



## AQUA MEKONG EXPEDITION CRUISE

This classic Mekong river cruise itinerary places you in the footsteps of the legendary King Jayavarman VII, who sailed the Mekong in the late 12th century to build the grand Khmer empire.

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Cruises, Small Ship Cruising



Asia, Cambodia, Vietnam



8 days Call for a quote pp



Private

## Journey Overview

This classic Mekong river cruise itinerary places you in the footsteps of the legendary King Jayavarman VII, who sailed the Mekong in the late 12th century to build the grand Khmer empire. Aboard the luxury Aqua Mekong, the whole narrative of the region's mysteries and wonders unravel before your eyes. Follow our expert English-speaking guides and discover magnificent carved temples, lush landscapes and rural villages where culture and craft flourishes — leaving no stone unturned.



## Itinerary

### **Day 1: Arrive Phnom Penh**

We meet you at the Phnom Penh TS1 Port for check-in to your 3-story, five-star Mekong abode. Welcome aboard. We'll leave you to settle into your floating retreat, with its window wall unveiling an endlessly captivating panorama. Enjoy these private Mekong moments on your California King bed, terrace or daybed. Together we celebrate the onward journey towards the heart of this mighty river with a Khmer apsara performance, an indigenous tradition memorialized on the temple walls at Angkor Wat.

### **Day 2: Koh Chen - Kampong Prasat**

In the silversmith village of Koh Chen, we watch artisans producing the magnificent silverware favored by Khmer royalty. We continue to Udong, the royal capital from the 17-19th centuries, where we learn about a uniquely challenging Buddhist practice at the Vipassana Dhura, a meditation center. In the afternoon, a walking tour of Kampong Prasat offers a close-up perspective on local lives and their riverside environment.

### **Day 3: Kampong Chhnang - Kampong Tralach**

In the cooler hours of the morning, we head out on skiffs to visit traditional potters and palm sugar producers in the village of Andong Russei. There'll be a chance to explore while riding mountain bikes or chauffeured by tuk-tuks. We'll pedal through the rice paddies to watch climbers scale the sky piercing palms towering over us. After lunch, there'll be more opportunities to bike through the countryside, go fishing, and discover the floating village of Kampong Tralach on board skiffs. Finally, we'll end the day with kayaking along the Tonle Sap and sundowners by the riverbank.

### **Day 4: Koh Oknha Tey - Preah Prosop**

On this river of time we admire dexterous Khmer artisans dyeing and weaving kroma, the ubiquitous fabric no Khmer lives without. Explore the riverbank on two wheels if you wish, past Buddhist temples and thatch houses perched on spindly wooden stilts while white oxen wade just offshore. After lunch, we board our marine-grade aluminum skiffs and head towards the tamarind trees of Preah Prosop, a remote village little changed over several lifetimes.

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**Day 5: Phnom Penh**

We show off the Cambodian capital to our passengers by motorized tuk-tuk, the Royal Palace, Silver Pagoda and the National Museum of Cambodia, home to the world's largest collection of Khmer art. For those who wish, we visit the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide and the Killing Field or shopping at Russian Market. We bid farewell to 4-night guests who are disembarking in Phnom Penh.

Welcome our 3-night passengers over custom sundowners like the Salted Watermelon Crush with Thai basil. Together we celebrate the onward journey towards the heart of this mighty river with a Khmer Apsara performance, an indigenous tradition memorialized on the temple walls at Angkor Wat.

**Day 6: Ka'om Samnor-vinh Xuong Border Crossing - Chau Doc - My An Hung**

Say 'Good Morning, Vietnam' while we cross the border and sail towards Tan Chau, a vibrant border town where we take the local rickshaw called xe loi for a trip around town or pedal 18-kilometers on the peaceful island of Long Khanh. In the afternoon, we visit a typical Mekong Delta village called My An Hung where we will walk through verdant plantations. We will be invited to a local's home to taste local fruits while hearing traditional folk songs performed by villagers, followed by a unique Unicorn dance. A 17-kilometer biking option is also available for those who wish to explore the countryside on wheels.

**Day 7: Binh Thanh/sa Dec - Cai Be**

Begin the day at Binh Thanh mat weaving village or opt to visit Sa Dec where we will peruse the vibrant market. We continue downstream for Cai Be, zigzagging in our sampan past lone fishermen on their long tail boats. Later, our skiffs moor at a wooden pier. Here in Cai Be, walk or bike ride among high-roofed open courtyard houses, some dating back more than 100 years, and currently inhabited by gracious locals who will invite us to glimpse their property.

