



Cambodia and Vietnam!

Exploring Nature and Culture along the Mekong River with Minnesota Public
Radio News Host Angela Davis

January 15 – 27, 2025



From the awe-inspiring Angkor temples to the pulsating city of Saigon, together we will experience the past, present and future of this vital region along its most storied waterway, the Mekong. Our journey begins in the town of Siem Reap, where we explore the history and culture of the Khmer empire as seen in the breathtaking ruins of Angkor, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We'll also explore the natural environment of the jungle that once hid these archeological treasures. From Siem Reap we cruise the Mekong River down through remote villages, and witnessing the rural life of Cambodia. Our gorgeous river ship, the 1st class, old world, *RV Bassac Pandaw*, balances traditional style with modern comfort. Our journey culminates in the vibrant city of Saigon.

I look forward to exploring Southeast Asia with you!

TRIP AT A GLANCE

3 Nights in Siem Reap, Cambodia's *Angkor Wat World Heritage Archeology* site

7 Nights first class cruising on the nostalgic *RV Bassac Pandaw*

2 Nights in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (*referred to as Saigon by local residents*)



**EARTHBOUND
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.

P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA

T. 800.723.8454 / T. 206.842.9775 / F. 206.238.8480

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INCLUDED

- Hosted by Angela Davis of MPR
- Guided by an experienced Earthbound Expeditions program director
- Three nights 4-star hotel accommodation in Siem Reap
- Seven nights cruising the Mekong on the RV Bassac Pandaw
- Two nights 4-star hotel accommodation in Ho Chi Minh City /Saigon
- Meals as described in your custom Mekong itinerary
- Alcoholic beverages and drinks while on the ship (*wine excluded*)
- All activities and entrances as described in your trip itinerary
- Guided tours with local experts through archeology sites, markets, jungles etc.
- Special nature outings along the way
- Talks on the history and ecosystem of Southeast Asia
- All shore excursions (*optional trips and excursions will not be sold or promoted*)
- Gratuities for all shore staff (*excluding for ship staff*)

TRIP FACTS

15 Days/ 14 Nights (*when including international air travel*)

Trip begins in Cambodia upon arrival on January 15, 2025

Trip ends in Vietnam on January 27, 2025

**Pricing & ship information on page 10*



WAYS TO SAVE \$400: Travel alumni save \$100 ◇ Pay by check & save \$200 ◇ Reserve by July 1, 2024 and save \$100



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Your Expedition Begins!

Day 0: Monday & Tuesday, January 13 & 14 - Travel from the US to Siem Reap

You'll cross the international dateline so the trip appears longer. Not to worry, you'll get this day back on the way home! Note – Travel Advice: *Fly via Singapore and spend a few days relaxing and exploring this remarkable, safe, English speaking island city state.*

Day 1: Wednesday, January 15 - Arrive into Siem Reap

Upon arrival, transfer to the comfortable hotel where you can relax and recover from jetlag. In the mid to late afternoon, your MPR group convenes for a briefing of the trip ahead. Enjoy a traditional Cambodian meal with your MPR host, Angela Davis and guides this evening. *Sleep at FCC Angkor by Avani (D) Private transfers are included for all passengers arriving today!*

Day 2: Thursday, January 16 - Angkor Thom and Ta Prom and Banteay Srey



Get ready for an exhilarating day as we kick off our adventure by departing for the Angkor Archeological Park to explore our first temples. Brace yourself for awe-inspiring wonders as we delve into the majestic Angkor Thom, adorned with the iconic terrace of elephants, followed by the enchanting Ta Prohm Temples, renowned as the most beautiful and stunning sites in the Angkor Park.



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After immersing ourselves in the ancient splendor of the temples, we'll recharge with a delectable lunch in Siem Reap before embarking on our next expedition to the captivating Banteay Srei Temple. Along the way, we'll journey through picturesque countryside villages, traverse sugar palm plantations, and pause to engage with local artisans, adding a touch of cultural richness to our unforgettable day.

Sleep at FCC Angkor by Avani (B, L, D)

Day 3: Friday, January 17 - Angkor Wat Sunrise and Apopo Demining Project

Starting out pre-dawn, we take a short drive to Angkor Wat, the most famous monument in the country. We witness the sunrise over the iconic towers and then, as the crowds head back to their hotels, we take advantage of the cool morning air and minimal crowds to explore the site. Angkor Wat is a living architectural wonder, a house of Buddhist mythology, and simply an aesthetic masterpiece.

