

Vietnam and Cambodia

Essential Information

APT

LUXURY TRAVEL



Preparing For Your Trip

PASSPORTS

A valid passport is required with a minimum validity of six months from your date of return. Always carry your passport and other travel documents in your hand luggage. Keep photocopies in a separate bag and leave a copy at home with family or friends in case of an emergency. Please ensure you have advised us of your full name as per your passport, including middle name(s). Failure to do so may result in a name change fee. APT is not responsible for delays or missed portions of the holiday package resulting from incorrect travel documents or visas.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel Insurance is not included in your holiday package. For your protection, we recommend you purchase comprehensive travel insurance that includes (without limitation) coverage for the full cost of your holiday package, medical costs, COVID-19, including medical evacuation, loss of luggage, land and air charges that may occur due to cancellation, or natural disasters that may strike before you depart. Be sure to pack your policy if you need to make a claim while on tour. Confirm that your insurance covers you for the whole time you'll be away and check what circumstances and activities are not included in your policy.

Ensure all pre-existing medical issues are declared to the insurer so that non-covered conditions are ascertained in advance. Have the details recorded and accessible at all times during travel. We recommend your travel insurance includes coverage of events such as itinerary disruption as we will not be liable for any direct or indirect costs that you incur as a result of such an event or other factors beyond APT's control. We also recommend your policy includes coverage for COVID-19 related events such as quarantine expenses, flight changes, cancellation fees, etc.

VISAS

Please note that visa conditions are subject to change. Please consult the respective consulate to ensure that you have any applicable visas for countries included in the holiday package prior to departure.

Vietnam Visas

All Australian and New Zealand passport holders must obtain a Vietnam Visa. We recommend you apply for an electronic visa (e-Visa) online at least 30 days prior to departure. On selected itineraries where you enter Vietnam on multiple occasions, you will be required to apply for a multiple entry e-Visa. UK passport holders are visa-exempt for stays up to 45 days.

Please refer to your Tour Code on your booking information and your Visa Checklist provided at the time of booking for specific instructions regarding the appropriate visa application. For Visa purposes: Border Crossing Point in Vietnam is Song Tien Landport.

For further information or queries in how to apply for a Vietnam visa prior to your departure, please visit the following website: evisa.xuatnhapcanh.gov.vn/web/guest/home

Cambodia Visas

All Australian, New Zealand and UK passport holders must obtain a Cambodian Visa. You can apply for an e-Visa online or obtain a Tourist Visa upon arrival at Siem Reap International Airport. If you are obtaining your visa at the airport, you will be required to pay cash in USD. If you are entering Cambodia on the Mekong River, you must obtain a Tourist Visa on board. The fee will be charged to your onboard account and to be settled upon check out. Please note a Cambodia e-Visa is only accepted when entering the country through the airport.

All other nationalities not mentioned above, please contact your local consulate for visa requirements.

Please note: Entry and exit conditions can change at short notice. You should contact the nearest embassy or consulate of Vietnam for the latest details.

For further information or queries on how to apply for a visa prior to your departure, please visit the following website:

Australia: smartraveller.gov.au

New Zealand: safetravel.govt.nz

United Kingdom: gov.uk

APT Website: aptouring.com.au/about-us/travel-information/visa-requirements

What to Pack

Luggage

The luggage limit on your tour is one piece of luggage that does not exceed 160cm (63 inches) or weigh more than 20kg (44 pounds). It is advisable to keep your luggage to a minimum weight, as you may be required to look after your luggage yourself at airports and hotels. An extra charge will be imposed to cover portage handling of any additional luggage. Your Tour Director will advise you of the exact additional charge.

Clothing and Footwear

Vietnam and Cambodia are conservative countries, so you should dress accordingly. As a general guideline, shoulders and knees should be covered when entering buildings of a religious nature and family homes. We recommend you pack a variety of light-to-medium weight clothing, plus rainwear in case of cooler or wet weather. Layers are a good option to cover a range of temperatures and to suit changing conditions. The dress code is casual light. Comfortable clothing is ideal for during the day, but smart casual clothing for evenings on board the ship is recommended. You may wish to bring something a little dressier for the welcome and farewell dinners. There will be no black tie or formal evenings. Smart or casual clothing is acceptable at restaurants.