**Day 8: Marina My Tho Port - Depart Ho Chi Minh**

After a hearty breakfast, we bid farewell to Aqua Mekong. En route to Ho Chi Minh, we stop at Vinh Trang Pagoda, one of the largest Mahayana Buddhist temples in the region. You will notice the mixed architectural style and see three large buddha statues plus an impressive collection of bonsai trees.

## Accommodation

### Aqua Mekong



Described as a "floating five-star hotel", the Aqua Mekong was designed by British architect David Hodkinson of Noor Design and is constructed entirely from locally-sourced sustainable materials. As you drift along the river, observe the changing river landscape through your room's gigantic movie-screen window, not forgetting to look out for the flocks of painted storks and spot-billed pelicans along the way. All 20 luxury suites, 8 of which have sky terraces, display a simple contemporary design. If you desire a little more space, interconnecting suites can be configured to create a private living area and separate master bedroom with his-n-her bathtubs.

Help the chefs to shop the local riverside markets for the finest local produce, which they will later transform into one of the many tantalising dishes from executive chef, David Thompson's innovative menu of exotic Southeast Asian flavours.

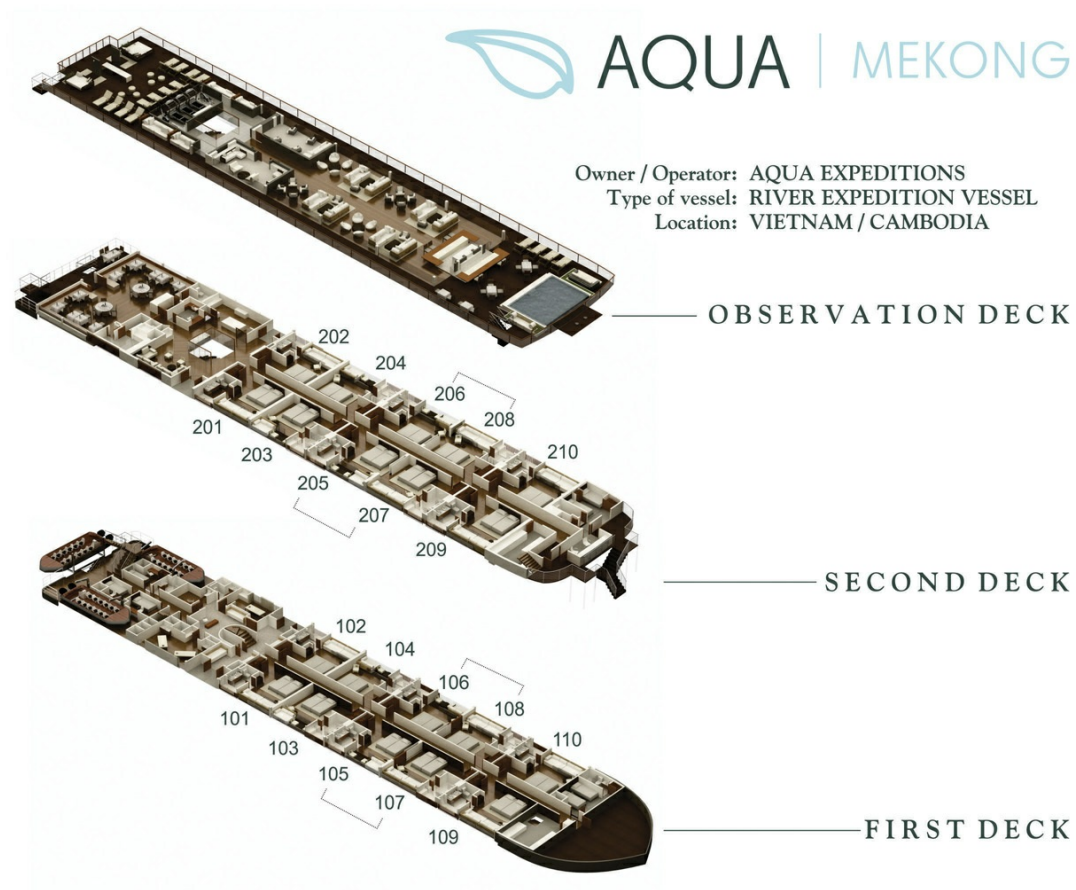
There is an abundance of facilities on board with a screening room showcasing classic films about the region, air-conditioned library, a plunge pool with private cabanas high on the observation deck and spa treatment rooms, where the therapists use traditional healing and massage techniques to perform a range of rejuvenating treatments.

The Aqua Mekong is also available for charter on an exclusive use basis.



## Why we like it

- The first luxury adventure cruise to travel along the Mekong River
- Just 40 passengers in 20 luxury design suites
- Professionally trained river guides lead daily expeditions on skiffs, by bike and on foot
- Inspired Vietnamese Khmer cuisine from David Thompson
- Facilities include a plunge pool, exercise room, library and screening room



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