

Expand Your **HORIZONS**



RV Tonie Pandaw

Horizons Cruise and Travel

02 9420 8383

0418 289399

[David@horizonscruisetravel.com.au](mailto:David@horizonscruisetravel.com.au)

[www.horizonscruisetravel.com.au](http://www.horizonscruisetravel.com.au)



**Pandaw River Cruises**

**Classic Mekong**

**8 days / 7 nights departing 12 January, 2020 – 19 January, 2020  
Twin Share from AUD \$3762.00 per person onboard RV Tonie Pandaw**

**SOLO TRAVELLER from AUD \$3762.00 per person = **NO SOLO SUPPLEMENT****

### Overview

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.



**Your Accommodation**



**Amazing sights**

## Your Itinerary



## SAIGON

Saigon or Ho Chi Minh is the capital of southern Vietnam and after Hanoi the country's second city. Remarkably despite the boom of the past ten years much of old Saigon has survived and there is still a real L'Indochine feel to the place.

It is easy to walk around the central district exploring the broad leafy boulevards and splendid French colonial architecture - the Notre Dame Cathedral, the Post Office and Opera. The Town Hall, scene of the 'fall of Saigon' on April 30th 1975 is worth a peek as is the war museum (interestingly the French seem to come off far worse than the Americans!).

A half day excursion to the Chu Chi tunnel complex is also well worth it - here the Viet Cong held out against successive carpet bombing in an underground city. Saigon is a great place to eat with some excellent French or Vietnamese restaurants.

Transfer from the meeting point in Saigon to My Tho Port. After boarding your Pandaw we sail downstream to Ben Tre and anchor midstream. In the afternoon, there is a lecture on Vietnamese life on the Mekong Delta. During cocktail hour passengers are entertained by an indigenous dance group and meet your key crew.

## DAY 2 BEN TRE

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. After lunch, 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.

## DAY 3 CON PHUOC ISLAND

After breakfast, there is a short coach journey to the Gao Giong 'green oasis' with its bird sanctuary. Here a diverse selection of water 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. After returning to the boat we cruise upstream to Con Phuoc Island. We Moor in a small canal off Con Phuoc Island and go

ashore to explore the island by Xi Loi seeing basket production and visiting a 100-year old Catholic Church as well as local woodworking artisans.

#### **DAY 4 CAMBODIA BORDER**

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. Border crossing formalities take up much of the afternoon and during this stationary period there is an optional tour of the working ship and fruit carving classes on deck.

#### **DAY 5 PHNOM PENH**

Morning orientation of Phnom Penh by cyclo visiting the Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda followed by the National Museum with its marvelous 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 6 SILK ISLAND**

Sail up the Mekong/Tonle River convergence 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 cruise upstream towards Kampong Cham. Evening lecture on Angkor and Khmer culture.

#### **DAY 7 WAT HANCHEY, OBT CHIRO VILLAGE & WAT NOKOR BACHEY**

Sunrise cruise to Wat Hanchey an important centre of worship during the Chenla period located on top of a hill above the mighty Mekong River with some of the best Mekong views in Cambodia. Visit 8th century structures some destroyed by American bombings during the Vietnam War. Well noted for its bizarre Fruit and Animal statues.

We cruise back downstream to Kampong Cham where after lunch we travel by Bus to the local OBT Chiro Village where the education of local children is high on the agenda. Pre-Hospitality training courses, plastic recycling, bee keeping, farming and handicraft skill projects are set up to improve the skill set of local children. We then travel to the Wat Nokor Bachey dating back to the Jayarvaman VII period. Built completely from Black Sandstone which makes it stand out from other temples built during this period. Many legends surround this complex one being it was built by a king who accidentally killed his father then married his mother as per Greek legend. This temple was built in penance for his crime.

#### **DAY 8 SIEM REAP**

Sail downstream to moor at Kampong Cham for disembarkation and road transfer to Siem Reap.

## Included in your cruise

Welcome cocktail party	Signature hors d'oeuvres at cocktails each evening
Afternoon tea with cakes or cookies when cruising	Celebration cake and champagne on birthdays and anniversaries
Cookery demonstrations and classes using local produce	All scheduled excursions
At least two cultural performances per cruise	Tour of the engine rooms, galley and working parts of the ship
Film presentations on local culture and history	Local mineral water
Cold towels on deck all day	Jugged coffee, tea and tisanes on deck from sunrise till sunset
Entrance fees, guide services (English language), Transfers between the meeting point and the ship at the start and end of a voyage.	Gratuities to crew, main meals, local mineral water
	All beverages except local mineral water

**Cruise Price Excludes:** International flights, port dues (if levied), laundry, all visa costs, fuel surcharges (see terms and conditions), tips to tour guides, local guides, bus drivers, boat operators and cyclo drivers.

## Cruise Cancellation and Refund

Cancellations for all or any part of the trip will not be effective until received in writing in the offices of Pandaw. Should you have to cancel, the following terms will apply:

- From time of booking until 61 days prior to departure non-refundable deposit
- From 60 days and less till departure, no show, late arrival or early return 100% cancellation fee

## Travel Insurance:

We strongly recommend for your protection that you purchase a trip cancellation insurance. Quotation for your holiday travel insurance available through Horizons Cruise and Travel

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