

PRINCETON
JOURNEYS

*Cruising the
Mekong River*

VIETNAM & CAMBODIA
ABOARD THE 14-CABIN *MEKONG PRINCESS*
JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 2, 2025



FEATURING **SOPHAL EAR *97**
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY



Mekong Delta

DEAR PRINCETONIAN,

Discover the allure of Southeast Asia, the Mekong River, and the awe-inspiring temples of Angkor on our captivating journey through Vietnam and Cambodia. Begin your adventure with two nights in Ho Chi Minh City, also known as Saigon, a city buzzing with energy. Then, board the 14-suite *Mekong Princess*, for an intimate exploration of this mighty river. The ultra-shallow draft of this exclusive riverboat allows access to remote corners of the river, revealing everyday life along the Mekong.

As you cruise to Siem Reap, delve into the heart of Southeast Asia, visiting magnificent Buddhist and Hindu temples, navigating vibrant floating markets, and gaining insight into local cultures. Enjoy enriching presentations by accompanying experts and engage in immersive experiences, including a hands-on Vietnamese cooking demonstration. Conclude your adventure with three nights in Siem Reap experiencing the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Angkor, home to iconic structures like Angkor Wat and the Bayon Temple. For those seeking an even earlier start, an optional pre-tour extension to Hanoi and Ha Long Bay is available.

With a total guest capacity of only 24, our journey promises an intimate and authentic perspective on this breathtaking region of the world. I encourage you to reserve your space now.



SCAN ME WITH YOUR
IPHONE OR TABLET
TO REGISTER ONLINE

With kind regards,

Bridget St. Clair

Bridget St. Clair
Director, Alumni Education and Travel
Princeton University

STUDY LEADER



Dr. Sophal Ear *97 (SPIA MPA) is a tenured Associate Professor at the Thunderbird School of Global Management, Arizona State University, where he specializes in global political economy, focusing on Asia's regional dynamics and international organizations. His remarkable journey from a Cambodian refugee to a respected academic and global advisor reflects his deep commitment to understanding and navigating the complexities of international development, governance, and human rights. Dr. Ear's multifaceted career has seen him consult for the World Bank, serve with the United Nations Development Programme in East Timor, and contribute as a TED Fellow and a World Economic Forum Young Global Leader. He is also the author of several influential works, including "Viral Sovereignty and the Political Economy of Pandemics" (Routledge, 2022) and "Aid Dependence in Cambodia: How Foreign Assistance Undermines Democracy" (Columbia University Press, 2013), and "The Hungry Dragon: How China's Resource Quest Is Reshaping the World" (Routledge, 2013). Dr. Ear's personal and professional narrative is marked by resilience, a dedication to democracy, and an enduring commitment to leveraging education and knowledge to impact global communities positively.

Please note, Dr. Ear will participate in the Vietnam portion of this program only, but will speak about both Vietnam and Cambodia.



Silver Pagoda

ITINERARY

MONDAY–TUESDAY, JANUARY 20-21

HOME / HO CHI MINH CITY (SAIGON), VIETNAM

Depart the U.S. on an overnight flight to Ho Chi Minh City. Upon arrival, transfer to the Park Hyatt hotel. The evening is at leisure to rest or explore independently.

PARK HYATT SAIGON

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22

HO CHI MINH CITY

Ho Chi Minh City is Vietnam's most economically dynamic city, and the streets are always abuzz with activity. This morning, you have the option of visiting the Cu Chi tunnels, a vast underground network that hid thousands of Viet Cong guerrillas and Vietnamese villagers during the Vietnam War, or visiting the War Remnants Museum and the Presidential Palace. After lunch, take a motorcoach tour highlighting the city's best known monuments—Notre Dame Cathedral, City Hall, and the Old Saigon Post Office. This evening enjoy the company of fellow travelers at a celebratory welcome dinner. PARK HYATT SAIGON (B,L,D)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23

HO CHI MINH CITY (EMBARK)

This morning, experience the vibrant atmosphere of the extensive Ben Thanh market and its diverse array of offerings. Then board the *Mekong Princess* to begin your seven-night cruise along the Mekong River. MEKONG PRINCESS (B,L,D)

