

## Luxury Mekong



**Tour Name:** Luxury Mekong

**Tour Code:** VIST

**Days:** 8

### Day 1

**Tue, 04 Nov**

#### Siem Reap > Mekong Cruise (L,D)

Please arrive by 08:30am. Here your Tour Director will run through an overview of your upcoming trip before boarding your bus. Discover the rural side of Cambodia as you transfer to Kampong Cham where the breathtaking Scenic Spirit awaits. Before arriving, you will be visiting the stunning Khmer bridge at Kampong Kdei, Kampong Thom and a stone cutters village.

After boarding, begin your cruise in style with a cocktail reception hosted by your Cruise Director. Take a stroll around the decks to orientate yourself as to where all the amenities are. After your welcome dinner, settling into your private suite does not mean you settle for service. At any time, your dedicated personal butler is free to swing by with a nightcap and delivery of your preferred pillows.

Please book your flight to arrive into Siem Reap prior to 07:30 AM.

### Day 2

**Wed, 05 Nov**

#### Wat Hanchey > Kampong Cham (B,L,D)

Awake as you approach Wat Hanchey, an ancient hilltop pagoda and monastery. After learning about life as a novice monk from one of the locals, wander around the complex and admire the view over the Mekong River and surrounding countryside. Sail back to Kampong Cham.

#### Freechoice:

This afternoon, explore Kampong Cham and its surrounds. Choose to learn about local folklore at Phnom Pros, a mountaintop pagoda that has long been part of a traditional legend. Tragically, in more modern times, the site was used as a Killing Field by the Khmer Rouge. The temple now features a Buddha Garden and is home to a local troop of monkeys. Afterwards, visit Wat Nokor Bachey, a unique architectural experiment that blends an Angkorian era temple with a new temple built inside it.

Alternatively, explore Kampong Cham's history and industry with a drive past shop houses, remnants of the French colonial era, and the large Central market. Visit a local rubber plantation established by the French before stopping at a village known for growing betel nut, an important part of Cambodian culture.

Your third option today is a visit to Kho Penh Village. Located on Pen (Bamboo) Island, it's only accessible by local remork after crossing by bamboo bridge or ferry from Kampong Cham. This remote village gives you a fascinating insight into the simple, rural lifestyle of farmers in Cambodia.

If you have not had a chance to enjoy your spectacular suite on the Scenic Spirit and are not feeling like socialising, it might be time to unwind and dine in private. Your dedicated butler can arrange for a beautiful meal to be served in your room or on the balcony as you enjoy the fresh air of the Mekong, overlooking the gorgeous sunset of the Cambodian skyline as you sail to Angkor Ban.

**Day 3**  
**Thu, 06 Nov****Angkor Ban > Silk Island > Phnom Penh (B,L,D)**

Upon arrival in Angkor Ban, explore its historical rural wooden houses, which survived the Khmer rouge, visit a school that teaches English to the local students after their regular school lessons and visit a local pagoda where a segregated and solemn excursion at a Buddhist pagoda awaits.

**Enrich**

Receive a traditional blessing from a monk and learn how to pray in a Buddhist pagoda before partaking in an alms ceremony, which contributes to the daily meal of the resident monks.

Afterwards reboard Scenic Spirit for lunch and sail downstream to the island of Oknha Tey, dedicated to the art of silk weaving. Travel by tuk tuk to the farm and learn about the process of silk production. Return to Scenic Spirit and some free time. The option to immerse yourself in local culture with our team is available by learning how to make and wear the Cambodian scarf.

Some down time is a great way to relax and what better way to do that than heading to the Wellness Centre or Beauty Salon for a bit of pampering.

**Sunset Drinks**

Get an outfit ready for an evening of style with a Sundowners cocktail reception on the sundeck against the backdrop of Phnom Penh's lights and stunning scenery as we approach the capital of Cambodia.

Later before dinner, enjoy a cultural performance by the Cambodian Student and Children's Organisation.

**Day 4**  
**Fri, 07 Nov****Phnom Penh (B,L,D)**

After breakfast, it will be time to head out and explore the city.

**Freechoice:**

You can choose to journey to the infamous Killing Fields and take a tour of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, housed inside a former prison. These sites are a sobering reminder of the terrors unleashed by the Khmer Rouge regime in the 1970s. This moving tour will give you a deeper insight into the tumultuous history of Cambodia and the resilience of its people.

Passionate foodies may like to choose a hands-on cooking class. Take a trip to the bustling market with a local chef to purchase your ingredients, then head back to the kitchen to cook your own lunch, testing out the styles and flavours of Cambodian cuisine.

Alternatively, travel by remok, a local style of tuk tuk, to explore the French architecture and history of Phnom Penh. Finish the tour with shopping at the Central Market, famed for its unique Art Deco design and bright yellow façade.

At the conclusion of your tour, return to Scenic Spirit for lunch. The remainder of the afternoon is at leisure.

**Sunset Drinks**

Later this evening, revel in our Phnom Penh by City Lights tour. You'll get to witness the nightlife of the capital before stopping at a local rum distillery for your exclusive Scenic Sundowners experience, including a private tour and tasting.

