



Signature Classic 15 Day Journey Yunnan~Laos~Cambodia~Vietnam

DAY 1 Arrive Kunming

We meet at the airport and transfer to our hotel, located in the centre of the city by Green Lake. Kunming, in the southern province of Yunnan, has a long history from the 12th century when it was made the regional capital under the Yuan dynasty. Set almost 1700 metres above sea level, the weather is said to be spring-like all year round. The city has undergone a massive modernisation program since 1996 and now boasts a population of over 12 million. During the early 20th century, Kunming and the province of Yunnan were occupied by the French who sought to expand their interests by linking this inland city with the seaport of Haiphong (Vietnam). Now there is a new high speed rail line linking Kunming to Vientiane in Laos – the Lancang or China/Laos railway. Dinner is included tonight.

Accommodation: Grand Park Hotel

DAY 2 Kunming

After breakfast, we will visit the Kunming Provincial Museum, a cultural landmark in Yunnan Province that attracts thousands of visitors annually. It showcases the historical and cultural heritage of Yunnan, offering insights into both local and global cultural diversity. Over its 70-year history, the museum has made significant achievements in cultural heritage conservation and the promotion of cultural artifacts. After lunch at a local restaurant, we return to the hotel in the afternoon for some free time.

Dinner is included tonight.

Accommodation: Grand Park Hotel

DAY 3 Xishuangbanna by Fast Rail

The China/Laos railway was completed at the end of 2021 linking southern China with Laos. Today we will board the train and travel due south to the provincial town of Xishuangbanna which was once part of the ancient Tea Horse Road, a network of caravan paths winding through the mountains of southern China. It is also referred to as the “Southern Silk Road” or “Southwest Silk Road”.

Dinner is included tonight.

Accommodation: Anantara Resort





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DAY 4 Xishuangbanna & Tropical Botanical Gardens

Here, deep in southern China, we are close to the border with Laos, Thailand and Myanmar. The countryside is tropical and home to the local Dai indigenous groups who ruled for centuries before new China came into being in 1949. We will spend this morning visiting China's largest tropical botanical garden which was established in 1959 spanning 1,125 hectares, and home to over 13,000 plant species, including rare orchids, ancient cycads, and towering dipterocarp trees. Access to the gardens is very convenient and explored best by using the on/off minibus service. The gardens are pristine with information in English making it easy for us to discover this wonderful garden at our own pace. Dinner is included at the hotel.

Accommodation: Anantara Resort

DAY 5 Xishuangbanna

Another chance this morning to visit the gardens which are located adjacent to our hotel. In the afternoon there will be free time. Dinner is included at the hotel.

Accommodation: Anantara Resort

Day 6 Luang Prabang

The China/Laos railway is a remarkable engineering project that has linked China with Southeast Asia. Today we will leave China and take a spectacular rail journey through mountains, across rivers and ravines, to the ancient Lao capital of Luang Prabang. The city is the spiritual home of Laos, a country predominantly Buddhist, and in this town there are many wats, monasteries and temples with hundreds of monks. Each morning as the sun rises, the monks take the first of their two daily meals by calling for alms, their bowls tucked under their arms. Dinner is included.

Accommodation: Three Nagas Hotel

DAY 7 Luang Prabang

Laos is an 80 per cent agrarian country with an agriculture sector oriented towards the production of rice, or more commonly, sticky rice. This morning, we will have an optional excursion to experience Living Land Farm - an organic farm and a community enterprise run for the benefit of the Lao people. We will learn and practise steps in rice production, including planting, transplanting and how water buffalos assist in the cultivation process. Alternatively, you may choose to relax in the splendid surrounds of our hotel, or take a morning escorted tour of Luang Prabang's temples and monasteries. Dinner is included this evening.

Accommodation: Three Nagas Hotel





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DAY 8 Vientiane

The recently completed rail service from Luang Prabang to Vang Vieng and on to Vientiane has revolutionised transport and tourism in Laos. Today we will complete our journey on the China/Laos railway from Kunming in China, to Vientiane in Laos. On arrival we transfer to our hotel and some free time. Dinner is included this evening.

