



Pandaw Cruises

EXPEDITION No 16

HANOI, HALONG BAY, SAIGON & SIEM REAP

18 NIGHTS

Combine the fascinating and varied Mekong River, with its striking cultural contrast between the bustling Vietnam delta and the tranquility of Cambodia, with exploring the key sites of Northern Vietnam by traversing the Red River delta and its main tributaries, connecting the wonders of Halong Bay with the excitements of down town Hanoi, and then on into the interior, well off the beaten track. Inbetween cruises spend a day at leisure to explore Saigon.

UPSTREAM ITINERARY

December to March

DAY 1

VIET TRI

Transfer to Viet Tri, embark your ship and set sail downstream for sunset and a night on the Red River. Tonight we enjoy a traditional dance on board.

[MORE ABOUT VIET TRI](#)

DAY 2

THE LO RIVER

In the morning transfer to Gia Thanh village and visit the conical hat making village. Then continue by bus to visit Hung Lo Temple where we will enjoy a UNESCO recognized "Hat Xoan" performance. In the afternoon will moor in Minh Chau to visit a carpenter village and smith's village in Vinh Phuc province.

DAY 3**UPPER RED RIVER**

We will visit the UNESCO praised village of Duang Lam, then sail downstream on the Red River and visit a timeless Arcadian Vietnam with emerald green rice paddies punctuated by lime stone rock formations. Of particular interest are the Thay and Tay Phuong Pagodas, hardly known, yet with exquisite temples dating from the 8th and 11th century and home to some fine Buddhist statuary carved from jackfruit trees.

DAY 4**HANOI**

Dropped anchor in the bustling city of Hanoi, passengers will visit some highlights of this Asian metropolis, must see's like the notorious Vietnam war prison known as the Hanoi Hilton, temple of literature where Confucius did his thinking and the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum. Welcome back to the ship by Lion Dances.

DAY 5**THE LOWER RED RIVER**

In the morning going off shore to visit Bat Trang ceramic village followed by a Unicorn Dance. Sail down the lower Red River to Dien Xa Bonsai village.

DAY 6**DAY RIVER**

After breakfast we visit Dien Xa Bonsai village followed by lunch. In the afternoon, visit the famous Phat Diem stone Cathedral and a local house where they make rice wine. Back to the ship then sail up the Day River to Ninh Binh.

DAY 7**NINH BINH**

In the morning we will visit Thung Nang, taking a rowing boat to the so called "Halong on land" in Ninh Binh. In the afternoon we visit the quaint village of Pham Phao where guests can walk around the village visiting a host family where musician instruments have been made and repaired for generations. Listen to the owner who plays every instrument within his family run business. We visit local Woodworking Artisans who produce items for local and international markets.

DAY 8

LUOC - THAI BINH - KINH THAY RIVERS

Observe the lively and interesting life on the river before we reach our next destination in the afternoon.

Excursion to Thanh Ha Commune with village walk and a private water puppet show set under shade by a beautiful pond of lotus and lilies.

We drop anchor near Hai Phong Port, the gateway to Halong Bay.

DAY 9

HALONG BAY

Cast off early morning along the river before entering Halong Bay's amazing island scenery with its 2,000 dramatic limestone islands and extraordinary rock formations dating back 20 million years.

Exploring Halong Bay, we stop at the so called "Dark and Bright Cave". Take a kayak or a local basket boat rowed by fishermen and enter this remarkable cave into an enclosed area similar to a crater. Bats can be heard in the cave and massive stalagmites hang from the ceiling.

We continue our cruise around Halong Bay until we drop anchor in Rang Dua.

[MORE ABOUT HALONG BAY](#)

DAY 10

HALONG BAY

We make a stop at Viet Hai Village and continue our journey by mountain bike or electric buggy to visit the village's vegetable farm and typical village houses. It is a breathtaking trip along a small road winding its way through the limestone rocks.

In the afternoon we will continue cruising towards Lan Ha Bay for a visit to a floating fishing house.

Weather dependent, we will end the day with cocktails at a beautiful beach in Halong Bay.

[MORE ABOUT HALONG BAY](#)

DAY 11

HALONG BAY - HANOI - SAIGON

Morning sail to Tuan Chau Jetty. Disembark and transfer to Hanoi Airport for your flight to Saigon and your hotel, with stop for lunch at a local restaurant.

