

# Bridge over the Mekong

**14 Days fully escorted from \$4,312 pp Twin Share**



**Newsflash**  
Only Upper-Deck Cabins Left from \$4574 pp twin Share

**22 September – 6 October 2010**

There can be no tapestry of river life as fascinating and as varied as the Mekong, the longest river in South East Asia. From the Tibetan, this river runs through China's Yunnan province, Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. From start to finish, the River is approximately 4,350 kms long and eventually drains into the South China Sea.

In English the river is called "the Mekong River", but in the Thai languages it is the "Mae Nam Khong", "Mae" translating to "Mother" and "Nam" which means "water".

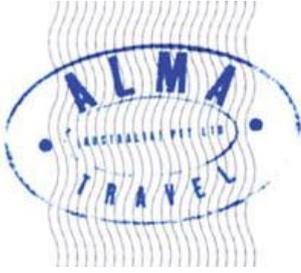
The Irrawaddy Flotilla Company was established by Scottish merchants in 1865. By the 1920's the company ran over 650 vessels on the river. It became the largest privately owned fleet of ships in the world. Royalty and Viceroy, writers and poets all travelled on the "Old Flotilla" immortalized by Rudyard Kipling in his poem, "Road to Mandalay".

In 1942 the fleet was scuppered in its entirety when the Japanese invaded. The Irrawaddy Flotilla was revived in 1995 by the Burma historian Paul Strachan – also a Scot - and these are currently the only major vessels cruising the Mekong River. **Pandaw** is the largest luxury river cruise company in Asia. They offer a real adventure experience; although travellers are cushioned with amazing comfort, air conditioned cabins, fine dining, and choice wines, not to mention extraordinary levels of service. All meals and local drinks (beer and spirits) are included.

Pandaw's ships were built new and designed and finished as replicas of the Colonial River Steamers. These small ships have the *highest passenger to space ratio of any ships afloat* – staterooms are 170 square feet and finished in teak and brass.

So many passengers return to a Pandaw cruise on a regular basis. Pandaw's success is not just in the beauty of the ships, the comfort and service, or even the fascinating lands and journeys. Much of Pandaw's success is the attitude of the inhabitants of this incredible River and their ability to rise above the devastation and trauma that recent wars and dictatorships have inflicted on them.





## **Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City) to Angkor 8 days on a Pandaw**



**Day 1/2: Fly Brisbane/Saigon with Singapore Airlines.**

On arrival at Saigon on Day 2, you will be met and transferred to your hotel for two nights. This evening enjoy a welcome dinner.

**Hotel: Hotel Majestic (4.5 Stars) breakfast daily**

**Day 3: Cu Chi Tunnels + City Tour (B/L/-)**

We will visit an extensive labyrinth of tunnels known as Cu Chi, built by the Viet Cong guerrillas during the war. This is where they lived and hid during bombing raids. Afterwards, lunch at a local restaurant, followed by a tour of the Reunification Palace, (formerly Presidential Palace) Notre Dame Cathedral, Central Post Office, War Museum, Chinatown and Binh Tay Markets.

**Day 4: Ho Chi Minh City to My Tho (B/L/D)**

Transfer to the Sofitel Plaza Saigon for registration and boarding of your Pandaw Cruise.

**Accommodation RV Mekong Pandaw**

**Day 5: My Tho Cai Bei – Vinh Long – Chau Doc (B/L/D)** Half day cruise excursion on traditional sampans. Cast off after lunch for Chau Doc. On route visit Cu Lao Gien Island and Catholic monastery built in 1875.

**Day 6: Chau Doc to Border crossing (B/L/D)**

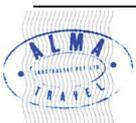
From the main Mekong channel we travel down to the Chau Doc jetty to visit a Cham Tribal village and fish farm. Return to Pandaw and cast off for the Cambodian border. A chance to play bridge!

