



— 2022 —

VIETNAM & CAMBODIA

WITH MEKONG RIVER CRUISE

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Tour Length: 23 Days

Tour Departs: 14 June 2022

Tour Ends: 06 July 2022

OVERVIEW:

This tour follows the same format as our 2019 tour which was yet again a real “hit” with the group that travelled. It includes many of the highlights of both Vietnam and Cambodia, and while each country has its own distinct history and culture, they complement each other with their diverse landscape, scenery, magnificent sites and of course friendly people. Add to this, a magnificent 7-night luxury cruise down the Mekong River and you have a very special tour.

Vietnam: A land of natural beauty and stunning landscapes, of bustling energy and wonderful culinary delights, and especially a land of warm and welcoming people.

- Hanoi, the nation’s capital, a mixture of colonial charm and city hustle and bustle
- Cruise magical Halong Bay for 2 nights – simply stunning
- Hoi An, river port and shoppers paradise
- Saigon, the commercial heart reflecting its French heritage

Cambodia: A land of contrasts with a history that is spiritually uplifting and thought provoking. Peace now reigns in this magical kingdom

- Siem Reap and its riverside setting – discover the world of Cambodian cuisine at Shinta Mani Cooking School
- The Temples of Angkor Wat, a spectacular blend of symbolism and symmetry where earth reaches for the heavens
- Phnom Penh, the chaotic yet inspirational capital, the political and economic hub of the country
- Learn about the infamous Khmer Rouge

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hanoi, the nation's capital
- Cruise magical Halong Bay for 2 nights
- Hoi An, river port
- Saigon
- Siem Reap
- Shinta Mani Cooking School
- Angkor Wat
- Phnom Penh,
- Khmer Rouge
- 7 Night Mekong River Cruise “The Jahan”

7 Night Mekong River Cruise “The Jahan”

- First boutique-style river cruise ship for the Mekong (built in 2011)
- Distinctive British Colonial design throughout the ship
- All spacious cabins with en-suite private balcony and the finest amenities
- Excellent on-board facilities including pool and spa
- Finest cuisine and entertainment afloat on the Mekong
- Private shore excursions included along with outstanding service



TOUR COST PER PERSON

Sharing Twin/Double Room
AUD \$12,750.00

Single Supplement
AUD \$3,750.00

Accommodation

While the itinerary is full of daily highlights, just as important is your comfort on tour which is why we have selected an excellent range of First Class hotels, as good as you will find anywhere. To complement the accommodation, a large number of meals (at least 2 each day) have been included. Many of these will be enjoyed at local restaurants to allow you to enjoy not just the fine cuisine but also the local surroundings.



TOUR COSTS INCLUDE:

- Economy Class Airfares from Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane.
- All prepaid airline/government taxes and fuel
- surcharges as at December 2021
- First Class accommodation throughout
- Superior Cabins on Main Deck aboard river cruise ship "Jahan"
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Air-conditioned coach transportation for all touring
- Sightseeing and entrance fees as indicated in the itinerary
- English speaking local hosts and guides in each country
- Baggage handling of one suitcase per person
- Tips to local guides and coach drivers
- Fully escorted by a Maher Tours Leader

TOUR COSTS EXCLUDE:

- Any meals and sightseeing not specifically mentioned in the itinerary
- Travel insurance – advice and assistance offered
- Visa fees – advice and assistance offered
- Items of a personal nature such as room service, laundry, drinks, telephone charges etc.

BOOKING CONDITIONS: Deposit of AUD \$1000.00 per person is due upon confirmation of the booking.

Final payment date: Friday 22 April 2022.

To register for this tour please contact us on 1800 358 741 or info@mahertours.com



DAY TO DAY ITINERARY

Tuesday 14 June

Home – Singapore

Arrival time is early evening and overnight hotel accommodation has been reserved at the airport.

Wednesday 15 June

Singapore – Hanoi (D)

This morning, we join the flight to Hanoi. On arrival we are met by our local hosts and transferred to our hotel for a 3 night stay.

The remainder of the day is at leisure until we go to dinner at KOTO restaurant, specially set up to train the under-privileged youth of Hanoi in restaurant skills.