Accommodation: Souphattra Heritage Hotel

DAY 9 Phnom Penh

We will make the short transfer to Vientiane International airport for our flight to Phnom Penh in Cambodia. Phnom Penh, the capital city of Cambodia, has a rich history that dates to the 15th century. The city was founded in 1434 by King Ponhea Yat after he moved the capital from Angkor to Phnom Penh. Cambodia became part of French Indochina in 1890, and the city developed rapidly as a river port and strategic centre for the French. Following independence in 1953, Phnom Penh continued as a favoured destination in Southeast Asia until the ravages of war in the late 1960s took their toll and the Khmer Rouge took power. The city fell silent until peace was restored in the early 1990s, and despite many setbacks Phnom Penh is now a vibrant and interesting place to visit once again. Dinner is included tonight.

Accommodation: Amanjaya Pancam Hotel

DAY 10 Phnom Penh

This morning, we will explore the history of Phnom Penh and Cambodia with a visit to SOSORO Museum. Here we see the history of currency in Cambodia from the time of Angkor to the present. The museum interprets the quirks of the Cambodian monetary system, including the French influence which introduced a common currency across their protectorates of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. The museum explores the probability that the great Angkor civilisation, by far the largest in Southeast Asia between the 8th and 13th centuries, did not have any medium of exchange - unlike regional empires that preceded it. Most evidence suggests that this massive, powerful and very well-administered empire had no currency and relied on the barter economy both for its domestic and its international trade. Dinner is included tonight.

Accommodation: Amanjaya Pancam Hotel





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DAY 11 The Mekong River - Phnom Penh to Saigon by riverboat – a Pandaw expedition

The Mekong River rises high in the mountains of China and makes its way through six countries over 4700 kilometres, until it spills into nine tributaries that form the Mekong Delta. Today we board the well-appointed Pandaw riverboat and begin our journey into Vietnam. We check in to our Pandaw expedition at 11am and meet the crew before enjoying lunch on board. In the afternoon there will be an optional visit to the remnants of Cambodia's tragic recent past when the Khmer Rouge held sway. The so-called Killing Fields and Genocide Museum are confronting places where you may learn more about the brutal Khmer Rouge regime.

Accommodation: We dock overnight in Phnom Penh

DAY 12 Vietnam border – Chau Doc

We up anchor early in the morning and cruise downstream along the Mekong River to the Vietnam border for immigration formalities. The ship sails toward Chau Doc in Vietnam where we take an evening stroll along the river before dinner aboard. Overnight on board

Accommodation: Overnight on board

DAY 13 Chau Doc

In the morning, we take minivans for a short drive to Sam Mountain, the location of Phuoc Dien Tu, or the Hang Pagoda. After climbing the steps, we are greeted with stunning views across the Mekong. For those not keen on the stairs, explore the local market instead. Afterwards, we visit the nearby floating fish farms by sampan before being treated to a private Lion Dance performance at a local village. After lunch aboard, we continue sailing into the heart of the Mekong delta and enjoy on-deck entertainment from the crew. Overnight on board

Accommodation: Overnight on board

DAY 14 Ben Tre

This morning, we will travel by sampans through mangroves and bamboo forests to the fruit orchards of Ben Tre. This is a fertile farming region with half of Vietnam's rice production coming from the Mekong Delta. It also hosts a rich artisanal culture which we will witness at a local village specialising in handicrafts. After returning to the ship, enjoy lunch on board as we sail through the Cho Gao Canal toward Saigon. The Cho Gao Canal is a vital waterway link for the transportation of goods to and from the city which was constructed in 1876 by the French, and offers a fascinating insight to life along the water. In the evening, we sail into central Saigon and enjoy the stunning skyline over dinner.

Accommodation: In Saigon

DAY 15 Saigon

Disembark in central Saigon after breakfast for your onward travels.

