Today marks the end of our memorable journey. Spend the morning at leisure before hotel check out and included departure transfer to the airport.(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.**

### Victoria Hotel Can Tho

This attractive, colonial-style resort is tastefully decorated with well-appointed rooms and a wide range of facilities including a spa, tennis courts, open-air bar, restaurant and a gym. The hotel also offers sunrise and sunset cruises to the floating markets aboard the Lady Hau junk.



### Iris Hotel

This elegant hotel is housed within a modern building in the city of Can Tho. Each guest room comes equipped with plush furnishings to ensure a good night's sleep and is decorated with a neutral palate and calming tones. Rooms look over the city and boast a range of modern amenities such as air conditioning and stylish ensuite facilities. Magnificent views of the city can be had from the hotel's skybar while a range of gourmet local and international dishes can be sampled at the onsite restaurant.



### Muong Thanh Centre

Centrally located, yet on a peaceful, tree-lined street, you will find the Muong Thanh Centre. Only a ten-minute walk from top attractions such as the Notre Dame Cathedral, Opera House and Ben Thanh Market, this hotel is a great base for exploring the famous sights of the city. Its guest rooms boast sophisticated designs and panoramic views. Warm and friendly, the Muong Thanh Centre also features a spa and swimming pool for you to relax and unwind after a long day of sightseeing.

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### Northern Hotel

Located in Saigon's central business district, the Northern Hotel offers comfortable and stylish accommodation. Guest rooms are contemporary in style and are decorated with warming tones and excellent en suite facilities. The onsite restaurant offers a variety of European and Asian dishes set on the mezzanine floor. The hotel also offers complimentary use of computers in the lobby and a fully equipped gym for those who wish keep fit whilst staying in the city.



### Harmony Phnom Penh Hotel

Just 5 minutes from the Royal Palace, the Harmony Hotel in Phnom Penh is an elegant hotel with a great location. The spacious rooms feature plush furnishings with a smart decor of dark wood flooring and white walls with accents of colour. The hotel features a rooftop infinity pool and Jacuzzi with views across the river and the city, a perfect spot to relax after a busy day sightseeing. Guests can dine on a choice of Asian and Western dishes at the hotel's restaurant and enjoy a wide selection of beverages.



### Kravan Hotel

The Kravan Hotel offers comfortable and spacious guest rooms in a quiet location close to the heart of Phnom Penh. This stylish hotel has an outdoor rooftop pool, in

addition to a rooftop bar and a restaurant which offer fantastic panoramic views across the capital. Free wifi is offered throughout the property and there is fitness centre located on the top floor where guests can indulge in various spa treatments and massages.



### Angkor Paradise Hotel

Not far from Angkor Wat, the Angkor Paradise Hotel offers elegant accommodation in a world famous setting. Guest rooms are beautifully furnished with traditional wooden floors and all mod cons. All rooms have either fabulous views of the city or the hotel's outdoor pool. The hotel also boasts a great onsite restaurant, fitness centre and pool terrace. The Angkor Paradise Hotel is situated a short distance from Siem Reap international airport and the majestic Angkor Archaeological Park.



## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

### Entrance Fees

Entrance fees to most sites are not included, although reasonably priced. The entrance fee amount is noted under exclusions on page one of this document and a breakdown of the entrance fees is provided upon arrival in your Welcome Letter.

For tours starting in Vietnam and Myanmar we collect from all tour participants the entrance fees on Day 2 of the tour. All funds collected in Vietnam are payable in either US dollars (USD) or Vietnamese dong (VND).

Multi-country tours starting in Laos: Please note if you are travelling on our Laos to Vietnam, Inside Indochina or Indochina Discovery tour your entrance fees will be split into two separate payments. Entrance fees for Laos will be collected on day 2 of the tour in Vientiane and entrance fees for Vietnam/Cambodia/Thailand will be collected on day 8 in Hanoi.

### Tipping Kitty

At the start of your tour, we collect from all tour participants a small tipping kitty (the amount is noted under exclusions on page one of this document). This kitty covers tips throughout your holiday and saves you the hassle of knowing when and how much to tip bellhops, luggage handlers, bus drivers, train conductors and other support staff throughout the tour.

This amount does not include a tip for your tour guide/s. For a job well done, we would suggest USD \$3-6 per traveller, per day. Tipping your guide is an entirely personal gesture and ultimately the amount is up to you.

Multi country tours starting in Laos: Please note if you are travelling on our Laos to Vietnam, Inside Indochina or Indochina Discovery tour your tipping kitty will be split into two separate payments. The tipping kitty for the Laos section of your tour will be collected on day 2 of the tour in Vientiane. Then, on day 8 in Hanoi the Vietnam/Cambodia/Thailand tipping kitty will be collected for these onward touring arrangements.