FRIDAY, JANUARY 24

BEN TRE / CAN THO

Today, cruise by sampan (small wooden boat) to a coconut candy maker and visit a local village. In the afternoon, cruise to Can Tho, the main city of the Mekong Delta, and take a guided walking tour. Enjoy a traditional Unicorn dance at the Zuhang Pagoda and some free time to visit the night market and souvenir shops. MEKONG PRINCESS (B,L,D)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25

CAN THO / HOA AN

Experience the unique and colorful Cai Rang floating market by sampan. Weave in and out among floating watercraft loaded with produce and anything the residents of the Mekong Delta need in their daily lives. Then visit a noodle factory and continue to the tranquil community of Hoa An, known for its flowers and handicrafts, and meet local families. MEKONG PRINCESS (B,L,D)

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26

GIENG ISLAND / HONG NGU

Today experience the idyllic natural beauty, charming French-colonial architecture, and Buddhist temples of Gieng Island. Witness the local arts of sampan making and the weaving and embroidering of traditional Khmer scarves. Venture into a remote riverside area to explore duck farms, tropical orchards and “monkey bridges.” Visit the historic Phanxico Monastery, built by the French in 1879, and a Hòa Hảo temple, dedicated to a unique form of Buddhism which focuses on aiding the poor. Back on board the *Mekong Princess*, cross into Cambodia and continue upstream.

MEKONG PRINCESS (B,L,D)

MONDAY, JANUARY 27

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA

A hub for both the Khmer Empire and French colonialists, Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh, retains vestiges of its French charm. Take a cyclo (bicycle taxi) tour along the park-lined riverfront and see the city's highlights, including the extravagant Silver Pagoda, also known as the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, and the National Museum, home to the world's finest collection of Khmer sculpture. MEKONG PRINCESS (B,L,D)



Ta Prohm



Apsara dancer

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28

PHNOM PENH

This morning take time to honor the victims of some of the darkest days of Cambodian history. Visit Choeung Ek, a former orchard that was used as a Killing Field by the Khmer Rouge during the Cambodian genocide. Then continue on to Tuol Sleng, the National Genocide Museum. This afternoon offers free time to reflect on these powerful and emotional sites, or to appreciate the city of Phnom Penh at your own pace. This evening, enjoy a cultural performance aboard the *Mekong Princess*, including Apsara, Cambodia's national dance, as well as several traditional folk dances.

MEKONG PRINCESS (B,L,D)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29

ANGKOR BAN

The cruise continues to the unique village of Angkor Ban, where centuries-old houses stand on stilts above water while the bustle of local life swirls below. Attend a special blessing ceremony at the pagoda conducted by local Buddhist monks and stop at the local monastery before returning to the ship. *MEKONG PRINCESS* (B,L,D)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30

KAMPONG CHAM / SIEM REAP

Disembark in Kampong Cham and transfer to Siem Reap, the gateway to magnificent Angkor, a UNESCO World Heritage Site comprising the remains of the different capitals of the Khmer Empire from the 9th to the 15th century. Immerse yourself in the Angkor National Museum in the afternoon, then enjoy dinner on your own and an evening at leisure. *RAFFLES GRAND D'ANGKOR* (B,L)

FRIDAY, JANUARY 31

ANGKOR / SIEM REAP

A trip highlight, begin the day with an early-morning visit to Bakheng Temple, offering the perfect vantage point for a sunrise view over Angkor Wat and the surrounding plain. After a picnic breakfast, enjoy a traditional Khmer gondola ride to Angkor Thom, once an enormous walled city. Delight in the temple at its heart, adorned with 55 large and small towers crowned with intricately carved heads, each wearing a mysterious smile. In the afternoon, under the optimal light, venture to Ta Prohm, a silent ruin entwined with jungle vegetation. Enjoy dinner on your own this evening.

RAFFLES GRAND D'ANGKOR (B,L)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1

ANGKOR / SIEM REAP

This morning is dedicated to the grandest of Siem Reap's temples, fabled Angkor Wat, a miniature universe carved in stone. Spend the full morning taking in the vastness and the details of this architectural masterpiece. In the afternoon, travel around Siem Reap by tuk-tuk (auto rickshaw) on an art tour, visiting galleries and artisan workshops to view the arts and crafts of the region. Conclude the day by bidding farewell to your fellow travelers at a festive farewell dinner with live Cambodian music and dance performances.