Comfortable footwear is a must, as most excursions involve walking over uneven ground, on steps or ramps to embark/disembark the ship and/or coaches and climbing into smaller boats. When entering temples and pagodas, shoes may need to be removed, therefore we recommend footwear that are easily removeable and wearing temple socks for comfort.

Travel Documents

- Passport and visas (if required).
- Travel insurance policy including policy number and 24-hour emergency contact number.
- Travel vaccination certificates (if required).
- Airline tickets and/or boarding pass, APT itinerary and Essential Information (electronically).
- Wallet or money belt (cash, credit cards, bank cards).
- Photocopies of important documents, such as spare passport photos, important addresses and contact numbers.

Personal Items

- Backpack (extra layers, water, rain gear, snacks, sunglasses, small umbrella etc.)
- Reusable water bottle.
- Medications and copies of prescriptions.
- Sunscreen, lip balm, hand sanitiser, sunglasses and sunhat.
- Clear zip-lock plastic bag to contain all liquids, gels, and aerosols from inside your carry-on luggage.
- Antibacterial gel or wipes.
- Travel-size toiletries (shampoo, conditioner, soap, body lotion, insect repellent).
- Smart casual clothing such as long/short-sleeved shirts, jeans, trousers, shorts, skirts, socks, underwear and sleepwear.
- Comfortable footwear such as sneakers, and temple socks.
- Windproof jacket.

Travel Accessories:

- Electronics such as mobile phones, smart tablets, and/or laptops.
- Camera, memory card and charger.
- USB stick for sharing photos and images.
- Plug adaptor and current converter for the country you are travelling to.

VALUABLES AND SECURITY

Do not take anything with you that will create emotional or financial hardship if lost or stolen. Carry all documents, money, passport and tickets with you. Do not carry these important items in your suitcase. You may find a money belt (worn inside clothing) useful while travelling. Never leave handheld luggage unattended or out of sight in hotel lobbies or dining rooms. Avoid solo exploration of unfamiliar streets or areas. You should also avoid excessive displays of jewellery or cash. When sightseeing, keep all valuables locked in the safe in your room or suite.

Before you Depart

GENERAL PHYSICAL FITNESS

A good level of fitness and health is required to participate on APT's holiday packages. Some destinations require walking on uneven ground, and climbing stairs and steep inclines. In Vietnam and Cambodia, you may also encounter the strong heat and humidity.

Getting on/off the ship

While on the Mekong River cruise or Ha Long Bay cruise, you may be required to climb into smaller boats to be transferred to shore. We may dock at ports lacking infrastructure which may require you to walk up and down embankments. It is your responsibility to advise APT of any pre-existing medical conditions that may affect the normal conduct of a holiday package, your enjoyment and that of other guests. You may be required to fill out a Health, Fitness and Mobility questionnaire to assist APT in assessing your abilities.

Get Walking

In the lead up to your trip, we recommend you start walking three times a week. Build up to walking an hour at a time and include some stairs or inclines. This will ensure you have the stamina and energy to see and appreciate all the sights your tour has to offer. You should ensure your walking shoes fit properly and have been broken in prior to departure.

See your GP

We recommend you consult your GP or local travel clinic for detailed advice to ensure maximum pre-travel preparation. Please take a copy of your travel itinerary with you to assist with the recommendations and ask your doctor to prepare your medical history for a foreign doctor. It should include your name, address, emergency contact, blood type, medical history, current medications and dosages, drug allergies, reasons for prior hospitalisation, and a list of vaccinations and dates. A copy of your prescriptions is vital in case of any health problems.

It is also a good idea to bring a copy of your prescription for glasses or contact lenses.

Medications

Prepare a list of your medications, including the name, dosage, prescribing doctor, and their phone number. Pack sufficient medication for the duration of your tour. Your medication should be kept close at hand in your purse or carry-on bag. It is always good to carry a list of your medications in case they are lost and remember to leave everything in its original container so it can be easily identified. If you are taking any prescription medicines, we recommend that you take a picture of the medicine box to ensure that should this be required on tour by a medical professional it is readily available.