### Groups & guides

The longest *Signature Range* tour we offer in Southeast Asia is our *Indochina Discovery 23 day tour*. All other *Signature Range* tours we offer (with the exception of the family tours) are sectors of this larger tour.

The longest *Essentials Range* tour we offer in Southeast Asia is our *Hanoi to Bangkok 19 day tour*, all other *Essentials Range* tours are sectors of this longer tour.

As our tours are modular, travellers may join you part way through your holiday, for

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example in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City or Phnom Penh on our *Signature Range* tours, or in Ho Chi Minh City our *Essentials Range* tours. There will also be travellers who end their tour when you continue on.

## Myanmar:

Our longest tour in *Myanmar is Best of Myanmar & Beach - 14 day tour*. All other tours in Myanmar are sectors of this longer tour. All our Myanmar trips operate together from day 1 - day 7, then from day 7 some in your tour group may leave and others continue on. Our *Yangon City Stay* travellers will also join our tour arrangements of day 1 and day 2.

## Guides:

In Laos, a Lao national guide escorts our tours from Vientiane through to Luang Prabang.

In Vietnam a Vietnamese national guide escorts our tours from Hanoi through to Ho Chi Minh City.

In Cambodia, our tours have two guides, a Cambodian national guide in Phnom Penh and a specialist regional guide in Siem Reap.

Our tours that end in Bangkok are not fully escorted for the Thailand sector. On our *Signature Range* tours there is a local Thai guide for the Bangkok city tour. If you are travelling on one of our *Essentials Range* tours, a local guide will meet you at the Cambodia border and escort you to the hotel, the remainder of your Bangkok stay is unescorted with free time to independently explore.

## What to pack

Please check local temperatures so you can pack accordingly. Visit [www.worldclimate.com](http://www.worldclimate.com)

- Lightweight cotton garments. Ladies may need to have their shoulders and legs (to below the knee) covered when visiting certain sites, so please pack accordingly
- Comfortable walking shoes in addition to flip flops/thongs
- DEET based mosquito repellent and antihistamine cream
- Universal travel adaptor
- Lightweight, fold up raincoat/poncho/umbrella

- Tour Voucher and a copy of your travel insurance policy, spare passport photos and a photocopy of your passport

- A small daypack for your day-to-day needs
- Sunglasses, hat, sunscreen, swimming costume and torch

- Sleep sheet if taking an overnight sleeper train in Vietnam. These also can be easily purchased in Hanoi at an approx. cost of USD \$5

- An overnight bag, if your tour includes a night aboard a Junk boat in Halong Bay. As we will be returning to Hanoi, it is not essential that you take your big bag/suitcase with you

## It's not like home

Travel to far-flung corners of the earth involves lifestyles and conditions that are sometimes very different from what you are used to back home. You must come prepared to cope with unusual situations, local inadequacies and unpredictable events, as and when they occur. Foreign travel is definitely not suitable for people who expect or demand everything to go exactly as planned. With the greatest respect and in the interest of your ultimate enjoyment you must understand this. Things can and do change in foreign countries.

## Shopping experiences on your tour

All shopping experiences on your tour have been noted in the itinerary and they have been carefully selected based upon positive feedback from On The Go travellers. You are under no obligation to partake in a listed shopping experience and you are most welcome to wait inside or outside the premises.

In the tourism industry it's common practice for commission to be offered in exchange for recommending particular shops or suppliers. This can become an issue when clients feel obliged to purchase goods. We do our best to avoid this by monitoring all shopping experiences offered.

Although we only visit reputable retailers, please note that we cannot explicitly guarantee the quality of their products. All purchases made whilst on holiday with us are

at your own discretion. Please make sure that you are completely happy with your purchase. On The Go cannot be held responsible for any items that you buy if they fail to meet expectation, or any shipping arrangements. Proceed with caution.

## Cambodia Country Guide

### Visas & passports

Visa requirements are subject to change and visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours. Please also ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of departure from Cambodia.

After booking your holiday, please provide us with your passport details as soon as possible so that we can proceed to book all services. Please be advised visa requirements are subject to change, therefore it is essential that you check current visa requirements with the embassy before travel. For information about visas, head to [www.onthegotours.com/Cambodia/Visas](http://www.onthegotours.com/Cambodia/Visas)

### What to expect in Cambodia

Please visit [www.onthegotours.com/Cambodia/Travel-tips-and-useful-info](http://www.onthegotours.com/Cambodia/Travel-tips-and-useful-info) for local customs, currency, WiFi and other helpful information to prepare you for your holiday.