RAFFLES GRAND D'ANGKOR (B,L,D)

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2

SIEM REAP / HOME

Transfer to the airport for your return flight, crossing the International Date Line and arriving home the same day. (B)

Sunrise view of Angkor Wat





Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum



Ha Long Bay

Trip Highlights

- ▶ Enjoy Seven nights aboard the 14-cabin **Mekong Princess**. The small size and shallow draft of our riverboat allow for **visits to villages not accessible to larger boats**, and embarkation at the more desirable Saigon port.
- ▶ **Cruise in comfort:** each cabin on this all-suite vessel features panoramic floor-to-ceiling glass French doors and deluxe spa-quality linens and amenities.
- ▶ **Interact with local people** and witness traditional music and dance performances.
- ▶ Take two full days to behold the **temples of Angkor**, including sunrise views of Angkor Wat from the peaceful surroundings of Ba Kheng Temple.
- ▶ **Experience excursions offering authentic glimpses of rural life**, with visits to floating markets, farms, and villages.
- ▶ **Excellent local guides** offer valuable insight throughout the program.

Water puppets



Floating market produce



Tuk-tuk



PRE-TOUR EXTENSION

JANUARY 17-21

HANOI & HA LONG BAY

Begin your Southeast Asian experience with a two-night stay in Hanoi, Vietnam's verdant and lake-studded capital. A panoramic tour will introduce you to the city's well-known landmarks, including the Temple of Literature, the "Hanoi Hilton," the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, and the modest "House on Stilts," where this influential figure in Vietnam's independence movement lived for many years. Take a cyclo tour through the charming historic quarter's alleyways and enjoy a delightful traditional water puppets performance. Next, begin your coastal journey with an overnight cruise on a small luxury boat in Ha Long Bay. This mystical seascape, adorned with limestone islets, features caves with fantastic stalactite and stalagmite formations.

HOTEL ROSE GARDEN PALACE (2B,L,D)

Per person, **\$2,895**
sharing accommodations

Single Supplement **\$955**

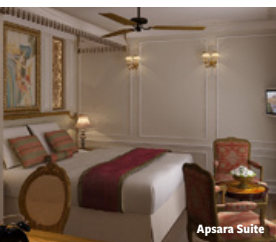
Further details and pricing will be sent to confirmed participants.



Outdoor Lounge



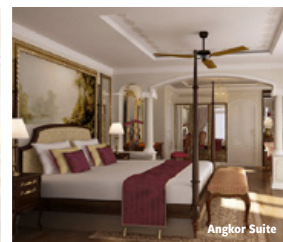
Lounge



Apsara Suite



Tonle Suite



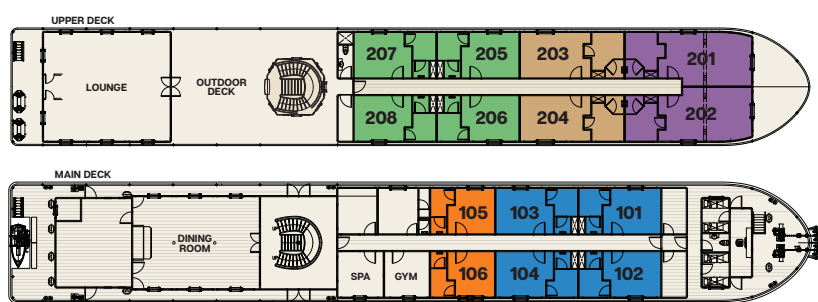
Angkor Suite

MEKONG PRINCESS

The *Mekong Princess* offers 14 luxurious suites combining the elegance of French Colonial style with the peacefulness and comfort of a Southeast Asian spa. All suites have sliding glass doors that open to a French balcony (railing); Angkor Suites also feature a private veranda with seating area. Suites have either twin beds that can be joined as a queen bed, or a king bed; a spacious seating area; en suite facilities with shower (plus separate soaking tub in the Tonle and Angkor Suites), hair dryer, spa robes, and slippers; individual climate control; daily butler service and housekeeping with nightly turndown; in-room safe; and televisions with satellite service. Breakfast and lunch may be served on deck, and single-seating dinners offer sumptuous cuisine featuring locally sourced fresh produce. Public spaces include open-air lounges with comfortable chaises, spa, and small fitness center. The small size and ultra-shallow draft of this elegant riverboat allow for visits to villages and tributaries not accessible to larger vessels, and the one-to-one guest-to-staff ratio ensures an unparalleled river cruise experience. .

