

You are invited to join Travelrite International on the fully escorted

# Mekong River Cruise

## Saigon to Angkor Wat

November 25 to December 8, 2012

Optional pre tour to Vietnam – November 18 to 25, 2012

Visit Saigon, sail along the Mekong River to visit  
the great temple complexes of Angkor and Siem Reap



THE Sunday Telegraph

THE AUSTRALIAN 

# Mekong River Cruise

## Saigon to Angkor Wat

### Mekong Cruising

With its informal and relaxed atmosphere, a tranquil journey on the luxury Pandaw is very different from other forms of river cruising. Pandaws are replicas of colonial steamers developed in Scotland in the early part of last century. All the Pandaws were built in the last ten years when river cruising in Asia was revived. Each ship has a crew of 25 and is under European management, meaning international health and safety standards are maintained. The comfortable 168 sq feet (12 sqm) staterooms are some of the roomiest afloat and are full of character, while the colonial-style promenade and observation decks, saloon bar/lecture theatre and single-sitting dining room add a smart and stylish touch. We find that passengers prefer to spend much of their time outside, on the promenade decks or the vast observation deck above, taking in the beautiful surrounds. Impeccable service is a hallmark of Pandaw cruising, with a ratio of one staff member for every two guests, and shore excursions are led by expert local guides.

### Cabins

All cabins have air conditioning, a mini-safe, luggage storage, wardrobe, writing desk and amenities including hair dryer, kimono and slippers. All upper and main deck cabins have their own deck space, with rattan chairs and a table outside. Premium cabins are a special-price category during peak periods and are no different from other upper deck cabins.



*Relax and enjoy*

### Clothing on board the Pandaw

The atmosphere on board is informal and relaxed. During the day, comfortable and casual attire is appropriate. The evenings are smart-casual.

### Don't worry about coming alone

About a third of people on the cruise travel alone. We will match people up in twin-share cabins when available, saving you the single supplement. The Travelrite tour manager will be looking after you to ensure you don't feel left out. There will be group activities almost every day.

### The advantages of the Mekong River and Angkor Wat Cruise on the Pandaw

The cruise is fully-escorted and will be a fun holiday with plenty of activities. Each evening you will have dinner with the group on our reserved tables. You will meet an interesting group of people and have a fabulous time.

## Vietnam to Angkor Wat

November 25 to December 8, 2012

**DAY 1 Sunday November 25, 2012**

**Saigon**

We depart Australia today on our flight to Saigon. On arrival we are met by our private coach and transferred to the hotel.

**DAY 2 Monday November 26, 2012**

**Saigon**

This morning we have a sightseeing tour of Saigon. We visit the Reunification Hall, Notre Dame Cathedral, General Post Office, former US Embassy, City Hall, the War Museum of Remnants. There will be time for shopping at Ben Thanh market. In the afternoon we drive to the extraordinary Cu Chi tunnels, about 65 km (1½ hours' drive) from Saigon. The complicated underground network was built by Viet Cong guerillas. We will see local people engaged in occupations such as cashew nut farming, duck breeding, rice farming and production of rice paper, a key ingredient in Vietnamese cuisine. This evening we will enjoy welcome dinner to celebrate the start of our cruise.

**DAY 3 Tuesday November 27, 2012**

**My Tho/Cai Be**

This morning we are transferred to the delta port of My Tho by coach for check in, followed by port and immigration formalities. Once on board we set sail at 1.30pm while we have lunch. We arrive in Cai Be late afternoon and make a fascinating trip, by traditional junk, to explore the local islands and see colourful floating markets. We learn how to produce popcorn and coconut candy, and visit Ba Duc ancient house. In the evening we will enjoy "Traditional Vietnamese Music".

**DAY 4 Wednesday November 28, 2012**

**Sa Dec**

Today we travel on board traditional sampan boats to Sa Dec via Vinh Long. We travel along small canals and backwaters. We will also visit the splendid ancient house of Mr Huynh Thuy Le, the "lover" of Marguerite Duras, famous French novelist and inspiration for the film *L'Amant – The Lover*. In the afternoon, we will have a presentation about Vietnamese history, culture and traditions with an onboard guide.