The vegetation consists mostly of tropical hardwood trees, including a variety of other trees such as fig, banyan, and kapok. We encounter many stonework sites such as the gates in the wall of Angkor Thom and the sentry temples at the primary points. On many of these structures, the trees have taken hold, with roots probing through the gaps in the stone blocks and sprouting out the top of the structure, providing incredible photo opportunities. We return to the FCC for breakfast before departing for the Apopo Demining Center and Cambodia's first-ever botanical garden, boasting the world's largest orchid collection.



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Since the day started at 5 am, we'll return to the hotel by mid-afternoon, allowing ample time to relax by the pool or leisurely explore Siem Reap town. After a free afternoon, we depart from the FCC Hotel to visit Sacha – the first Cambodian handicraft center that incubates local artisans, blending traditional knowledge with contemporary design to showcase Cambodian talents to local and international visitors while having a sustainable social, economic, and environmental impact. Tonight, we will experience a local acrobatic show before returning to the hotel. *Sleep at FCC Angkor by Avani (B, L, D)*

Day 4: Saturday, January 18 - Siem Reap and Embarkation of the RV Bassac Pandaw

Today we transfer from Siem Reap to the town of Kampong Cham to embark on the expedition vessel, Bassac Pandaw. After a short cruise upriver, we moor midstream for cocktail hour and crew introductions. *Sleep on board the Bassac Pandaw (B, L, D)*

Day 5: Sunday, January 19 - Silk Island and Angkor Ban

Today, we have a morning excursion to Angkor Ban and a local Cambodian school where the library was built with the support of travelers like you! Guests are encouraged to bring books to donate to the library for children. In the afternoon, we will have a presentation from one of our local guides about Cambodian geography and culture.

Our afternoon excursion consists of visiting the famous Silk Island. We travel by tuk-tuk to observe the entire silk-making process from worms to weavers. We visit silk makers and have the option to purchase scarves and other fabrics. The village is a center for the ancient martial art L'bokator, which roughly translates as a “pounding lion”. It includes weapon techniques and is one of the oldest combat techniques in Cambodia, believed to date back to the Angkor Empire. *Sleep on board the Bassac Pandaw (B, L, D)*



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Day 6: Monday, January 20 - Oudong and Kampong Tralach

Today we'll embark on a coach journey to Cambodia's ancient capital, Oudong, including a stop en route to explore the serene Vipassana Dhura Meditation Centre. Upon arrival in Oudong, enjoy a scenic drive through historic streets before rejoining the ship in Kampong Tralach for lunch aboard. In the afternoon, embark on an ox-cart excursion through riverside villages, markets, and temples. As dusk falls, gather around a village fire pit for cocktails, where locals will share traditional dances and Khmer culture.

Sleep on board the Bassac Pandaw (B, L, D)

Day 7: Tuesday, January 21 - Phnom Penh

Our morning orientation in Phnom Penh is by rickshaw as we visit the Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda followed by the National Museum with its marvelous collection of Angkorian statuary. This afternoon there is an optional excursion to the Genocide Museum to learn about the Khmer Rouge Regime or you may opt to take a tuk-tuk to explore the riverfront. The ship docks in port tonight so you can enjoy the lively bars, restaurants and night life of Phnom Penh. *Sleep on board the Bassac Pandaw (B, L, D)*

Day 8: Wednesday, January 22 - Vietnam Border

Early this morning we cross the Cambodia - Vietnam border. As the crew takes care of a few formalities with the border officials, there is an optional tour of the working ship or fruit carving classes on deck. This afternoon the ship sails to Chau Doc and we enjoy an evening lion dance performance on board. *Sleep on board the Bassac Pandaw (B, L, D)*



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Day 9: Thursday, January 23 - Con Phuoc Island

In the morning, we take minivans for a short drive to Sam Mountain, the location of Phuoc Dien Tu or the Hanging Pagoda. We climb 400 steps to the top to visit the pagoda. Then, we continue alongside the picturesque border town of Chau Doc, where we visit the floating fish farms by sampan. We make a stop at Chham Village and observe the lives of Vietnamese Muslims.