Vaccinations

Vaccinations may be required for travel to Vietnam and Cambodia. We recommend you consult your GP or travel clinic prior to your travels for the latest travel vaccinations and medical advice no less than 8-10 weeks before departing.

COVID-19 Requirements

Before you travel, ensure that you check the latest Government travel requirements and APT updates ([aptouring.com.au/about-us/travel-updates](https://www.aptouring.com.au/about-us/travel-updates)) which include on tour protocols and the obligations which may apply to customers departing on tours.

Allergies

APT requires you to advise them of any allergies or dietary requirements when the booking is created as well as your Tour Director upon arrival, as most suppliers require advance notice to cater for your condition. APT will pass these requirements on to the relevant suppliers but cannot guarantee that it will be able to be accommodated. In some cases you might be asked to fill out a form or waiver.

At the Airport and In the Air

Reconfirmation of Flights

You are no longer required to confirm flights directly with the airline or your travel agent prior to travel, however, we recommend you check your booking directly on the airline's website to ensure there have been no last-minute schedule changes. Your airline booking number can be found at the top of your e-ticket.

Check-In

It is important that you arrive at the airport at least two hours before domestic flights and three hours in advance for international flights. This will allow you time to check your baggage, present your passport and ticket, get seat assignments and boarding passes, and make your way through security procedures to the boarding area. Please ensure you arrive at the airport at the correct time. Early morning flights may require you to check in the day before. Airlines have little leniency if flights are missed.

Internal Flights

Flights within Vietnam or between Cambodia are included in the tour price as stated on your itinerary. These flights are booked by APT's ground operator, and the flight details will not appear on your final documentation. Your Tour Director or local guide will carry all necessary documents for these flights. Please note all flights included in your tour are in economy class and a luggage limit of 20-23kg. If this weight is exceeded, an excess luggage fee may be charged at the time of check-in for each flight.

Checked Luggage Restrictions

International airlines may impose fees or require you to remove articles if weight or size limits are exceeded. We recommend that you carefully check your airline ticket for maximum luggage allowance on each flight.

Hand/Carry-On Luggage Restrictions

For your comfort, limit hand luggage to one bag that fits under your aircraft seat or in the overhead compartment. Make sure you have your passport, airline tickets, medication and all your travel documents with you in your hand luggage. For security reasons, keep all unchecked luggage in your immediate possession. Unattended luggage can be confiscated by airport personnel.

Luggage Tags

It is imperative that you attach a luggage label to the outside of your suitcase for clear identification should the bag be misplaced. It is also a good idea to put a label with your name, address and telephone number on the inside of your suitcase and hand luggage.

Lost or Delayed Luggage

Sometimes luggage is delayed during air transit. It is recommended to take a change of clothing and any essential medication in your hand luggage or pack some clothing in your travel companion's bag. Place a copy of the hotel contacts inside each piece of luggage. If your luggage is lost, this will help the airline find you. Should your luggage be delayed, it is the responsibility of the airline to deliver it to you. Claims for reimbursement should be submitted directly to the airline – a claim form should be filled out at the appropriate airline desk upon arrival. If you need assistance in contacting the airline for information regarding your delayed luggage, please ask your Tour Director or local guide.

Airport and Airline Security

The following is based on information issued by the Australian Government regarding liquid, aerosol and gel restrictions on flights. These rules concern flights coming into and departing Australia only. We advise you to check with your airline for clarification of regulations before you leave. Sharp objects and liquids should be stored inside the luggage you are checking in. Each container of liquids, aerosols or gels in your carry-on luggage must be 100ml or less and sealed in a transparent, one-litre (or less) resealable plastic bag. You may carry through prescription and non-prescription medicines that you need for the flight. Proof of need may be required. Items allowed include empty containers, cosmetics and toiletries such as personal hygiene items, talcum powder, contact lenses and lens solution, solid foods, medicines including prescribed and essential non-prescribed medication.

Delayed or Missed Flights

In the unfortunate event that you miss your flight or that you are delayed substantially, please advise the airline representative that you are booked on a group tour with a specific start location, date and time. Be sure to advise APT of your new travel arrangements immediately.