**DAY 5 Thursday November 29, 2012**

**Chau Doc/Border Crossing**

Today from the main Mekong channel at Tan Chau, we travel down the canals and backwaters by local ferry boat. At Chau Doc we transfer to small boats to visit a Cham tribal village. We also visit a cat fish farm. We take a trishaw ride through this fascinating town of fine French colonial buildings to its bustling market. We return to the ship by boat for lunch and cast off for the Cambodian border for the usual formalities. This evening we cruise up the broad Mekong channel, which is an international shipping route.

**DAY 6 Friday, November 30, 2012**

**Phnom Penh**

This morning we arrive in the city of Phnom Penh. Passengers will be provided with their own private cyclo to visit the Royal Palace and the National Museum of Art. The Cyclo Centre Phnom Penh is a charity that provides the cyclos drivers with basic welfare and medical services. The capital of Cambodia retains its French charm with old colonial architecture that makes an attractive backdrop to busy cafés and the renovated river "corniche". The city has several impressive Wats, including Wat Ounalom, Wat Phnom and Wat Lang Ka.

Pride of place goes to the spectacular Silver Pagoda, one of the few places in Cambodia where artefacts embodying the brilliance and richness of Khmer culture are preserved. The National Museum is another highlight, with outstanding displays of Khmer crafts.

After lunch we visit the Killing Fields and the Khmer Rouge's grim Tuol Sleng, or S21 detention centre, situated in the suburbs of the city.

Phnom Penh has a lively night life, and some passengers may choose to dine ashore or try one of the capital's many watering holes; such as the Foreign Correspondents' Club.

**DAY 7 Saturday December 1, 2012**

**Kampong Chhnang**

Our excursion up the Tonle River is to Kampong Chhnang. We see the rich tapestry of Cambodian rural life. This is a busy rural port town with bustling markets. We make a wonderful motor boat excursion into the lakeside wetlands that form the mouth of the river. Here a stunning variety of birdlife may be seen and the great fish traps are of considerable interest. We return to the ship for lunch.

*The ship's itinerary is based on high water conditions. Unusual water levels could result in a change in the ship's itinerary. Should the water levels be unsatisfactory at this time of the year we will transfer by coach to Kampong Chhnang.*

**DAY 8 Sunday December 2, 2012**

**Kampong Cham area**

An early morning departure from Phnom Penh with a stop at the little-known Chong Koh silk weaving village for a morning walk. As we cruise along the Mekong, we see its timeless villages and river life, including its extensive fishing activities. The scenery is

lovely here, and in the distance, forested hills rise. On the river above Phnom Penh there is little shipping, just real Cambodian life. In the afternoon we stop at Peam Chi Kang village to visit the wat or monastery and school.

**DAY 9 Monday December 3, 2012** **Kampong Cham area**

This morning we journey upriver to the hilltop pre-Angkorian temple of Wat Hanchey. Dating to the 8th century, these ancient brick structures characterise the architecture of the Chenla Empire which predates the glories of Angkor. We sail back downstream over lunch for an exploration of the Kampong Cham area.

In the afternoon, we travel by bus to visit the Twin Holy Mountains of Phnom Pros and Phnom Srey (Man and Women Hill). We continue to the eco village of Cheungkok supported by the French-Cambodian NGO AMICA

**DAY 10 Tuesday December 4, 2012** **Siem Reap**

We disembark early this morning and are transferred to our hotel where we spend the next four nights. We will arrive mid-afternoon.

**DAY 11 Wednesday December 5, 2012** **Siem Reap**

Today we visit Cambodia's famous temple, Angkor Wat. It is visually, architecturally and artistically breathtaking. Its massive three-tiered pyramid crowned by five beehive-like towers rise 65 metres from ground level. This temple is the centrepiece of any visit to the temples of Angkor. We also see Preah Khan, Neak Pean, Ta Som, and East Meborn.

