



## The Small Cruise Ship Collection

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## THE MEKONG RIVER: LAOS TO CHINA UPSTREAM (SABAIDEE PANDAW)

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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visits to Sisaket Temple, the President's Hall, Wat Prakeo Temple and the Phatouxay monument. Set sail late afternoon, enjoy a welcome dinner on board and overnight near Vientiane.

### DAY 2 CRUISING THE MEKONG

Today we cruise upstream on the Mekong, passing lush jungle scenery and tiny riverside villages. Morning presentation on the Lao language. Afternoon cooking demonstration on the upper deck. Arrive in Ban Xanakham where we more overnight.

### DAY 3 PAK LAI

Afternoon visit to the French administrative town of Pak Lai with many colonial buildings and a bustling local market. This town boasts the largest elephant festival in South East Asia, usually in February. We return to the ship at Ban Muang where we overnight.

### DAY 4 BAN PARK BOR VILLAGE

Afternoon visit and walking tour of Ban Park Bor (Kmu Tribal) Village, a typical village, set on the banks of the Mekong amidst lush jungle.

### DAY 5 BAN MOUANG KHAI VILLAGE

In the morning we pass the newly constructed lock that forms part of the Xanyaburi Hydro Electric Power Plant. Continue upstream to the village of Ban Mouang Khai.

### DAY 6 LUANG PRABANG

Morning sightseeing by mini coach to visit the jungle pools and dramatic Khaung Si waterfall. We also visit a butterfly garden and elephant camp. Arrive in the heart of the temple city of Luang Prabang. After lunch, explore by tuk-tuk this well-preserved and unique world heritage site with its many

safely reach.

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1 VIENTIANE

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 (the last stretch into China would need to be done by speed boat). Embarkation 11.30am, followed by lunch and afternoon explorations of the delightful French city including

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Buddhist temples, libraries and royal palace. There is a buzzing night market and many delightful cafes and some quite good restaurants ashore.

### DAY 7 LUANG PRABANG

Early morning walking tour to see the alms offering by the local people to hundreds of monks who walk around the city every morning. Passengers are invited to join in with offerings we provide for the alms giving. Morning walking tour visiting the National Museum and morning market. Afternoon free to enjoy the beauty and unique atmosphere of Luang Prabang on your own explorations ashore. Enjoy traditional Laos dancing on the upper deck late afternoon. We moor overnight in Luang Prabang.

### DAY 8 PAK OU BUDDHA CAVES

Morning sightseeing by local boat exploring the unique Pak Ou Caves, a Buddhist sanctuary with spectacular limestone cliff faces. Sail upstream on the beautiful Mekong towards Ban Bo. After lunch, enjoy a cooking demonstration on the upper deck.

### DAY 9 PAK BENG

Morning walking tour of the market town of Pak Beng. After lunch, if time permits, we explore Ban Pak Sip, a traditional riverside village full of charm and life.

### DAY 10 CHIANG KHONG

Scenic cruising to the border between Laos and Thailand at Huay Say. Here we cross into Thailand where our waiting transport takes you to re-join the ship at the bustling and pretty Thai port town of Chiang Khong. Afternoon visit the Golden Triangle and Opium Museum. Enjoy farewell cocktails and dinner on board the Champa Pandaw tonight.

### DAY 11 BAN DOM MOON

Sailing on the dramatic upper Mekong arriving at Ban Pha Khao. Afternoon village walk up steep track up a hill with a small temple and stunning panoramic views of the surrounding jungle and valleys. Continue to Ban Don Moon where we overnight.

### DAY 12 CRUISING THE MEKONG

Continue up the Mekong with Burma on our left and Laos on our right. Arrive at Ban Na Kor (Sob Luoy Port) for sail on 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 13 GUAN LEI

Arrive in China at Guan Lei Port, take a walking tour and pass immigration. We are now in Yunnan Province, China - the only luxury ship to make this incredible journey. Continue on the Mekong in China past magnificent scenery of dramatic, scenic hillsides.

### DAY 14 JINGHONG

Arrive in Jinghong, founded in 1180 by Tai King Phanya Coeng. Its turbulent history has been influenced by Thai, Burmese and Chinese occupations, which can be seen in the buildings and the local language. After lunch, visit the Tropical Plants Research Institute and Manting Park. On our final evening in Jinghong, 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 15 JINGHONG

Disembark after breakfast.

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**Please Note:**

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. Please note this cruise is not suitable for those with walking difficulties.



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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