Thursday 16 June

Hanoi (B. L)

Our sightseeing of Hanoi city includes visits to Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum and his cottage house, One Pillar Pagoda situated in the middle of a pond of lotus, and the Temple of Literature, the 1st University of Vietnam.

After lunch at Wild Rice Restaurant, visit the Museum of Ethnology and learn about the 54 ethnic groups in Vietnam. We then take a cyclo ride in the Old Quarter of "36 streets and 36 wares" dating back from the

11th century to see the historic quarter.

Friday 17 June

Hanoi (B. D)

This morning drive to the ancient village of Duong Lam, a typical agricultural village in the north of the Red River Delta. Home to around 300 houses built three or four centuries ago, we wander along Duong Lam's narrow alleyways to explore rural life and Vietnam's ancient architecture.

In the afternoon, we visit Hoa Lo Prison, known to the Americans in the Vietnam War as the "Hanoi Hilton." We then visit the Lake of Restored Sword and the Ngoc Son temple. Tonight, we enjoy a traditional and unique Vietnamese water puppet show before dinner at the Press Club Restaurant which serves fusion cuisine.

Saturday 18 June

Hanoi – Hai Phong - Cruise (B. L. D)

After breakfast, we depart by coach for Ha Phong for one of our tour highlights. The Halong Bay region is referred to as the "Jewel in the Crown" of Vietnam, with some of the most stunning scenery in Vietnam. Lan Ha bay is a tranquil part of the famous Halong Bay, where many lagoons, bays, and caves still remain untouched. We join a traditional Vietnamese junk



for two nights cruising Lan Ha Bay, a World Heritage site, with accommodation onboard in private ensuite cabins.

Enjoy the Vietnamese buffet lunch and the sumptuous seafood dinner as you cruise the bay passing fishing villages and small towns. Lots of activities available for the more active – cooking demonstrations, pristine beaches for swimming, fishing, kayaking - or just sit back and enjoy the wonderful setting as the world passes by.

Sunday 19 June

Lan Ha Bay Cruising (B. L. D)

Another fabulous day cruising to some of Lan Ha Bay's more secluded and untouched locations. Enjoy a leisurely day of sightseeing, swimming and relaxing as you take in the magnificent scenery.

Monday 20 June

Hai Phong Bay – Hanoi – Da Nang – Hoi An (B)

The cruise continues this morning passing many islands, inlets, caves, bizarre rock sculptures. Don't forget to watch the magnificent sunrise from the sundeck, maybe even join the crew for Tai Chi exercises. Sadly, after a late breakfast, it's time to disembark as we continue our journey by coach first to the ceramic village of Dong Trieu then on to Hanoi Airport where we join our flight to Da Nang and then by coach to Hoi An for a 2 night stay.

Tuesday 21 June

Hoi An (B. L)

A chance to enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of this heritage town, one of the most popular destinations in Vietnam. This morning, join in a cooking class with Hoi



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An's Red Bridge Cooking School in the old town. Meander through Hoi An's central market with the chef to select the fresh produce before embarking on a 20-minute boat trip to the school for a private hands-on cooking class. This afternoon, enjoy a walking tour of the ancient town centre providing an insight into the city's history and architecture. The remainder of the day is free for shopping (a great place to buy silk) or just relaxing.

Wednesday 22 June

Hoi An – Da Nang – Siem Reap (B. L)

The morning is free for last minute shopping and we enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before returning to Da Nang airport where we join the flight to

Siem Reap. On arrival, we are met and transferred to our hotel for a 3 night stay.

Thursday 23 June

Siem Reap (B. L. D)

On today's morning tour we visit Conservation D'Angkor, which houses more than 6,000 pieces of priceless Khmer art. Conservation D'Angkor was originally charged with protecting all of Cambodia's ancient Khmer artefacts and temples. We continue on our tour with a visit to Angkor National Museum which is a profound cultural landmark in Siem Reap. Lunch is taken at the Chanrey Tree Restaurant, a new trendy restaurant that has taken traditional Khmer recipes and given them a modern twist. This evening enjoy dinner at a fine local restaurant.