[MORE ABOUT HALONG BAY](#)

DAY 12

SAIGON - MY THO - BEN TRE

Transfer from Saigon to the river port for embarkation. After lunch, we journey by sampans through mangroves and bamboo forests to the fruit orchards of Ben Tre. This is an area rich in birdlife which we will explore via local transport before transferring to a local rowboat. We will journey slowly through the bamboo covered canals before arriving at a village specialising in making local products. In the evening you will be entertained by a Vietnamese dance troupe on deck..

[MORE ABOUT SAIGON](#)

DAY 13

GAO GIONG

Sailing through the delta offers a real insight into life along this vast waterway. After lunch, a short coach journey through the lush countryside to Gao Giong 'green oasis', a 1,000-acre eucalyptus forest and listed wildlife sanctuary. Here a diverse selection of water birds and egrets gather in their tens of thousands across the Duong Thap Muoi or 'Plain of Reeds'. Rowboats traverse the canals to take us to view the principal nesting areas where photo opportunities abound.

DAY 14**CHAU DOC - SAM MOUNTAIN -
VIETNAM/CAMBODIA BORDER**

We go alongside at the picturesque border town of Chau Doc where we visit the floating markets & fish farms by sampan. We make a stop at a Chham Village and observe the lives of Vietnamese Muslims before taking minivans for a short drive to Sam Mountain, location of Phuoc Dien Tu or the Hang Pagoda. We climb the 400 steps to the top to visit the pagoda. Upon return to ship, we navigate a web of canals before dropping anchor on the Vietnam/Cambodia border to undergo Immigration formalities.

DAY 15**PHNOM PENH**

We go alongside in the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh. Morning orientation of the city by cyclo, visiting the Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda followed by the National Museum with its marvellous collection of Angkor statuary. In the afternoon, we visit by coach the Killing Fields and Tuol Sleng Genocide. Optional half-day and full-day tours are available during our stay in Phnom Penh at extra cost. Please contact us in advance or see your in-cabin information manual for further details. Overnight in Phnom Penh city port with its lively bars, restaurants and nightlife.

DAY 16

SILK ISLAND

Morning at leisure in Phnom Penh with its café life and many smart boutiques. After lunch sail up the Tonle River to Koh Nghe Tei (Silk Island) to study the entire silk-making process from worms to weavers. We visit silk makers and can buy from them their lovely silk scarves and other fabrics. This village is a centre of the ancient martial art of L'bokator which roughly translates as 'pounding a lion'. It includes weapons techniques and is one of the oldest combat techniques in Cambodia and believed to date back to the Angkor empire.

[MORE ABOUT PHNOM PENH](#)

DAY 17

TONLE SAP RIVER - PREK KDAM - OUDONG

Sail further up the Tonle River to Prek Kdam and travel by coach to the ancient capital of Cambodia, Oudong. On the way we stop to visit the Vipassana Dhura Meditation Centre for meditation before taking a drive around the old capital. We re-join our ship at Kompong Trolach. After lunch, we travel on ox-carts ride to visit river-side villages, markets and temples. In the evening cocktails are round a village fire pit where we will be joined by village folk keen to show us their traditional dancing show us more of the delightful Khmer culture.

DAY 18

KAMPONG CHHNANG - TONLE SAP FLOATING VILLAGES & MARKETS

A highlight of any Mekong journey is the navigation of the web of tight channels as we approach the mouth of the Tonle Sap. From Kampong Chhnang we embark on country boats to explore floating villages and markets, observing fisheries and aquatic horticulture. Back on land at Kampong Chhnang we can walk the riverbank to see the towering stilt houses.

DAY 19

KAMPONG CHHNANG - SIEM REAP

Disembark and travel by coach from Kampong Chhnang through stunningly lovely countryside to reach Siem Reap, adjacent to Angkor Wat.

[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

PRE-TOUR EXTENSION

DAY 1

ARRIVAL IN HANOI

Our guide will pick you up at the airport and bring you to your hotel. Enjoy this bustling Asian metropolis at your own leisure. Overnight at the hotel.