Customs

To prevent the introduction of exotic pests and diseases on your return home, arriving travellers are screened and luggage is often inspected or x-rayed by customs or quarantine officers. All food and other such items of plant and/or animal origin need to be declared. Travellers should also declare items on which duty or tax might be payable (check with customs about the duty-free concession).

During your flight

- Wear loose clothing and comfortable shoes.
- Eat light meals, drink plenty of water, and minimise caffeine and alcohol consumption.
- Alleviate pressure in your ears by chewing gum, yawning, swallowing, or gently blowing your nose.
- Pack a light moisturiser and apply it frequently during/after your flight to prevent feeling dry.
- Avoid wearing contact lenses during your flight because aircraft cabin air tends to dry them out.
- To avoid swollen legs and to reduce the risk of deep vein thrombosis, wear knee-length flight socks for all long-haul flights and walk up and down the aisle to stretch your legs and get blood circulating.
- You could also do a few isometric exercises while seated (refer to your inflight magazine for recommended exercises).
- To avoid jetlag, try to arrive early in the morning and try to sleep during your flight so you can stay awake until the evening upon arrival. This will help you adapt to the new time zone.
- If you wish to get some rest before the cabin lights are reduced, an eye mask comes in particularly handy.



Rice Fields, Mai Chau, Vietnam

Arrival and Departure Information

Airport Transfers

If you have arrival transfers confirmed, you will be welcomed upon arrival by a local representative, who will be holding an APT sign. If you cannot locate your transfer representative, refer to your itinerary for the relevant contact number to call. If you miss the pre-booked transfers, you must make your own way to/from the hotel at your own expense.

Fast Track Arrival Service

Fast Track on Arrival service is included for tours starting in Vietnam where you meet the APT transfer requirements. You will be met by a representative upon disembarking the aircraft and guided through customs and immigration upon meeting your transfer representative.

To ensure you receive the Arrival, Departure transfers and Fast Track service you must have advised APT your flight details no later than 60 days prior to your departure. If flight details are not provided by this time, we cannot guarantee the Fast Track on Arrival service and the airport transfers. Transfers cannot be re-routed to other pick-up points or destinations. No refund will be given for unused transfers.

Transfers not arranged by APT

If you have independent travel arrangements prior to your APT tour and do not have an APT transfer, the tourist information office at your arrival airport will be able to offer further assistance with directions to your hotel. All hotel addresses and contact details are outlined towards the end of your personalised itinerary. You will not be eligible for the Fast Track service upon arriving into Vietnam.

HOTEL INFORMATION

Your accommodation is one of the most important elements of your holiday. This is why we have carefully chosen the best hotels on offer for your tour, to complement your level of touring. We are proud to provide superior accommodation with the highest levels of comfort, service and cuisine available. You will enjoy ample time to experience each spectacular region you visit. In the more remote locations, hotel standards may vary, but we always provide the best accommodation available. If you have special requirements such as a preference for adjoining rooms, double beds or ground floor access and have not advised us, please contact us as soon as possible.

Check-In: Hotel check-in time is generally 2pm local time, but where possible, the hotel will try and have your room available earlier. If your flight arrives in the morning, luggage can be dropped off at the hotel before check-in and stored until your room is ready.

Check-Out: Check-out times may vary, however, they are usually at 11am or noon. If you have a late afternoon or evening flight,

most hotels have a luggage room where you can store luggage until your departure and may charge a fee. A hotel day room may also be arranged with the hotel directly at an additional cost (subject to availability).

Safety Deposit Box: All hotel rooms are equipped with a personal safe. It is recommended that you place your valuables in the safe when away from your room.

CRUISE INFORMATION

Upstream Itinerary

Ho Chi Minh City – Siem Reap

Cruise registration: From 10am to 12pm

Cruise check-out in Siem Reap: From 8am

Disembark ship in Kampong Cham from 8am and arrive in Siem Reap from 1.30pm

Downstream Itinerary

Siem Reap – Ho Chi Minh City

Cruise registration: From 7.30am to 8.30am

Cruise check-out: From 8am

Disembark ship in My Tho from 8am and arrive in Ho Chi Minh from 10.30am

Siem Reap to Kampong Cham Port (vice versa) is approximately a five-hour coach journey with two toilet breaks.