Friday 24 June

Siem Reap (B.L)

Certainly, one of the tour highlights today. We begin the day early for a full day-tour of Angkor. When it is well-lit and relatively quiet is the best time to visit Angkor Wat, the largest and most famous of the Angkor temples. We continue the tour with a visit to explore the picturesque Ta Prohm, which has nearly disappeared into the jungle and remains overgrown; an oddly haunting and exotic scene, emphasizing





the 'lost city' legend. Lunch is included at a local restaurant. This afternoon, we take a fun tuk tuk ride to visit Angkor Thom, a walled and moated royal city and the last capital of the Angkorian Empire. We visit the surroundings of the complex including the Baphou, Elephant Terraces, Leper King Terrace and Royal Palace area.

Saturday 25 June

Commence 7 Night Mekong River Cruise / Siem Reap – Kampong Chhnang (B. L. D)

This morning, we transfer to Kampong Cham on the Mekong River. Early this afternoon, we embark at Kampong Cham on our boutique river cruise ship “The Jahan” where we are greeted by the crew with a welcome drink and buffet lunch. In the afternoon we learn more about the education of the young Cambodian generation (NGO project). The children join us on board, always excited to show their skills in music and art. After the performance, we leave the ship by bus for an afternoon excursion. During low water season, we have the chance to see a bamboo bridge which connects the mainland with an island. Local communities re-build the bridge every year when water levels drop. We continue our land journey to the enchanting pre-Angkorian temple of Wat Hanchey (7th century). This small complex sits on a hill top on the shore with



a breath-taking view over the Mekong. We return to the ship to freshen up before we get together for a welcome dinner.

Sunday 26 June

Kampong Chhnang – Okna Tey – Kampong Cham (B. L. D)

Our journey will start with an invigorating Tai Chi lesson on the sun deck just as the sun begins its slow rise. The ship sails up towards the small Angkor Ban village on the Mekong River. The Angkor Ban village is famous for its unspoiled community and beautiful, traditional houses. Back on board we enjoy lunch as we set sail downstream on the Mekong to the Island of Koh Oknha Tey. This spot in the middle of the Mekong is



DAY TO DAY ITINERARY

known for manufacturing high class silk products. By tuk tuk we explore the island with its workshops and learn how silk is processed from its source, provided by little silkworms, to a final quality product made of original Cambodian silk. After some additional cruising time, passing the confluence of the Mekong and Tonle Rivers, and observing the spectacular marshlands of this area, the boat anchors near Kampong Chhnang, where we overnight.

Monday 27 June

Kampong Cham – Kampong Tralach – Phnom Penh (B. L. D)

After a good night's rest we awake to Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia's "water

world", where everything is on sticks balanced on water rich soil. We take a local boat to the shore and head to a rural village nearby for a walking tour. Our guides introduce you to the village specialities – Khmer style pottery and the making of palm sugar. Before returning to the boat, we explore the floating villages and wetlands of the region. Back on board lunch is served while the cruise continues with a languid meander along the Tonle River towards Kampong Tralach. Children wave enthusiastically while bringing their livestock down to the river. Further down the river we take part in an Ox cart ride being introduced to the Heritage Line pro-bono "literacy project" at the Green Schol. After some additional





cruising time the boat arrives at the pier of Phnom Penh where we overnight.

Tuesday 28 June

Phnom Penh "Pearl Of The East" (B. L. D)

Phnom Penh was once the Paris of the East. Despite its rapid development, it has retained a lot of its rustic charm and elegance. After breakfast, we enjoy a comprehensive lecture on Cambodia's modern history. This is followed by a city tour of this dynamic, historical capital city of Cambodia which has managed to preserve huge slices of its French colonial allure. Sightseeing in the morning includes the dazzling white and gold Royal Palace and the Silver Pagoda, as well as a visit to the National Museum. After lunch at a local restaurant, we visit the Genocide museum, a stark reminder of the horrors that transpired during Cambodia's Khmer Rouge regime. We then return to the ship with time to relax on our cabin balcony or the lounge before the evening programme commences with a variety of cocktails served on the sun deck. Take a seat and enjoy the Apsara dance performance, showcasing the brilliance and richness of this culture and the soothing sounds of traditional music with the calming scent of incense sticks. This is followed by a barbeque on the sundeck with the stars and the moon as our companions.