Please note: Guides and drivers are not allowed inside the terminal building. We will be waiting for you outside with a Pandaw sign. Hanoi Airport has two exits; if you don't see us, please try the other exit on the same level (30 meters).

DAY 2

DEPARTURE

Transfer and embark your Pandaw cruise.



5 STAR

Pre Tour Hanoi 1 Night

Savour a 5-star hotel experience with the best views in the city. Pan Pacific Hotel Hanoi enjoys a spectacular location rising up between the watery expanses of Truc Bach Lake, West Lake and the Red River with inspiring, uninterrupted panoramas.

Rates include:

All transfers as above by coach or car with local guide, 1-night Pan Pacific Hotel Hanoi in a Deluxe Room.

Note

- Please advise arrival/ departure flight details in order to arrange the transfer accordingly
- Check out time from hotel at 1200hrs

* Please note that your hotel will be confirmed after we have received your deposit payment. Prices are subject to change. Hotel subject to availability. We will try to offer you an alternate accommodation if the requested hotel would not be available.

Airport Arrival Transfer Notes

Please take note your driver/guide will be waiting for you at Column No 12 outside the arrival area (either the International Arrival area or Domestic Arrival area, depending on your flight). Upon exiting the Arrival Terminal please look for column No 12. In case you do not see the driver/guide at column No 12, please call the Pandaw hotline number and remain standing at the column No 12 in order for the guide/driver to locate you. Please be on the lookout for the Pandaw welcome sign in front of Column No 12.

PAN PACIFIC HOTEL HANOI

1 Thanh Nien Road

Ba Dinh District

10000 Hanoi

Tel: +84 4 382 38888

[Visit Hotel Website](#)

PRE-TOUR EXTENSION

DAY 1

ARRIVAL IN HANOI

Our guide will pick you up at the airport and bring you to the hotel. Enjoy this bustling Asian metropolis at your own leisure.

Overnight: Silk Path Boutique Hanoi

Meals: none

Please note: Guides and drivers are not allowed inside the terminal building. We will be waiting for you outside with a Pandaw sign. Hanoi Airport has two exits; if you don't see us, please try the other exit on the same level (30 meters).

DAY 2

HANOI - SAPA

Check out after breakfast and enjoy Hanoi further with a full day tour. We visit the Royal Palace, the Ethnic Minority Museum as well as the house of Uncle Chuong to learn more about ancient Hanoi. We then take dinner in a local restaurant before heading to the train station for your overnight train to Sapa. Stay in a VIP cabin aboard the luxury Chapa train.

DAY 3

SAPA

Arrive to Lao Cai Train Station early in the morning and drive 1.5 hours to your hotel in Sapa for check in. After breakfast at the hotel, transfer to Fansipan Cable Station for an amazing trip to reach the Indochina Roof, 3143m above the sea level. Starting by cable car and step up to the Peak, enjoy the fresh air and the beautiful landscapes from what so call "the roof of Indochina".

Overnight: Silk Path Grand Sapa

Meals: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 4

SAPA

Today we explore the various hilltribe peoples that reside in this mountainous region with trekking through the breathtaking terraced mountainsides and local village visits. We enjoy a picnic lunch amidst the dramatic scenery before continuing to visit the H'mong people and Red Dao people but exact stops are dependent on weather conditions and physical ability and can be tailored with your local guide.

Overnight: Silk Path Grand Sapa

Meals: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 5

TRANSFER TO SHIP

In the morning after breakfast transfer from Sapa to the Angkor Pandaw.

Meals: Breakfast



DISCOVER

Sapa & Hanoi 4 Night Pre Tour

Explore Sapa with Pandaw in combination with your Red River expedition. Famous for its terraced rice paddies & highlands, Sapa is home to more than 30 colorful hill tribes and close to Vietnam's highest peak, Mount Fansipan. During colonial times Sapa - surrounded by what is referred to as the "Vietnamese Alps" - was a hill station where the French escaped the Hanoi heat, and this heritage is reflected in our elegant, regal interior design and architecture.

Rates include:

Transfers and tours as per itinerary, accommodation at the Silk Path Boutique Hanoi and the Silk Path Grand Sapa, with daily breakfast and three lunches and one dinner during the tour.