**DAY 12 Thursday December 6, 2012** **Siem Reap**

Today we visit the South gate of the Angkor area. We see Thom Banyon, Baphoun, Terrace of Elephants, Terrace of the Leper King and Pimean Akas. This afternoon we will see Thommanon, Chau Say, Tevoda, Ta Keo, Ta Promh, Banteay Kdei and Srah Srang. Tonight we enjoy a farewell dinner.

**DAY 13 Friday December 7, 2012** **Siem Reap**

This morning will be free to relax and explore Siem Reap. This afternoon we will be transferred to the airport for our flights to Australia.

**DAY 14 Saturday December 8, 2012** **Departure**

Arrival in Australia and the tour and cruise concludes.



## Vietnam Pre Tour

### November 18 to November 25, 2012

**DAY 1 Sunday November 18, 2012** **Hanoi**

Depart Australia today flying with Singapore Airlines (Sydney and Brisbane passengers depart one day earlier and stay overnight in Singapore). Upon arrival you will be transferred to our hotel, for our two night visit to the charming Vietnamese capital. Hanoi is without doubt one of Asia's most beautiful cities, with its Chinese architecture, majestic colonial buildings, wide, tree-lined boulevards with French-style architecture. Our hotel, the Hilton Hanoi Opera, is centrally located in Hanoi's elegant French Quarter and is a short walk from the famous Old Quarter.

**DAY 2 Monday November 19, 2012** **Hanoi**

This morning we visit Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum and the former President's stilt house and the One Pillar Pagoda, which is designed to resemble a lotus blossom, the symbol of purity. We then visit the ancient Temple of Literature, Vietnam's first university since 1070 with its perfectly preserved traditional Vietnamese architecture. This afternoon we visit Hoa Lo prison, otherwise known as the 'Hanoi Hilton', followed by a free afternoon. You may wish to visit the Old Quarter for independent exploration and shopping. This evening your cyclo awaits to take you to a performance by Vietnam's famed water puppets. The art of water puppetry is unique to the areas surrounding the Red River (Song Hong). Dinner will follow at a local restaurant.

**DAY 3 Tuesday November 20, 2012** **Halong Bay**

This morning we drive to Halong Bay one of Mother Earth's most amazing natural wonders and one of Vietnam's most prized treasures. A comfortable three hours drive from Hanoi, Halong Bay is in north-eastern Vietnam on the shores of the Gulf of Tonkin. The bay has more than 1,600 limestone karsts and islets which rise out of the waters of the bay to heights of up to 100 metres and numerous caves and grottos spread throughout the bay. This afternoon we embark on our traditionally styled, but well appointed, modern sailing boat for a one night cruise. We cruise this beautiful bay and visit one of the fascinating grottoes. Tonight we have a sumptuous seafood dinner on board.

**DAY 4 Wednesday November 21, 2012** **Hue**

Early risers may like to participate in a Tai chi class on the sundeck. After a leisurely morning of sailing we disembark and travel back to Hanoi's airport for our flight to Hue, the country's imperial capital. Hue served as Vietnam's capital under the emperors of the Nguyen Dynasty from 1802 to 1945 and the city's regal past can still be seen inside the walls of the Citadel and the Imperial City. The Imperial City, created in the 19th century and modelled on the Forbidden City in Beijing, has many palaces and temples inside. Our

hotel for the next two nights is La Residence Hôtel & Spa, the former governor's residence which has been restored and converted into Vietnam's newest boutique hotel, stunningly positioned on the banks of the Perfume River overlooking the former Imperial Citadel.