PROGRAM RATES (PER PERSON)

	DOUBLE	SINGLE
JUNIOR SUITE ~216 sq. ft., with French balcony	\$7,995	\$13,495
SAIGON SUITE ~235 sq. ft., with French balcony	\$8,995	\$15,495
APSARA SUITE ~235 sq. ft., with French balcony	\$9,995	—
TONLE SUITE ~305 sq. ft., with French balcony	\$11,495	—
ANGKOR SUITE ~495 sq. ft., with French balcony, private veranda, complimentary laundry service, and evening canapés	\$12,995	—



GENERAL INFORMATION

PROGRAM RATES INCLUDE

All accommodations, meals, and excursions as specified in the itinerary, including eleven breakfasts, eleven lunches, nine dinners, five hotel nights and seven nights aboard *Mekong Princess*. • Comprehensive program of briefings, lectures, and presentations • Arrival and departure airport transfers • Gratuities to porters, wait staff, guides, drivers and shipboard personnel for all group activities • Entrance fees and port charges • Local beer, coffee, tea, and soft drinks with all group lunches and dinners on land, and wine with dinners • All local liquor, beer, and soft drinks on board *Mekong Princess* (wine and imported liquors available for an additional cost) • Bottled water on motorcoaches • Comprehensive packet of pre-departure information • Professional tour manager throughout the program

AIR ARRANGEMENTS

U.S. domestic and international airfare is not included in the program rates. Valerie Wilson Travel, Inc., can help with airline arrangements for this trip and can be reached at 877-376-1754. You are also welcome to book your air transportation through your local travel agent, an online travel site, or the airline of your choice. Further information about making flight arrangements will be sent to confirmed participants.

WHAT TO EXPECT

This is a moderately strenuous program, at times physically demanding and busy, with considerable walking at some sites. Daily activities can involve miles of walking, often on cobbled streets and uneven terrain; elevators may not be available and stairs may not have handrails. Participants should be fit and in active good health. In January, the average temperature in Cambodia and Vietnam is in the low to high 80s F, and the average humidity is 80%, with intermittent rain. Although the riverboat, hotels, and motorcoaches are air-conditioned, temples and traditional conveyances such as cyclos and sampans are not, nor are some restaurants and museums. Travelers should be able, with assistance, to climb in and out of small boats and other local vehicles such as bicycle-driven and motorized rickshaws. The ship does not have an elevator, so you will need to navigate stairs. Limited medical facilities are available on board the *Mekong Princess*. All participants will be required to follow safety/sanitization protocols set forth by Princeton Journeys or Criterion Travel, local staff, and host country laws.

CRUISING THE MEKONG RIVER VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 2, 2025

RESERVATION FORM

Please make your deposit check payable to Criterion Travel and mail to: Princeton Journeys, P.O. Box 5256 Princeton, NJ 08543. For more information or to reserve by phone, contact Princeton Journeys at journeys@princeton.edu or 609-258-8686.



SCAN ME WITH YOUR
IPHONE OR TABLET
TO REGISTER ONLINE

CONTACT INFORMATION (please print)

NAME #1 _____ PRINCETON AFFILIATION _____

NAME #2 _____ PRINCETON AFFILIATION _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / POSTAL CODE _____

HOME PHONE _____ MOBILE PHONE _____

EMAIL #1 _____

EMAIL #2 _____

Are you traveling with any other parties on this program?

Yes, _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ (\$1,000 per person), payable to Criterion Travel, for _____ place(s) on *Cruising the Mekong River*.

Please charge my deposit of \$ _____ (\$1,000 per person) to my

VISA MasterCard American Express

NAME ON CREDIT CARD _____

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____ SECURITY CODE _____

CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE _____

ACCOMMODATIONS (not guaranteed)

Cabin Category Preference: 1st _____ 2nd _____
Bed Preference King / Queen Twins

SINGLE TRAVELERS (choose one)

I prefer to have single accommodations. (limited availability)
 I plan to share accommodations with: _____

I'd like to know about roommates.
I am a non-smoker smoker

I understand that if a roommate cannot be found by the final payment deadline of September 23, 2024 I will pay the single rate.