CRUISE ONLY GUESTS (VEMR08/VEM08)

You will not be able to make your own way to the port to board the cruise ship. You will need to make your way to the APT tour hotel either in Siem Reap or Ho Chi Minh City. Please refer to your itinerary for hotel details.

Upstream Itinerary

Flights must arrive in Ho Chi Minh City by 8am for the 10am cruise registration (a pre-tour night is recommended).

Flights must depart Siem Reap after 5pm.

Downstream Itinerary

Flights must arrive in Siem Reap the day prior (a pre-tour night is required) as Cruise Registration is from 7.30am.

Flights must depart Ho Chi Minh City after 2pm.

*Please Note: Cruise registration are subject to change without notice, please refer to your itinerary or calling your booking agent.



Ta Prohm Temple, Cambodia

General Information

TOUR DIRECTOR

Your Tour Director is a highly trained industry professional, committed to making your holiday memorable. Their informed and entertaining commentary will showcase their passion for and knowledge of the area and, backed by APT's dedicated support staff, their organisational skills will ensure that your trip is truly hassle-free. From the moment you join the tour, nothing is too much trouble. They are on hand to ensure your comfort, take care of all arrangements and answer any queries.

COACH SAFETY

You must always remain seated while the coach is in motion. Hand luggage and other personal items should be safely stored in the overhead luggage racks or under your seat to keep the aisles clear. Heavy items, such as bottles, should not be stored overhead. You will not be permitted to remain on the coach during stops. Do not leave any valuable items on the coach. Please watch the stairs and overhead entrances when descending from the coach, and check for traffic when exiting. Please follow these safety precautions and note all emergency exits.

GUEST FEEDBACK

As part of APT's commitment to providing quality touring experiences, we welcome and encourage your feedback. Towards the end of your cruise, your Tour Director will ask you to complete a paper feedback form. Towards the end of your land touring, your Tour Director will ask you to complete an Electronic Traveller feedback form. Please take the time to answer the questions on each form and make relevant comments. Every feedback form is read at APT's Head Office and a summary of each tour is given to all members of APT management. Where necessary, relevant action is taken to rectify any problems.

GRATUITIES

On all APT holidays, gratuities to your Tour/Cruise Director, ship crew (Mekong River and Ha Long Bay), local guides, drivers, as well as portage and restaurant service staff are included in your holiday package. If you wish to reward any individual for service above and beyond then this is at your own discretion. Should you purchase additional services or additional touring that is not organised by APT, you will be expected to tip on top of the bill provided. In general, the expected tip is between 10-15% and may appear on a bill as a service charge.

CREDIT CARDS

Credit cards are not generally accepted at markets or at smaller stores in either Vietnam or Cambodia. If you are planning on taking a pre-loaded travel card, which can be used as a debit card, please ensure that you also take a standard credit card with you. While the visa debit card may work at most ATMs for withdrawals, it may not always work in shops and on the ships. We recommend obtaining local currency of the country you are visiting prior to departure as some ATMs may not be available in smaller towns.

INTERNET ACCESSIBILITY

Internet accessibility and connectivity in Vietnam and Cambodia have seen significant improvements in recent years, but there are still variations in terms of availability and quality. Vietnam has made remarkable progress in expanding internet access across the country. Broadband internet is widely accessible in urban areas, with high-speed connections and 4G mobile networks. Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi have good coverage and strong connectivity options. However, in rural areas, including your Mekong River cruise, internet access can be limited, and connection speeds may be slower.

Similarly, Cambodia has witnessed significant advancements in internet infrastructure. Major cities, including Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, have reliable internet connectivity with access to 4G networks. However, in rural areas, internet access is limited, and connection speeds may be slower and unreliable.