**DAY 5 Thursday November 22, 2012** **Hue**

Our tour begins as we follow the cobbled paths through the grounds of the Imperial Citadel and tour the Forbidden Purple City. We then move to the rolling hills of the surrounding countryside where we find the Royal Tombs to the Nguyen Emperors. After having viewed the splendid landscaped gardens and ornate architecture of the kings' final resting places we return to Hue. We have some free time at the local Dong Ba Market and experience the amazing sights, sounds and aromas of this busy market. In the evening we enjoy a traditional musical performance whilst cruising on the tranquil waters of the Perfume River.

**DAY 6 Friday November 23, 2012** **Hoi An**

This morning you will have time at leisure. In the afternoon we will travel by coach for the scenic trip over the Hai Van Pass (Pass of Clouds) to Da Nang. We continue by coach, past the breathtaking Marble Mountains and beside China Beach, to reach the ancient town of Hoi An. The large community of foreign merchants living in Hoi An between the 16th and 18th centuries resulted in a unique display of architecture, combining Vietnamese, Chinese and Japanese cultures. Our hotel for the next two nights is the Life Heritage Resort Hoi An. The hotel is located along the scenic Thu Bon River and is a short stroll from the colourful and bustling Ancient Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

**DAY 7 Saturday November 24, 2012** **Hoi An**

This morning we will take a cooking class at the Red Bridge Cooking School. We will visit Hoi An's colourful market, and experience the amazing sights, sounds and aromas of this busy market. We board the Red Bridge boat for a leisurely cruise along the Hoi An River to the cooking school. On arrival, we explore the cooking school's herb garden, before learning about some of Hoi An's and Vietnam's well-known dishes. You will experience hands-on cooking from start to finish of four famous Vietnamese dishes and finish with lunch. The remainder of the afternoon will be free for independent activities.

**DAY 8 Sunday November 25, 2012** **Saigon**

This morning we have a tour of Hoi An with a local guide walking through the narrow winding streets of the Ancient Quarter visiting Chua Ong Pagoda, Chinese Assembly Halls, the 200 years old Tam Ky ancestral house and the Japanese Bridge. In the afternoon we are transferred to Danang airport for our flight to Saigon. Saigon is a much livelier city than Hanoi, its streets are packed with motorbikes and increasingly with cars. On arrival we are transferred to our hotel in Saigon.

# Mekong River Cruise

## Saigon to Angkor Wat

November 25 to December 8, 2012

| CABIN CATEGORY /DECK   | PACKAGE FARE |
|--|--------------|
| Middle Deck Twin share   | \$ 4499      |
| Upper Deck Twin Share  | \$ 4699      |
| Middle Deck Single   | \$ 8998      |
| Upper Deck Single  | \$ 9398      |
| Business Class Upgrade   | \$ 3650      |
| Air taxes and surcharges as of 1/12/11 are included in your fare | \$ 500       |

Price includes port and handling and gratuities for local guides

### Optional pre tour to Vietnam

|                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Twin share per person | \$ 2175* |
| Single supplement     | \$ 695   |

\* Sydney and Brisbane passengers require one night in Singapore for connecting flights. This will be at additional cost.

### Availability

All cabins are subject to cabin availability. Please call for fares and information on other cabin categories. A limited number of cabins are available for single occupancy. Please call for details on **1800 630 343**.

## General information and booking conditions

Touring can involve a considerable amount of walking and stair climbing and it is important that all tour participants have a level of physical fitness that allows them to take part in this tour without the need of assistance from others.

**Tour operator:** Travelrite International Pty Ltd (ABN 64 005 817 078) is the tour organiser. Pandaw is operated by Pandaw Cruises and the fly/cruise arrangements are subject to the terms and conditions and general information detailed in the Pandaw Cruises 2012 brochure. All passengers must complete and sign a Travelrite International booking form and a Pandaw booking form.

**Deposit and payment:** A deposit of \$600 per passenger should be sent together with a completed Travelrite International booking form that lists your requested cabin category. As soon as the booking is confirmed (usually within 24 hours), a cruise confirmation advice will be posted to the client. The client must confirm the booking by paying a fly/cruise deposit equal to 25 percent of the fly/cruise fare within 10 days of the booking being confirmed. The confirmation advice will contain all details. Final payments are due to be paid to Travelrite International 90 days prior to the commencement of the fly/cruise. A 1% administration fee will be added to all payments made by Visa and Mastercard and a 3% fee will be charged for American Express and Diners Club.