I/We have read the tour information section of the brochure and agree to the Terms and Conditions stated therein.

SIGNATURE #1 _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE #2 _____ DATE _____

GROUP SIZE

This program is limited to 24 participants.

PROGRAM RATES

DO NOT INCLUDE

U.S. domestic and international airfare • Passport/visa expenses • Medical expenses, immunizations, and COVID-19 testing if required at the time of travel • Travel and trip cancellation insurance • Private transfers or airport transfers outside of group arrival and departure days • Excursions that deviate from the scheduled tour options • Airline baggage charges • Meals not specified in the itinerary; dishes and beverages not part of the included meals; liquor or soft drinks except as noted • Laundry or dry cleaning • Telephone, fax, internet, and email charges • Room service • Other items of a personal nature

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Insurance for trip cancellation and interruption, medical problems, baggage loss and delay, etc., is highly recommended. Cancellation policies that apply to this expedition are included in this brochure. Information about travel insurance will be sent to confirmed participants.

A NOTE ABOUT RATES

Tour rates are based upon current fuel prices, taxes, tariffs, and a minimum number of participants. While we will do everything possible to maintain the listed prices, they are subject to change. If there are significant changes, details and costs will be advised prior to departure. Complete Terms and Conditions including Statement of Responsibility will be made available to you at time of registration, or in advance upon request. A signed "Terms & Conditions, Release from Liability, Assumption of Risk and Binding Arbitration Clause" is required from each applicant prior to participation on the tour.

RESERVATIONS & PAYMENTS

Reserve your space online at https://account.criteriontravel.com/Booking/RefStart/PJ/250120_MEK_PJ/tour or return the completed reservation form with your \$1,000 per person deposit to: Princeton Journeys, P.O. Box 5256 Princeton, NJ 08543. Balance of payment is due September 23, 2024. After September 23, 2024, full payment is due upon registration. Final payment must be made by check or bank transfer.

CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS

Upon payment of a deposit, all reservations are subject to the cancellation provisions set forth below and by which the passenger agrees to be bound. Cancellations shall not be effective until they are received

in writing and confirmed by Princeton Journeys. Deposits are refundable (less a \$250 per person admin fee) if written notice of cancellation is received within 30 days of booking; after that, deposits are 100% nonrefundable. After September 23, 2024 final payment deadline: All payments are 100% nonrefundable, regardless of booking date. For this reason, we strongly urge participants to purchase trip cancellation insurance. No refunds will be made for any part of this program on which you choose not to participate. NOTE: Neither Princeton University nor Criterion Travel, the tour operator, accepts liability for any airline cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket in conjunction with this tour.

ITINERARY CHANGES

The itinerary presented for this tour is subject to modification and change by Princeton Journeys and Criterion Travel, the tour operator. Every reasonable effort will be made to operate the program as planned; however, should unforeseen world events and conditions require the itinerary to be altered, Princeton Journeys and the tour operator reserve the right to do so for the safety and best interest of the group. Any extra expenses incurred in this situation are the responsibility of the participant.

DISCLAIMER

Princeton University is pleased to facilitate travel opportunities for its Alumni and Friends through Princeton Journeys. Princeton Journeys works with tour operators to make available interesting and enriching travel opportunities for the Princeton family. Please note that neither Princeton Journeys nor Princeton Journeys conducts tours, nor does either act as an agent for guests interested in tours. Princeton Journeys acts as a facilitator with tour operators, and tour participants contract directly with tour operators to make arrangements for completing travel. Princeton Journeys encourages you to familiarize yourself thoroughly with the tour operator's cancellation and refund policies, and also to investigate available services such as trip cancellation insurance. The University is not responsible for changes to trips or travel arrangements or for losses or additional expenses resulting from travel. Complete program terms can be found: alumni.princeton.edu/connect/princeton-journeys/termsand-conditions.

California Seller of Travel
Program CST #2088800-40

Cruising the Mekong River

**VIETNAM & CAMBODIA ABOARD
THE 14-CABIN MEKONG PRINCESS**

JANUARY 20 - FEBRUARY 2, 2025



**PRINCETON
JOURNEYS**

Princeton University
P.O. Box 5256
Princeton, NJ 08543

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alumni.princeton.edu/journeys