



## The Small Cruise Ship Collection

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## THE MEKONG: FROM LAOS TO CHINA (DOWNSTREAM)

For the first time it is possible for travellers to sail on the mighty Upper Mekong River from Laos to China or vice versa. This will be an incredible, pioneering 14-night river expedition discovering charming villages, stunning scenery, pristine jungle, the Golden Triangle and the very different emerald green Mekong in China's Yunnan province. Our journey also includes overnight stops in Luang Prabang, Chiang Saen and Jinghong. The river recces sail aboard a Pandaw, specifically designed and built for sailing on the Upper Mekong with low draft and extra powerful engines. Pandaw's founder, Paul Strachan, said: "it has been a long held dream to sail the length of the navigable sections of the Mekong River; now we can. There is much to explore in this undiscovered region; travellers need to be up for a real adventure as the daily itinerary might change, but with a flexible attitude will have the adventure of a lifetime". Please note this expedition is NOT suitable for anyone with walking difficulties. We are also offering pre and post cruise extensions visiting Kunming, Dali and Lijiang in Yunnan Province and the Plain of Jars in Laos. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** These are reconnaissance voyages and the itinerary is indicational only subject to daily revisions and many a change. Travellers should be up for a real adventure and be prepared for such uncertainties. This will be the first time a river expedition ship will have made this expedition and there may be delays at border crossing points when dealing with formalities. Travellers who might find sudden changes of plan or delays stressful should not book this trip. Our guides will do their best to ensure that we cover as much of this indicational itinerary as possible but some excursions may be changed for others. We can assure

we will see and do as much as we can, hopefully more than indicated in the itinerary below. **LOW WATER SEASON DECEMBER - APRIL (Upstream)** Passengers booking in the low water season months of December to April are advised in the event that the ship's master decides that the water is too low it will be necessary to transfer passengers from as close to the China border as the ship can reach to Jinghong by speed boat and stay at the InterContinental or similar for two nights in order to complete the Yunnan sightseeing. **LOW WATER SEASON DECEMBER - APRIL (Downstream)** Passengers booking in the low water season months of December to April are advised in the event that the ship's master decides that the water is too low it will be necessary to stay at the InterContinental or similar for two nights in order to complete the Yunnan sightseeing and then join ship by speed boat transfer from Jinghong to a position as close to the Laos - China border as the ship can

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at leisure with opportunity to explore charming Jinghong.

### DAY 2 JINGHONG

Founded in 1180 by Tai King Phanya Coeng, the turbulent history of Jinghong has been influenced by Thai, Burmese and Chinese occupations, which can be seen in the building and the local language. After lunch, we visit the Tropical Plant Institute and Manting Park. Experience an evening cultural show at Maxmumbani, where dancers from 38 different ethnic groups display their traditions with acrobatics and fascinating story of China and its people.

### DAY 3 GUAN LEI

Cruise the Mekong in China with magnificent scenery of dramatic, scenic hillsides and cliffs. Arrive at Guan Lei Port, take a walking tour and pass immigration. We are now on the Mekong in Laos.

### DAY 4 CRUISING THE MEKONG

Sailing downstream on the Upper Mekong with lush jungle scenery of Laos on our left and Burma on our right. Arrive at Ban Na Kor (Sob Luoy Port) and continue to a remote sand bank where we moor for the night. Tonight experience sandbank canapés and cocktails followed by local Laos folklore stories and traditional floating fire lanterns.

### DAY 5 CHIANG SAEN

Arrive Chiang Saen, Thailand. After lunch, afternoon excursion by coach to the Golden Triangle area named due to the meeting of Burma, Laos and Thailand. We also visit the opium Museum.

### DAY 6 INTO LAOS

safely reach.

### ITINERARY

#### DAY 1 JINGHONG

Please note this cruise is not suitable for those with walking difficulties. Low Water Itinerary: Passengers booking in the low water season months of December to March are advised that in the event that the ship's master decides that the water is too low, it will be necessary to stay at the four star InterContinental or similar for 2 nights in order to complete the Yunnan sightseeing. Later join ship by speedboat transfer from Jinghong to a position as close to the Laos-China border as the ship can safely reach. Embark the your Pandaw from 16:00pm. Afternoon

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We go through the immigration formalities at the Thai/Laos border and re-join the Pandaw. Set sail downstream on the beautiful Upper Mekong River. After lunch, if time allows, enjoy sightseeing by foot in a Laos jungle village.

### DAY 7 PAK OU CAVES

Morning walking tour of the local trading town of Pak Beng. Continue cruising downstream to Pak Ou, where we transfer to a local boat and enter the Nam Ou River to visit the extraordinary Pak Ou Buddha Caves. Admire spectacular limestone cliff faces in the Buddhist sanctuary.

### DAY 8 LUANG PRABANG

In the early morning we will arrive in Luang Prabang. After breakfast, there is an opportunity for you to explore the beautiful temple city of Luang Prabang with its many Buddhist temples, libraries and Royal Palace. There is a buzzing night market and many delightful cafes and some quite good restaurants ashore.

### DAY 9 LUANG PRABANG

Early morning walking tour to observe the morning alms offering by local people to the hundreds of monks who walk around the city every morning. Passengers are invited to join with the offerings we provide for the alms giving. Mid-afternoon traditional dance performance on board the Pandaw. We moor overnight in Luang Prabang.

### DAY 10 MUANG KHAY VILLAGE

Morning sightseeing by mini coach. We drive to see the deep jungle pools at the Khaung Si Waterfall and for the teak forest trails and butterfly farm. Time permitting, we will also visit the elephant camp. After lunch, enjoy a cooking demonstration on board and wonderful scenic cruising on the mighty Mekong

River.

### DAY 11 XAYABURI DAM

Pass through the Mekong water control lock at Xayaburi Hydro Electric Power Plant (itself an interesting and perhaps controversial tourist attraction). Late afternoon walking tour of a local village.

### DAY 12 PAK SAO

Morning visit to Ban Pak Huong, an interesting local village on the Thai/Laos border. Continue to Pak Sao where we enjoy an excursion to a plantation village and meet the local people.

### DAY 13 VIENTIANE PROVINCE

We pass through a dramatic landscape of jungle and mountain where the river flows fast and wild. Amazing rock formations straddle the riverbanks. Here we enter the cultivated plains of Vientiane province. We arrive mid-afternoon in Vientiane where we moor overnight. Opportunity for independent exploration of this delightful, French influenced city.

### DAY 14 VIENTIANE

Morning explorations of the delightful French city including visits to Sisaket Temple, the President's Hall, Wat Phakeo Temple and the Phatouxay monument. Opportunity for independent exploration enjoying the many cafes and bistros in this charming little corner of L'Indochine. Farewell cocktails and dinner on your final night aboard the Pandaw.

### DAY 15 VIENTIANE

Disembark in Vientiane after breakfast.

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The itinerary for this expedition is indicative only and subject to reconnaissance. As we travel to remote areas, changes to the itinerary will inevitably occur. A flexible approach is required if you book this cruise.



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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 Taxes 125 USD pp



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