Wednesday 29 June

Phnom Penh – Border Crossing
– Tan Chau (B. L. D)

Today enjoy a lazy day of cruising along the main Mekong Channel where we witness large commercial ships plying this route. Later in the afternoon, we reach the Vietnamese border for the requisite cross border paperwork which can take some time. Meantime, we can enjoy the afternoon sun on the Sun Deck, pamper ourselves at the Spa, or sharpen our culinary skills with the Heritage Line's Cambodian and Vietnamese cuisine cooking class. The ship moors midstream overnight in Tan Chau.

Thursday 30 June

Tan Chau – My An Hung – Sa Dec (B. L. D)

Welcome to the fish sanctuary of Vietnam. We begin our day with a hearty breakfast at the Dining Hall or at your private balcony. We will then take a short excursion to Tan Chau, a pleasant town near the Cambodian border with sizeable Chinese, Kinh and Khmer communities. We will start the trip by a traditional vehicle called "xeloi" to a local market where we will take a local boat to visit the fish farm. Here you will see the daily life of Vietnamese people in Mekong. Lunch is on board the ship before we set off for My An Hung Village. Passengers walk to the family house through the vegetable

DAY TO DAY ITINERARY

garden to see the boat building yard and canals. We will cross a monkey bridge and see chilli, corn and beetle nut plantations amongst other vegetable fields. Then gather at the family's house to taste tea with honey with local delicacies and fruits before we return to the ship and set sail for Sa Dec where we moor for the night.

Friday 01 July

Sa Dec – Cai Be – My Tho (B. L. D)

This morning we join a traditional sampan to tour Binh Thanh Island and its man-made canals. Here, every villager is involved in the process of growing and processing water hyacinths into natural fibre floor mats and rattan baskets. After lunch on board, the ship arrives in Cai Be in time for a visit to the boisterous and colourful floating market

where traders gather in a cacophonous congregation. Continuing our cruise, we discover breath-taking landscapes along the river and see the rustic life on the Mekong Delta unfold. The cruise halts intermittently to allow us to observe how rice paste, rice cookies and coconut candies are made, along with the Longan fruit drying process. After touring the canals, we head to an ancient house surrounded by fruit orchards before returning to the ship for the tranquil evening cruise towards My Tho. A wonderful farewell party awaits us on board.

Saturday 02 July

My Tho – Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) (B. L)

Our cruise sadly comes to an end, as the ship winds its way to My Tho, approximately 70km south of Saigon



on the upper Mekong River in Vietnam. We disembark after breakfast and leave the rural tranquillity behind us as we transfer to the bustling city of Saigon for a 3 night stay. Lunch is included and the remainder of the day is at leisure.

Sunday 03 July

Ho Chi Minh City (B. L)

Today is a full day of sightseeing. After breakfast travel out of the city to the Cu Chi Tunnels. This vast network of tunnels, stretching for over 150 kilometres was built by the Viet Cong in the battles for the South. The tunnels are a sobering insight into the dedication of the Viet Cong who virtually lived in the narrow and claustrophobic tunnels whilst the war raged. Nearby, a chilling demonstration of the traps and weapons that were used against the Americans is given and we then enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. This afternoon, we see Saigon's historic landmarks including the 1880's General Post Office and the former Presidential Palace which was once headquarters for the Saigon Government during the "American War". We visit the late 19th century Notre Dame cathedral, located in a peaceful part of the city, and the War Remnants Museum

Monday 04 July

Ho Chi Minh City (B. D)

A free day today – time for last minute shopping, sightseeing, or just relaxing by the pool in preparation for the journey home. This evening, we enjoy a farewell dinner together.

Tuesday 05 July

Ho Chi Minh City – Singapore- Home (B)

A leisurely day until our lunchtime transfer to the airport where we join the flight to Singapore connecting with the overnight flight home.

NB: Those who wish may break their journey at Singapore for a stopover and return independently at a later date.

Wednesday 06 July

Arrive Home



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AUSTRALIA

P: 1800 358 741

E: info@mahertours.com

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