



# Pandaw River Expeditions

EXPEDITION No 1

## CLASSIC MEKONG

7 NIGHTS

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 SHIP - [RV MEKONG PANDAW](#) / [RV TONLE PANDAW](#)**

**[MORE IMAGES OF THE RV MEKONG PANDAW](#)**

**[MORE IMAGES OF THE RV TONLE PANDAW](#)**

**Cruise Price Includes:** Entrance fees, guide services (English language), gratuities to crew, main meals, local mineral water, jugged coffee, teas & tisanes. Transfers between the meeting point and the ship at the start and end of a voyage.

**Cruise Price Excludes:** International flights, port dues (if levied), laundry, all visa costs, fuel surcharges (see terms and conditions), all beverages except local mineral water, jugged coffee, teas & tisanes and tips to tour guides, local guides, bus drivers, boat operators and cyclo drivers.

# UPSTREAM ITINERARY

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## DAY 1

### SAIGON TO MY THO

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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.

[MORE ABOUT SAIGON](#)

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## DAY 2

### BEN TRE

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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 local transport 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.

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**DAY 3****CON PHUOC ISLAND**

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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.

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

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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.

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

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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.

[MORE ABOUT PHNOM PENH](#)

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**DAY 6****SILK ISLAND**

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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.

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## DAY 7

# WAT HANCHEY, OBT CHIRO VILLAGE & WAT NOKOR BACHEY

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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.

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## DAY 8

# SIEM REAP

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

[MORE ABOUT SIEM REAP](#)

# STATEROOM

## The Pandaw stateroom is the most celebrated feature of our ships.

Finished in brass and teak, the main and upper deck rooms are very spacious at 168 square feet (15.6 sqm). Much loved by all our passengers we have ensured that with each ship we build the stateroom remains the same. Our cabins do not have mini-bars, satellite TV's, internet or phones. Pandaw passengers usually want to escape from the tiresome features found in international business hotels.

Many passengers describe life on board a Pandaw more like being a guest on a private motor yacht than a cruise ship. Where we go and what we see is intrepid in extreme. What you come back to is a floating base of discreet comfort, caring service and all the good things one looks for in life. All our cabins have the same size and Pandaw signature amenities. Choose from Main Deck, Upper Deck or Premium Upper Deck (Mekong only).

### **Special to Your Stateroom**

- Fruit and flowers on arrival
- Kimonos and slippers
- Spa-branded amenities
- Unlimited mineral water

# River Conditions Warning!

The rivers you will sail on are subject to seasonal rises and falls of water level, in some places as much as 30 metres. Water levels can change dramatically overnight and a sudden rise can impede our progress upstream considerably and even prevent us from passing under certain bridges. A sudden fall can result in our being unable to get into certain places or go as far upstream as we would hope. Groundings on sandbars are not infrequent and are part of the excitement of any Pandaw expedition. Published itineraries are indicational only and subject to sudden change. In such events alternative itineraries will be provided and we do our best to ensure that if a stop is missed we make up for it with another stop. Passengers are thus forewarned and expected to be flexible and patient. River cruising in Asia can be a dramatic and adventurous experience - not like cruising the controlled waterways of Europe or America. Note also that we operate in areas with little or no developed infrastructure and subject to the strictures of local officialdom. Be prepared for this and it is all more the fun!

## Useful Links

[Terms & Conditions](#)

[General Information & Life on Board](#)

[Visa Information](#)