



**Pandaw Cruises**

**EXPEDITION No 7**

# **THE MEKONG TO CHINA**

**7 NIGHTS**

We are delighted to announce a new 7-night river recce itinerary on the Upper Mekong River sailing from Chiang Saen, Thailand to Burma, Laos and for the first time crossing the border into China sailing on the emerald green Mekong to the charming city of Jinghong in China's scenic Yunnan Province.

The recces will sail aboard the Laos Pandaw, specifically designed and built for sailing on the Upper Mekong with 10 main deck staterooms, low draught and extra powerful engines.

Pandaw's founder, Paul Strachan, said: "it has been a long held dream to sail the length of the navigable sections of the Mekong River; now we can. There is much to explore in this undiscovered region; travellers need to be up for a real adventure as the daily itinerary might change, but with a flexible attitude will have the adventure of a lifetime".

We are also offering some pre and post cruise extensions visiting Kunming, Dali and Lijiang in Yunnan Province and the hill tribes in Northern Thailand.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** These are reconnaissance voyages and the itinerary is indicational only subject to daily revisions and many a change. Travellers should be up for a real adventure and be prepared for such uncertainties. This will be the first time a river expedition ship will have made this four country expedition and there may be delays at border crossing points when dealing with formalities. Travellers who might find sudden changes of plan or delays stressful should not book this trip. Our guides will do their best to ensure that we cover as much of this indicational itinerary as possible but some

excursions may be changed for others. We can assure we will see and do as much as we can, hopefully more than indicated in the itinerary below.

**Cruise Price Includes:** Entrance fees, guide services (English language), gratuities to crew, main meals, local mineral water, jugged coffee, teas & tisanes. Transfers between Chiang Mai or Chiang Rai to Chiang Saen.

**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

### CHIANG SAEN

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Transfer to Chiang Saen and embark the Laos Pandaw for your 7-night cruise on a full board basis. Proceed upstream on the Mekong for the sunset and moor overnight at Ban Mon village in Laos.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The itinerary for this expedition is indicative only and subject to reconnaissance. As we travel to remote areas, changes to the itinerary will inevitably occur. A flexible approach is required if you book this cruise.

Transfer information: we are including transfers from Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai airports. Arrivals should be before 13.00pm Chiang Rai or 11.00am Chiang Mai. Late arrivals will also be transferred but may miss the sunset cruise and dinner.

Hotel pick-ups from city hotels in Chiang Mai between 10.00 am and 11.00 am. and Chiang Rai between 1.00 pm and 2.00 pm.

**Please note:** There is a surcharge for private transfers if you are not able to meet us at above scheduled pick up times.

**Please note:** For your Chinese visa application please write "Guan Lei" as your entry point to China.

[MORE ABOUT CHIANG SAEN](#)

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## DAY 2

### TACHILEIK, BURMA

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Visit The Shwedagon Pagoda in Tachileik, one-fifth the size of the more famous original in Yangon. We also visit the local market and the Two Dragon Monastery, a Chinese Buddhist temple. Bright colours and ornate carvings made the temple an enchanting place. Finally, visit the Chinese Monastery, built in 1999, and perhaps the largest and most beautiful in Tachileik.

[MORE ABOUT TACHILEIK, BURMA](#)

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## DAY 3

### CRUISING THE MEKONG

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Continue up the Mekong with Burma on our left and Laos on our right and stop to explore a jungle village on the Laos side and if possible trek in the jungle.

[MORE ABOUT CRUISING THE MEKONG](#)

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## DAY 4

### MUANG LONG

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Moor at Xiang Kok and travel inland by car to the town Muang Long and visit Aka tribal villages.

[MORE ABOUT MUANG LONG](#)

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## DAY 5

### INTO CHINA

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After a visit to a local village, we leave Laos and cross the border into China. Here the Mekong River turns to a beautiful emerald green. Continue to Gang Lei where we go ashore for a walking tour.

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## DAY 6

### MENGLUN BOTANICAL GARDEN

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A morning visit to the famous Menglun Botanical Garden, built in 1959 and one of China's most important botanical research centres. Explore the impressive gardens, home to many rare, exotic and endangered plant species here such as the dragon tree, the poisonous upas tree; the "Clock Flower" that opens and closes along with the sunrise and sunset and the "Dancing Grass" that responds to sound. After lunch, sail upstream and stop at Mengzhan where we explore Mangza temple.

[MORE ABOUT MENGLUN BOTANICAL GARDENS](#)

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## DAY 7

# MANGFEILONG MONASTERY & TEA PLANTATION

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Sail to Jinghong. Morning excursion to the impressive Mangfeilong Monastery. After lunch, visit a Chinese tea plantation including tasting and Manting Park Temple, the third most important Buddhist temple in Yunnan province. After our farewell dinner tonight, enjoy a traditional dancing show in Mengbalanaxi theatre.

[MORE ABOUT MANGFEILONG MONASTERY AND TEA PLANTATION](#)

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## DAY 8

# JINGHONG

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Disembark after breakfast and morning transfer to Jing Hong airport or city hotel.

**Jing Hong Port:** Jinghong Port Jetty, No. 51 Xuanwei Road (near Xishuangbanna Bridge).

[MORE ABOUT JINGHONG](#)

# 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](#)