**Cancellation charges:** Number of days before sailing.

| Days prior to Departure          | Cancellation Fee  |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Over 120 days                    | \$600             |
| 120 - 91 days                    | 25% of full fare  |
| 90 - 61 days                     | 50% of full fare  |
| 60 - 46 days                     | 75% of full fare  |
| 45 days or less                  | 100% of full fare |
| Non appearance/no written notice | 100% of full fare |

**Refunds:** This cruise is based on arrangements that do not allow for any refunds in respect to sightseeing, accommodation, meals or other services not utilised after the respective tour has commenced.

**Travel documents:** All passengers will require a valid passport. Visas are required for Vietnam and Cambodia. If not an Australian passport holder, check with Travelrite International for visa requirements.

**Travel insurance:** Adequate travel insurance is compulsory to cover cruise members for the consequences of unforeseen events during the cruise and for cancellation fees which could result from events such as illness, accident, death etc.

**Baggage:** Passengers qualify for a 20kg free baggage allowance on flights to join or return from the cruise.

### Included in the Mekong River to Angkor Wat cruise are:

- Travel on the Pandaw in the selected cabin category, with sightseeing tours at all ports of call
- Accommodation in five-star hotels on a bed and breakfast basis in Saigon and Siem Reap
- All meals, entertainment, and service charges on the Pandaw
- Tour management by Travelrite International
- One dinner in Saigon and Siem Reap
- Economy-class air travel from Melbourne/Sydney/Brisbane to Saigon/Siem Reap return with Singapore Airlines with return transfers from the airport to hotels
- Port and handling charges on the Pandaw
- Cruise taxes
- Gratuities for cruise staff

### Included in the optional pre tour to Vietnam are:

- Two nights' accommodation in five-star hotels in Hanoi and Hue on a bed and breakfast basis
- Admission to the water puppet show in Hanoi with cyclo ride.
- 2 day/1 night Halong Bay cruise including, lunch, dinner and brunch.
- Two nights' accommodation in four-star accommodation in Hoi An with breakfast daily
- Airport transfers to meet the group flights.
- Sightseeing tours in Hanoi, Hue and Hoi An
- Musical performance in Hue cruising the Perfume River.
- Cooking class at the Red Bridge Cooking school in Hoi An (including lunch)
- One dinner in Hanoi, one dinner in Hue and one dinner in Hoi An
- Tour management by Travelrite International
- Economy-class air travel from Hanoi to Hue and Danang to Saigon
- Gratuities for local guides

### Not included in the price are:

- Travel Insurance
- Additional travel arrangements not detailed in the itinerary. These will be quoted for separately
- Passport and visa fees
- Meals and drinks not specified in the itinerary
- Air ticket taxes and fuel surcharges



**How to book:** Bookings can be made by completing a booking form and sending it with a deposit of \$600 per person to:

Travelrite International Pty Ltd  
298 Whitehorse Road  
Balwyn, Victoria 3103

Further information can be obtained by telephoning

**Toll Free: 1800 630 343**

**Telephone: (03) 9836 2522**

**Fax: (03) 9836 8068**

**Email: balwyn@travelrite.com.au**

**www.travelrite.com**



**About Travelrite International:** Travelrite International Pty Ltd (ABN 64 005 817 078) is a well established travel company which has been marketing throughout Australia for over 26 years and operating in Victoria for more than 32 years. It has two fully licensed offices (Licence No 30858) at Balwyn and Heathmont which are also accredited with IATA. As such they directly represent the major airlines of the world and all major domestic and international hotel, tour and transport operators. Travelrite International Pty Ltd is a full member of the Australian Federation of Travel Agents – AFTA.