

## The Small Cruise Ship Collection

www.small-cruise-ships.com

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info@small-cruise-ships.com

### CLASSIC MEKONG (DOWNSTREAM)

There can be no tapestry of river life as fascinating and varied as the River Mekong. Indeed there can be no more striking a cultural contrast as that between the bustling Vietnam delta and the tranquility of Cambodia. We pass from the vibrant French colonial port of Saigon, through the vast delta so rich in human life and endeavour, to travel along the main channel into the rich countryside of Cambodia. With a full day in charming Phnom Penh we then explore remoter waterways as we progress to the great monuments of Angkor.



#### ITINERARY

##### DAY 1 SIEM REAP

Embark on your Pandaw at Kampong Cham following a road transfer from Siem Reap (Angkor). The vessel will proceed upstream to moor midstream for cocktails and to meet key crew. Please note: between mid of February and end of March we are expecting low water levels. Alternate itinerary and excursions will apply should we not be able to reach Kratie and the river dolphins.

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### DAY 2 KRATIE AND THE DOLPHIN GROUNDS

Morning visit to Koh Trong Island a small Mekong River hamlet which can be explored by bicycle or ox cart with a real immersion into Khmer rural life visiting local schools and English classes then visiting a reforestation site where you can leave your mark by planting your own tree. Passengers should feel free to donate items for use in the schools such as books & pens etc. After lunch, moor off Kratie and continue to the dolphin grounds by local boat where we will observe the elusive Irrawaddy Dolphins.

### DAY 3 SILK ISLAND

Sailing downstream all morning, with lectures and film presentations, past Phnom Penh and up the Tonle River to board our expedition vessel, the Pandaw Explorer, to visit Koh Okhna Tey, or 'silk island' to study the entire silk making process from worms to weavers. There will be a demonstration of the ancient Khmer martial art of Bokator. Return to ship and return down the Tonle River to turn up the Mekong at the confluence. Evening lecture on Angkor and Khmer culture.

### DAY 4 PHNOM PENH

Morning orientation of Phnom Penh by cyclo visiting the Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda followed by the National Museum with its marvellous collection of Angkorian statuary. Afternoon optional visit to the Killing Fields and Genocide museum or take a tuk-tuk to explore the riverfront and finish with High Tea at Raffles Hotel. Overnight in Phnom Penh city port with its lively bars, restaurants and night life.

### DAY 5 VIETNAM BORDER

Early sailing to the Vietnam border for formalities and during this stationary period there is an optional tour of the working ship

and fruit carving classes on deck. Afternoon, explore the labyrinthine canal system around Tan Chau to visit a Taoist temple where the monks will read fortunes. Continue through local villages by Xi Loi stopping off to help locals tend their fields before stopping off to visit a fish farm and earn merit by releasing fish back into the Mekong.

### DAY 6 CON PHUOC ISLAND

In the morning sail up a small canal to moor off Con Phuoc Island and go ashore to explore the island by tuk-tuk seeing basket production and visiting a 100-year old Catholic Church and local woodworking artisans. After a short cruise downstream in the afternoon we take a short coach trip where we visit Gao Giong 'green oasis' with its bird sanctuary. Here a diverse selection of water birds and egrets that gather in the tens of thousands across the Duong Tharp Muoi or 'Plain of Reeds'. Rowing boats traverse the canals to take us to see the principal nesting areas.

### DAY 7 BEN TRE

After breakfast the ship moors off Cho Lach island for pot making and further glimpses of Delta life, agriculture and local Viet hospitality including a culinary lesson in making traditional Banh Xeo. Upon return to the boat we take a cruise downstream to Ben Tre. Where we travel by sampans through mangroves and bamboo groves to the fruit orchards of Ben Tre. In these local artisans are at work and are invite visitors into their homes for tea, fruit and honey products made from their own honey. This is an area rich in bird life and on our return journey we travel by horse cart through the lush countryside.

### DAY 8 MY THO TO SAIGON

Moor at My Tho for road transfer to Saigon.

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## YOUR SHIP:

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**YOUR SHIP:**

**VESSEL TYPE:**

**LENGTH:**

**PASSENGER CAPACITY:**

**BUILT/REFURBISHED:**



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## PRICING

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**ADDITIONAL CHARGES:**

**Port Charges. From 65 USD pp**