After an onboard lunch, the ship sails to Con Phuoc for the shore excursion. We pass through a small canal and head ashore to Con Phuoc Island, where we visit local craftspeople traditionally weaving bamboo baskets. After a demonstration, we try our hand at making our own. We then take a tuk-tuk ride back to the ship, stopping at a 100-year-old church and meeting more of the friendly local community. *Sleep on board the Bassac Pandaw (B, L, D)*

Day 10: Friday, January 24 - Ben Tre and My Tho

As the ship sets sail to Ben Tre, get ready for an exciting shore excursion! After indulging in a delicious lunch, we embark on a journey by sampans through enchanting mangroves and bamboo forests to the lush fruit orchards of Ben Tre. Keep an eye out for the diverse birdlife that inhabits this area as we explore via local transport before transferring to a traditional rowboat. Glide slowly through the serene bamboo-covered canals, immersing yourself in the tranquility of the surroundings. Our adventure culminates at a village renowned for its local products, where we'll have the opportunity to witness traditional craftsmanship firsthand. As the evening sets in, prepare to be captivated by the vibrant performances of a local Vietnamese group, adding a touch of cultural immersion to our unforgettable day.

Sleep on board the Bassac Pandaw (B, L, D)

Day 11: Saturday, January 25 - Saigon: Bustling Commercial Metropolis

This morning we disembark for the 2-hour drive to Saigon. Saigon is the commercial capital of Vietnam, while the official and administrative capital is Hanoi. Saigon is a cosmopolitan city that has changed rapidly in the last ten years. These days there are galleries, craft beer breweries and a staggering number of dining and evening venues. On our way to Saigon we stop at the Cu Chi tunnels. This network of tunnels was used by the Viet Cong during the US/Vietnam conflict and was a significant advantage for them. There were many such tunnel bases throughout southern Vietnam, but a lot of effort has been put into preserving this site and making them suitable for visitors. We hear the full story from our guides and have the opportunity to wiggle our way through to get a feel for what it might have been like to use the tunnels. *Sleep in Saigon at the M Gallery, Des Arts (B, L, D)*



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Day 12: Sunday, January 26 - Historic Saigon Walking Tour

This morning we get our bearings by taking a walk in the former French Quarter where we see the old cathedral and visit the former South Vietnamese Presidential Palace, used these days as the Reunification Museum, complete with 1970s decor.

This afternoon we enjoy some local cuisine and have a free afternoon to enjoy Saigon prior to our final meal is at a low key, but exceptional restaurant – a meal that you will remember Vietnam by! *Sleep in Saigon at the M Gallery, Des Arts (B, L, D)*

Day 13: Monday, January 27 - Depart Saigon for the US

Your expedition concludes today at Saigon Airport. Transfers are included! (B)

Meet Your Host!



Angela Davis is the host of MPR News with Angela Davis, a weekday talk show on Minnesota Public Radio that airs at 9 a.m. She joined MPR News in November 2018 after more than 25 years of television reporting and anchoring in the Twin Cities and other cities throughout the country.

Davis leads conversations on a wide variety of topics including how the state is changing, Minnesota's persistent racial disparities, economic issues, education, mental health and the climate crisis.

The national award-winning program includes insight from experts as well as listeners who call in during the live broadcast.

Before joining MPR News, Angela anchored morning and evening newscasts and worked as a reporter at WCCO-TV in Minneapolis and KSTP-TV in St. Paul. She has won five regional Emmy awards for anchoring and covering breaking news. Her television career included jobs at CNN in Atlanta and local stations in Washington, DC, Dallas, TX and Lexington, KY. She is also a Gracie Award winner for her work in public media.

Angela grew up in southern Virginia and holds a journalism degree from the University of Maryland, College Park. She also did graduate work in urban affairs at the University of Texas at Arlington. She is a member of the local and national chapters of the National Association of Black Journalists and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

She frequently emcees community events and moderates panel discussions in Minnesota. Angela is married and has a son and a daughter.



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HANDCRAFTED LUXURY – THE RV BASSAC PANDAW

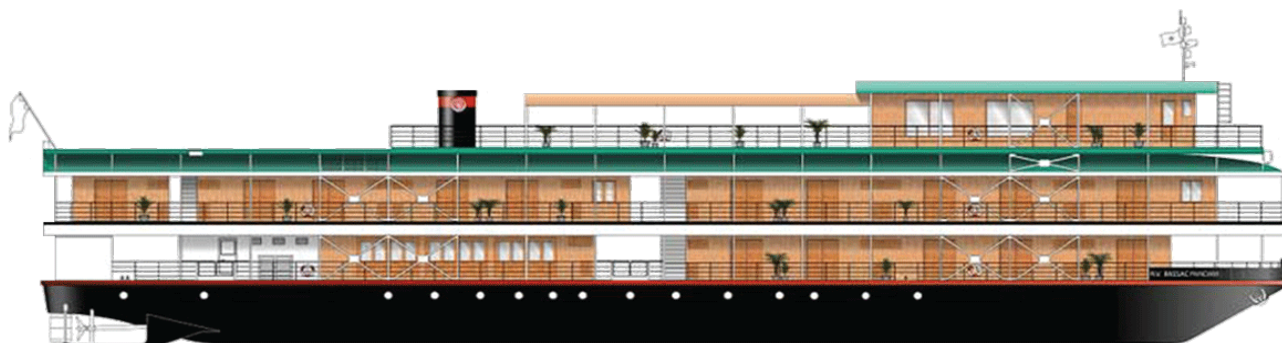
\$7,195 Main deck per person Double Occupancy / Single rate add 50%