### Health requirements & water

You should seek medical advice for vaccinations and about medications before travelling.

#### 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.

### Airline luggage allowance

If your tour includes international or domestic flights within the region please be mindful that the free baggage allowance for Economy class travel is strictly 20kg and 1 piece of hand luggage up to 6kg. Any additional weight is charged at a per kilo rate. You may wish to bear this in mind whilst shopping.

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## Vietnam Country Guide

### Welcome to Vietnam - Arrival transfer

A complimentary airport arrival transfer is provided on our Signature Range Tours, Private Tours and Short Stays if you are arriving on day 1 or you have booked pre tour accommodation with us. An arrival transfer is not included on our Essentials Range tours\*.

Arrival procedure for Hanoi - Noi Bai International Airport and Ho Chi Minh City - Tan Son Nhat International Airport. Upon arrival, please proceed to the immigration counter and pay the visa stamping fee of USD\$25 (if applicable). After collecting your luggage proceed to the arrival hall and go to the meeting point detailed on your Tour Voucher.

**If, for any reason you have trouble locating our representative** (after waiting 20 minutes) or your flight is delayed, please call or send a text message (standard text message, not Messenger or WhatsApp) to the emergency contact number as stated on your Tour Voucher.

**Please note:** If arriving prior to 9am on day 1 (essentially on a flight that arrives very, very early in the morning) you will need to purchase a night of pre-tour accommodation to save you waiting until standard hotel check in time which is generally 2pm. Breakfast is included with our pre tour accommodation rates.

**\*Essentials Tours: Please note, airport transfers are NOT included on our budget Essentials Range of tours, please make your own way to the start hotel noted on your Tour Voucher.** Transfers can be booked upon request for an additional fee, please contact us for rates.

### Visas & passports

Visa requirements are subject to change and visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours. Please also ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of departure from Vietnam.

After booking your holiday, please provide us with your passport details as soon as possible so that we can proceed to book all services. Please be advised visa requirements are subject to change, therefore it is essential that you check current visa requirements with the embassy before travel. For information about visas, head to [www.onthegotours.com/Vietnam/Visas](http://www.onthegotours.com/Vietnam/Visas)

### Health requirements & water

You should seek medical advice for vaccinations and about medications before travelling.

#### 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.

### What to expect in Vietnam

Please visit [www.onthegotours.com/Vietnam/Travel-tips-and-useful-info](http://www.onthegotours.com/Vietnam/Travel-tips-and-useful-info) for local customs, currency, WiFi and other helpful information to prepare you for an enjoyable holiday.

### Airline luggage allowance

If your tour includes international or domestic flights within the region please be mindful that the free baggage allowance for Economy class travel is strictly 20kg and 1 piece of hand luggage up to 6kg. Any additional weight is charged at a per kilo rate. You may wish to bear this in mind whilst shopping.

### Trains in Vietnam

It's not the Orient Express, but Vietnam's Reunification Express. On a number of our group tours we include an overnight train journey on the Reunification Express Railway Line between Hanoi and Hue and on our budget Essentials Range tours we include a second overnight train journey from Danang to Mui Ne. The particular SE series train that we use is the highest class of train available in Vietnam. It's titled as being the nation's fastest train; though by international standards it's quite the opposite. Nevertheless, our journey between Hanoi and Hue takes approximately

14 hours and travellers are accommodated in 4 berth 'Soft Sleeper' cabins.

Aboard each wagon are 9 compartments that comprise of 4 bunks per compartment. 4 persons of mixed sex share one compartment. You may be sharing with people from your tour group, other tourists or Vietnamese people. Who you will share your cabin with is ultimately dependent upon how the Vietnamese Railways Corporation configures the bookings.

Cabins onboard are comfortable though not comparable to European standards. A western style toilet (with a varying degree of cleanliness) is located at either end of the wagon. Air-conditioning (not always operational in the summer) and lighting are controlled from inside the cabin, which is also lockable. Luggage can be stored in a compartment under the bottom bunk. Linen and a pillow are provided though we strongly recommend that you bring your own sleep sheet (easily purchased in Hanoi at a cost of USD\$5). The cleanliness of the train varies according to wagons assigned to the journey for that particular day. Some wagons are spotlessly clean whilst others can be unclean and should have been decommissioned long ago. Irrespective of the particular wagon, they all have large clear glass windows that allow for uninterrupted views of stunning landscapes and never ending rice paddy fields.

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