Note

- Please advice arrival/departure flight details in order to arrange the transfer accordingly
- Check out time from hotel at 1200hrs
- Please note this is a group tour. The size of the group is 1-12 depending on the interest

* **Please note** that your hotel will be confirmed after we have received your deposit payment. Prices are subject to change. Hotel subject to availability. We will try to offer you an alternate accommodation if the requested hotel would not be available.

PRE-TOUR EXTENSION

DAY 1

ARRIVE IN HUE

Individual arrival at Hue airport, meet your local guide and transfer to your hotel for a 2-night stay on a bed and breakfast basis. The rest of the day is free to enjoy the hotel and relax.

Meals: none.

DAY 2

HUE

This morning we take a boat trip on the serene Perfume River to the best-known pagoda in Middle Vietnam, Thien Mu. Then we visit to the impressive tomb of former Emperor Tu Duc and a beautiful garden once belonging to the royalty followed by a royal style lunch at a local restaurant (included). In the afternoon, visit Hue citadel including Noon Gate, Thai Hoa Palace, Royal Urns and the ruins of the Forbidden Purple City.

Meals: Breakfast at hotel, Lunch at local restaurant.

DAY 3

HUE - HOI AN

After breakfast we leave Hue for Hoi An. En route we'll travel through the Ocean Clouds Pass, visit Non Nuoc Beach and the fascinating Cham Museum. We continue to your hotel in Hoi An. In the afternoon, you will have time to explore this charming and wonderfully preserved merchant town that retains Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese and European influences from its flourishing old days.

Meals: Breakfast at hotel.

DAY 4

HOI AN

Day at leisure. Explore the beautiful old town of Hoi An or relax at the beach.

Meals: Breakfast at hotel.

DAY 5

HOI AN - HANOI

Transfer to Danang Airport for morning flight to Hanoi Airport, followed by transfer to the Angkor Pandaw. It is possible to extend your stay in Hoian - please email information@pandaw.com for availability and prices.

Meals: Breakfast at hotel.



DISCOVER

4 Night Hue & Hoi An Pre Tour

This is a Pandaw group tour.

Hue and Hoi An are two of Vietnam's scenic and historic highlights and a 'must see;' on most people's visit to this most wonderful country. Our included trip on the Perfume River and visit to the enormous Hue Citadel are fascinating. Hoi An is best explored independently and retains a charming village feel which comes alive after sunset with the glow of red lanterns and the senses of Asia. And, of course, enjoy time to relax at your beach resort.

We are pleased to offer a pre and post extension staying in delightful and specially selected boutique hotels, including a connecting domestic flight, all transfers, excursions in Hue, a scenic journey from Hue to Hoi An and 2-nights in Hoi An. It is possible to extend your stay in Hoi An if required.

Rates include:

English speaking guide on tours, 1x lunch at local restaurant, economy one-way domestic air ticket Danang - Hanoi, hotels as advertised, transportation by AC vehicle, daily breakfast, and entrance fees.

Rates exclude:

International flights, visa, travel insurance, not mentioned beverages and

meal.

Note

- Please advice arrival flight details in order to arrange the transfer accordingly
- Check in time at hotel is 1400hrs
- Check out time from hotel at 1200hrs
- Early check in and late check out are subject to hotel room availability

* Please note that your hotel will be confirmed after we have received your deposit payment. Prices are subject to change. Hotel subject to availability. We will try to offer you alternative accommodation if the requested hotel is not available.

POST-TOUR EXTENSION

DAY 1

ARRIVAL SIEM REAP - ANGKOR WAT

Your guide will meet you upon arrival to Siem Reap and transfer you to the Jaya House Hotel for lunch before check in. In the afternoon we visit the most famous temple of Cambodia, Angkor Wat. It is visually, architecturally and artistically breathtaking with its massive three tiered pyramid crowned by five beehive-like towers rising 65 meters from ground level. This temple is the centerpiece of any visit to the temples of Angkor. Take in the romantic view at sunset from Bakheng Hill.

Overnight at hotel

Meals: Dinner

DAY 2

TEMPLES OF ANGKOR

Following breakfast in your hotel, set out for a day of exploration amongst the various temples and ruins of the Angkor Empire. The morning we will cover the large complex surrounding the imposing Bayon Temple. After lunch at a local restaurant, we discover more secluded temples including the awe inspiring and overgrown Ta Prohm, made famous by the Tomb Raider movie.