\$7,995 Upper deck per person Double Occupancy / Single rate add 50%

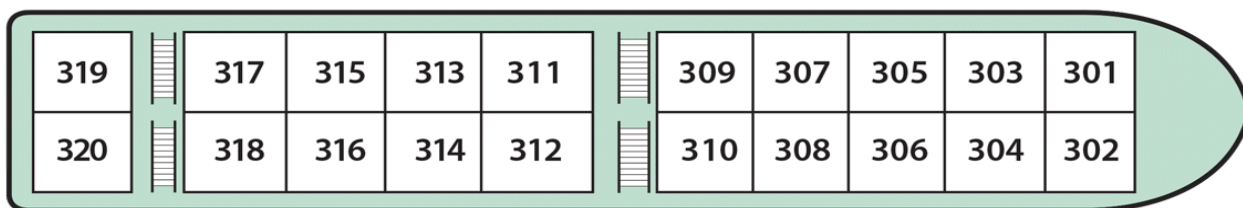
Not Included: Gratuities for ship staff, travel insurance and items not mentioned in your itinerary. Additional port taxes, charges & fees are currently at \$85. *Fuel surcharges may apply.*

THE 1ST CLASS RV BASSAC PANDAW FACT

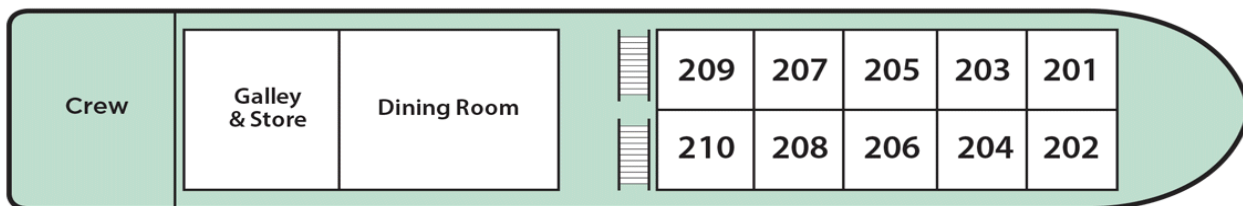
Built 2012 in Saigon, refit 2022 • Length: 167ft • Beam: 33.5ft • Draft: 3ft • Berths: 60



ELEVATION



UPPER DECK PLAN



MAIN DECK PLAN



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Know Before You Go!

Reservations and Deposits: A \$1000 per person deposit is needed to confirm your space on this custom MPR journey. You can make a credit card deposit online or by phone. Once the deposit is processed, a deposit packet is emailed with pertinent journey details. Deposits are refundable for 30 days from deposit or until 120 days before departure, whichever comes first, less a cancellation fee of \$500 per person. Final payment is also non-refundable which is why we strongly urge guests to purchase travel insurance.

Not Included: International airline tickets, alcoholic beverages, room service and gratuities for hotel staff, travel insurance, meals not listed in brochure, and any activities or items not listed in your itinerary.

Physical Requirements: It is the responsibility of each guest to be aware of their physical abilities or limitations and to be in sufficient good health to undertake the trip. [Click here](#) to read “Is an Earthbound trip right for you?” or call the Earthbound office for more details.

Travel Insurance: Earthbound Expeditions strongly encourages the purchase of travel insurance coverage. We include information on trip insurance in your deposit information.

Events and Hosted Journeys: If a planned event is cancelled for any reason, another event will be included in its place. This is not cause for refund. Events are subject to change. Also, if a host or special guest is unable to attend as planned, Earthbound Expeditions will do its utmost to find another host who has similar interests, talents, and expertise. The inability of a host to participate in a tour is not grounds for a full or partial refund.

Terms & Conditions: Click [here](#) to read the full terms and conditions.

Reservations & Questions!

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Reserve online using your Guest Portal!



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