**Day 5**  
**Sat, 08 Nov****Phnom Penh > Border Crossing > Tan Chau (B,L,D)**

Even the most developing countries have a standard of luxury and opulence. You can experience this this morning at the Royal Palace with the famous Silver Pagoda within, on your included visit to this must-see attraction. Set on the riverfront, this dazzling palace was built in the 1860s and still serves as the official residence of the King of Cambodia. Upon returning to the ship set sail and say goodbye to Phnom Penh as we sail to the Cambodian and Vietnamese border.

A relaxing afternoon of sailing will allow you to take advantage of the many exclusive facilities on the Scenic Spirit. Sometimes everyone needs a break from the hustle and bustle of this exciting cruise and for those bookworms, kick back in the Scenic Spirit library, or head to the heart of this ship, which is the Scenic Spirit lounge, a great place to unwind with a glass of wine. Obtain some background knowledge of each port and get the key information for the exciting activities ahead. With travelling throughout South-East Asia comes the heat and what better way to cool down than socialising with a fresh cocktail and swimming in the pool all or just settle into the private comfort of your luxury suite and private balcony.

After clearing immigration into Vietnam at the border, you will experience a fantastically themed dinner on board the Spirit along with a lion dance performed by locals on the expansive Sundeck.

**Day 6**  
**Sun, 09 Nov**

**Tan Chau (B,L,D)**

You may want to start the day with some exercise in the on-board gym, an early morning yoga class or relax your muscles in the sauna. Then set off to discover the areas surrounding Tan Chau.

**Freechoice:**

You could leave the city life behind at Tra Su Bird Sanctuary in Tra Su Forest. Travel by sampan through endless tranquil waterways, flanked by mangroves and lush greenery. This eco reserve spans 850 hectares and is an ecological haven for fauna and flora, home to more than 100 species of waterbirds.

Or experience a traditional way of life on Evergreen Island, joining local farmers for a morning of discovery. Back in Tan Chau, ride in a xe loi, a three-wheeled bicycle rickshaw that was introduced by the French in the 19th century and is a common form of transportation in rural Vietnam. Visit the recently renovated, brightly coloured Cao Dai temple. Caodaism is a new religion, established in 1926 in the southern Vietnamese city of Tây Ninh, and brings together beliefs and practices from Buddhism, Christianity, Taoism and Confucianism. Here, you will learn more about the mix of ideas that form the basis of this fascinating religion.

For your third choice, board a speedboat to visit Chau Doc, a major city in the Mekong Delta, and Tay An temple. Set at the foot of Sam Mountain, this elaborate temple is a mixture of Indian and Islamic architecture. Afterwards, board another sampan to visit Vinh Te canal and view life along the riverfront of Chau Doc, before stopping at a family-operated fish farm on your way back to Scenic Spirit.

What better way to end the first day in Vietnam than a delicious cocktail by the pool on board the Spirit along with a great view of the Mekong as you set sail for Sa Dec.

**Day 7**  
**Mon, 10 Nov**

**Sa Dec > Cai Be (B,L,D)**

When you arrive in Sa Dec, board your sampan once again to explore the lively wet market where you can meet the sellers and marvel at their wares, including live fish, frogs and even snakes. This two-hour exploration will take you deep into the local lifestyle. You can also see the grand home of Mr. Huynh Thuy Le, a Chinese merchant who inspired Marguerite Duras' novel L'Amant. Your expert guide will reveal the secrets behind this passionate tale of tragic love. After your morning excursion, head back to the Scenic Spirit for lunch whilst sailing downstream to Cai Be.

**Freechoice:**

This afternoon enjoy your choice from the Scenic Freechoice activities.

Choose to travel via sampan to Tan Phong, a small island located near Cai Be town that is rich in alluvial soil suitable for tropical fruit orchards all year round. With a total area of more than 1,000 hectares, surrounded by silted sandbanks, canals and a mild temperature, Tan Phong has long been a friendly destination for eco-tourism. On arrival, try a hands-on experience at a workshop specialised in weaving water hyacinth into artistic crafts. Board a motorised buggy for a ride through endless fruit orchards, stopping to enjoy the tropical fruits and interact with a farm owner. Reboard the sampan and cruise to Cái Bè town to discover the local cottage industry where families make rice-paper and sweets from pop-corn, pop-rice and coconut.

Alternatively take a sampan from the Scenic Spirit to savour a delicious afternoon tea at the Le Longanier, a French colonial house restaurant, where staff will welcome you with tea, coffee and a range of local fruit and snacks for your tasting. You can dive into a local experience with a band playing music and performing traditional Vietnamese songs.

If you would prefer to enjoy the comforts of your ship, our highly skilled bar team is ready to welcome you to a hands-on cocktail/mocktail making class featuring fresh local ingredients.

Back on board you will have time to relax and overlook the gorgeous sunset of the Vietnamese skyline and life on the Mekong River before your engaging farewell dinner with the crew as you sail to My Tho.

**Day 8**  
**Tue, 11 Nov**

**Mekong Cruise > Ho Chi Minh City (B)**

It is time to bid farewell to the Scenic Spirit as you wave goodbye to the staff and commence your 90 min drive to Ho Chi Minh City. Upon arrival you can be dropped off at the Caravelle Hotel Saigon or head to the airport as you get ready to depart Vietnam for your homeland or extended travels. Leave with a full camera and stunning memories to treasure.

Please book your flight to depart out of Ho Chi Minh City after 03:00 PM.

This itinerary is a guide only and may be amended for operational reasons such as high and low water. As such, the cruise may operate altered from that stated above.