In the evening we experience a true highlight of Cambodia and meet talented young performers in a breathtaking and original Cambodian show at Phare Ponleu Selpak's Circus. Not just for entertainment, Phare is also a social enterprise supporting the youth of Cambodia gain skills and employment.

Overnight at hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 3

DEPARTURE

After breakfast check out of your hotel and head to the airport for your onward flight.

Meals: Breakfast



DISCOVER

Exploring Angkor (Jaya House Riverpark) Post Tour

Explore the magnificent temples of Angkor including the world famous Angkor Wat, high on any bucket list destination. With our specially selected hotels and local guide at your service throughout, this 2-night add-on to your Pandaw expedition it is the perfect choice for your trip in Cambodia.

Rates include:

One way transfer (ship to hotel and hotel to airport), two nights accommodation at Jaya House Riverpark, meals and excursion as per itinerary.

Note

- Please advice arrival/departure flight details in order to arrange the transfer accordingly
- Visa on arrival to Cambodia not inclusive (USD 30 per person downstream if arriving at Siem Reap Airport, USD 35 upstream if crossing the water border between Vietnam/Cambodia)
- Check out time from hotel at 1200hrs

* Please note that your hotel will be confirmed after we have received your

deposit payment. Prices are subject to change. Hotel subject to availability. We will try to offer you an alternate accommodation if the requested hotel would not be available.

JAYA HOUSE RIVERPARK

River Road

Treang Village

Siem Reap - Slor Kram Commune

Tel: +855 639 62 555

[Visit Hotel Website](#)

POST-TOUR EXTENSION

DAY 1

ARRIVAL SIEM REAP - ANGKOR WAT

Your guide will meet you upon arrival to Siem Reap then arrange lunch before check in. In the afternoon we visit the most famous temple of Cambodia, Angkor Wat. It is visually, architecturally and artistically breathtaking with a massive three tiered pyramid crowned by five beehive-like towers rising 65 meters from ground level. This temple is the centerpiece of any visit to the temples of Angkor. Take in the romantic view at sunset from Bakheng Hill.

Overnight at hotel

Meals: Dinner

DAY 2

TEMPLES OF ANGKOR

Following breakfast in your hotel, set out for a day of exploration amongst the various temples and ruins of the Angkor Empire. The morning we will cover the large complex surrounding the imposing Bayon Temple. After lunch at a local restaurant, we discover more secluded temples including the awe inspiring and overgrown Ta Prohm, made famous by the Tomb Raider movie.

In the evening we experience a true highlight of Cambodia and meet talented young performers in a breathtaking and original Cambodian show at Phare Ponleu Selpak's Circus. Not just for entertainment, Phare is also a social enterprise supporting the youth of Cambodia gain skills and employment.

Overnight at hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 3

DEPARTURE

After breakfast check out of your hotel and head to the airport for your onward flight.

Meals: Breakfast



DISCOVER

Exploring Angkor (FCC Angkor) Post Tour

Explore the magnificent temples of Angkor including the world famous Angkor Wat, high on any bucket list destination. With our specially selected hotels and local guide at your service throughout, this 2-night add-on to your Pandaw expedition it is the perfect choice for your trip in Cambodia.

Rates include:

One way transfer (ship to hotel and hotel to airport), two nights accommodation at the FCC Angkor by Avani, meals and excursion as per itinerary.

Note

- Please advise arrival/departure flight details in order to arrange the transfer accordingly
- Visa on arrival to Cambodia not inclusive (USD 30 per person downstream if arriving at Siem Reap Airport, USD 35 upstream if crossing the water border between Vietnam/Cambodia)
- Check out time from hotel at 1200hrs

* Please note that your hotel will be confirmed after we have received your deposit payment. Prices are subject to change. Hotel subject to availability. We will try to offer you an alternate accommodation if the requested hotel

would not be available.

FCC ANGKOR

Pokambor Ave

next to Royal residence

Siem Reap

Cambodia

Tel: +855 63 760 280

[Visit Hotel Website](#)

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](#)