MINORS

Minors under the age of 18 travelling to foreign countries must be accompanied by an adult and have a notarised letter of consent

signed by the parent(s) not travelling with them. Parents, guardians and chaperones are responsible for overseeing the conduct of minors in their care. Minors may not be left unsupervised at any time on the tour. A parent or legal guardian must accompany minors on all tours for safety and liability reasons. Children under 12 years of age are not permitted on tours and cruises. Please feel free to contact the APT Reservations Team for more information.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

With your final documentation, we have provided you with some important phone numbers and other information. APT's local representatives are also available to assist with any needs, that may arise while you are on tour.

In an emergency, your family/friends can call APT during normal business hours on:

Australia: 1300 336 932 or +61 3 8526 1300

New Zealand: 0800 223 368

SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES

These exclusive or unique events are designed to deepen your experience, taking you on an inspiring journey beneath the surface of local history, culture and traditions.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE™

Freedom of Choice Sightseeing and Dining Inclusions are uniquely available on all APT tours. Mix and match a selection of cultural, culinary, relaxed and adventurous experiences. Go with something gourmet one day and get active the next. Or immerse yourself in ancient towns and opulent architecture, then relax and be pampered.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE™ SIGHTSEEING INCLUSIONS

With APT's Freedom of Choice Sightseeing Inclusions, whether it's a guided walking tour through a city or town or a culinary experience designed to tantalise your tastebuds, choose how you want to explore selected destinations. For the explorers, adventurers and outdoor lovers, we offer you thrilling rides on the back of a motorbike, or alternatively, it's always nice to have some time to put your feet up and indulge in a rejuvenating treatment at a luxury day spa.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE™ DINING INCLUSIONS

APT's Freedom of Choice Dining concept means that some evenings you have the choice of where to dine. The restaurants we have chosen, offer a variety of cuisines including local Classical Khmer, French-Khmer, Asian Fusion, Vietnamese and some Western cuisine.



Phnom Penh Royal Palace, Cambodia

Staying Healthy on Tour

It's important for you to be as healthy as possible before you travel, and to maintain your health by applying good hygiene practices while on tour. Respiratory and gastrointestinal illnesses, while usually minor in nature, can spread rapidly within a tour group, and have a major impact on everyone's enjoyment. APT is committed to reducing the spread of infections on all tours, and asks that you read and follow APT recommendations, to ensure a healthy, safe and enjoyable holiday for yourself and your fellow travellers.

APT HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOL

APT has created Health and Safety as well as COVID-19 protocols that all our Tour Directors are required to adhere to. You may be requested to assist in reducing the spread of viruses if you are showing symptoms while on tour. If you are showing symptoms of a cold or a virus while on tour, you may be asked to wear a face mask, have meals in your room instead of the dining room, or remain in your room until the symptoms improve.

Practice Good Hygiene:

- Washing your hands is the most effective way to reduce the risk of contracting and spreading infections.
- Health experts recommend you wash your hands often with hot water and soap for 20 seconds or longer before eating, after sneezing or coughing, and after touching high-contact surfaces (such as doorknobs, elevator buttons and railings).
- Please be mindful of your fellow travellers with respect to coughing, sneezing and the disposal of used tissues.
- We recommend you bring your own hand sanitiser for personal use when in airports on your coach, train or touring.

Colds and Flu

Viral respiratory infections are the most common infectious illnesses affecting travellers. Colds and flu are primarily spread by people coughing, so please practice hygiene and respiratory courtesy – wash your hands often, cover your coughs and sneezes, and use anti-bacterial wipes/hand sanitiser frequently i.e., after excursions, prior to meals and throughout the day. The flu vaccine protects against influenza virus, which is commonly contracted while travelling overseas. You should discuss this with your GP.

Sun Exposure and Dehydration

Weather conditions will be variable on tour. Drinking plenty of water is important to prevent dehydration. A hat and high-quality sunscreen are important for preventing sunburn, even on overcast days. Please ensure you bring a refillable water bottle to ensure you keep hydrated.

Water and Food Safety

Tap water in Vietnam and Cambodia is generally not recommended to drink. Be mindful of different meals you will consume day to day while on holiday. It's a good idea to pack some medicine to alleviate symptoms should you experience an upset stomach from eating foods that are not usually a part of your regular diet.