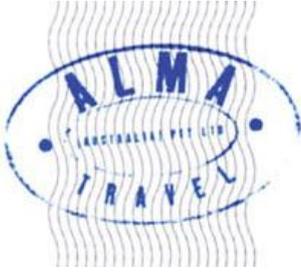
**Day 7: Phnom Penh (B/L/D)**

The capital of Cambodia, we will visit the Royal Palace – Silver Pagoda – National Museum – Killing Fields (optional) or Russian and Central Markets.

**Day 8: Phnom Penh to Tonle River (B/L/D)**

Proceed by coach to Kampong Cham to view a rich tapestry of Cambodian rural life. Moor at Phnom Penh overnight and visit the Foreign Correspondents' Club at leisure.





## **Alma Travel Centre (Australia) Pty Ltd**

ABN 30 066 763 362

### **Day 9: Kampong Cham (B/L/D)**

Kampong Cham (from Tonle River to Mekong) View the silk weaving village at Chong Koh. Afterwards visit the Prem Chi Kang village to see an ancient monastery and a modern school.

### **Day 10: Kampong Cham (B/L/D)**

This morning visit the pre Angkorian Temple of Wat Hanchey dating from the 8<sup>th</sup> century. In the afternoon travel by air-conditioned bus to the 12<sup>th</sup> century Angkorian Temple of Wat Nokor, a modern Wat set within the ruins of an ancient temple.

### **Day 11: Arrive Siem Riep (B/-/-)**

Arrive at this amazing city for three nights and discover the ancient Angkorian sites. We will be met on arrival and transferred to the Hotel de la Paix. Afternoon free.

**Hotel: Hotel de la Paix (5 stars) breakfast daily.**

### **Day 12: Siem Reap (B/L/-)**

Depart 9 am. Visit Ta Phrom temple, where jungle and trees grow over the temple, made famous by the Tom Raider movie. Continue to magnificent Angkor Wat to view its architecture and bas reliefs. Lunch at own arrangement.

Depart hotel 2.30 pm. Depart for flooded forests at Me Chrey. Take a boat and discover the way of life of floating villages, school and markets. Learn how the local people make traditional medicine from the trees and plants. On the return, time permitting, visit Pouk Village and discover how silk products are woven and made. Evening at own arrangement.

### **Day 13: Siem Reap (B/-/D)**

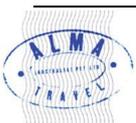
Depart at 8.30 am to visit the "Citadel of Women", a pink sandstone edifice, locally known as Banteay Srey Temple. Continue to Neak Poan Temple. Lunch at own arrangement.

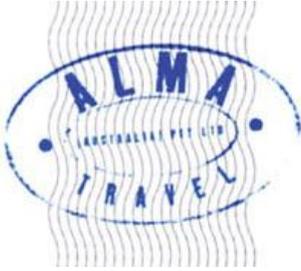
In the afternoon, visit Angkor Thom. Next stop is Baphuon, Elephant Terrace and Terrace of the Leper King. Time permitting, we will visit Artisan D'Angkor and/or Poul Silk farm. Farewell Dinner at AHA restaurant.

### **Day 14/15: Siem Reap to Singapore/Brisbane (B/-/-)**

Depart hotel 8.30 am for flight home. Arriving Brisbane 0640 on Day 15.

**~ End Of Tour ~**





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### **Price Includes:**

- International economy class return airfares & taxes (except Siem Reap)
- Twin share hotel accommodation
- Meals as specified (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- On Pandaw Cruise, 7 nights, all meals, local beverages, sightseeing & gratuities [www.pandaw.com](http://www.pandaw.com)
- Chartered air-conditioned vehicles
- Professional English speaking local guides
- Australian Tour Managers
- Transfers, sightseeing, entrance fees as specified
- [www.pandaw.com/passenger-information-c-51/html](http://www.pandaw.com/passenger-information-c-51/html)

### **Price does not include:**

- Vietnamese & Cambodian Visas (approx \$160)
- Departure tax, Siem Reap (US\$25)
- Tipping to local guides (Approx. \$5 pp per day)
- Increase in taxes and charges
- Foreign exchange rate fluctuations
- Travel Insurance (essential)
- Fuel surcharge increases

### **Enquiries:**

## **Alma Travel Centre**

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