Water Bottles

APT is committed to reducing waste, the use of plastic water bottles and the environmental impact of APT tours. As such, water refill stations

are available in the hotels, in larger vehicles and on board the Mekong River cruise. We encourage you to bring your own refillable water bottle or alternatively purchase one in country.

Street Food

When visiting countries where you are unsure about general hygiene practice, please take care if buying food from street vendors or in small restaurants away from your hotel, cruise ship or recommended venues. At these places, avoid raw fruit and vegetables, dairy products (including ice-cream) as well as meat and fish not properly cooked. It is generally safe to eat cooked meats and vegetables prepared in tourist hotels and tourist area restaurants. Fruit that you peel yourself is considered safe. You can feel safe eating anything served to you at the tour hotels and while on board your cruise. Avoid buying alcohol from street vendors.

Gastro and Traveller's Diarrhoea

Traveller's diarrhoea is the second most common infectious illness affecting travellers. The illness can be due to a number of different bugs including viruses and bacteria. Viral gastroenteritis is generally spread by person-to-person contact, whereas bacterial gastroenteritis is generally spread from consuming contaminated food or water. Symptoms can include fever, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and abdominal pain. The incubation for the illness is variable depending on the cause. Symptoms are generally self-limiting and treatment includes rest, rehydration, simple diet, anti-nausea and anti-diarrhoeal medications. Antibiotics are generally reserved for use when symptoms are more severe or protracted, e.g., fever, abdominal pain, bloody diarrhoea or duration of symptoms for more than two days. Strict personal hygiene measures, particularly hand washing, helps protect you from getting sick and spreading the infection to others.

Avoiding Malaria

See your GP or visit a travel clinic at least eight weeks before you travel for your recommended vaccines and/or malaria medication. Whether or not you are taking anti-malarial medication, it is important to protect yourself from mosquito bites, especially at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.

Precautionary measures include:

- Using a DEET-based insect repellent.
- Mosquitoes are generally attracted to dark colours. Wearing light-coloured clothing also has the advantage of keeping you cooler in the summer heat.
- Covering as much of your skin as possible. Wearing long-sleeved shirts, long trousers, socks and shoes.
- Wearing clothes made of tightly woven fabric, which mosquitoes are unable to penetrate.
- Wearing loose-fitting clothing so that mosquitoes cannot bite through to your skin, however, not too loose or they could fly up sleeves and down collars.
- Avoid wearing perfume or cologne as these are known to attract mosquitoes.
- Please be aware that Doxycycline, a commonly prescribed antimalarial medication, can cause gastritis and sun sensitivity.



Ha Long Bay, Vietnam

Mekong Serenity

Step aboard a brand-new, state-of-the-art ship and glide along the mighty Mekong river in style. Aboard the new and spacious Mekong Serenity River ship traverse Asia's waterways and discover the ever-changing scenery from your own private balcony.

SHIP SCHEDULE

The ship will sail promptly from each port in accordance with its cruising schedule. The ship is unable to delay departures for guests who may not be on board. Unless you are on a shore excursion accompanied by an appointed guide, it is your responsibility to make your own way to rejoin the ship at a subsequent stop. Without limitation, APT is not liable for any costs incurred if you miss the ship's departure for any reason.

DAILY PROGRAM

The ship's daily program features information about daily activities, shore excursions, tour departure times and more. This is available at the reception desk.

BORDER CROSSING POINT

Vietnam: Song Tien Landport.

DISRUPTION TO THE ITINERARY

Under normal operating conditions, itineraries will be delivered as per usual. If conditions render any routes unsafe for navigation, APT reserves the right to provide alternative services including, but not limited to, accommodation on the docked ship or substitute land arrangements. We recommend you take out comprehensive travel insurance that covers direct or indirect costs that you incur as a result of an event or factor beyond APT's control. Additionally, you are not entitled to any refund for any alterations to your itinerary that are caused or contributed to by any flood events or such other events that are beyond APT's control. For further information, please refer to your APT brochure.

NOISE AND VIBRATION

While the Operators make efforts to reduce noise and vibration on the ship, you acknowledge and agree that some level of noise and vibration may be present on the ship.

DOCKING POSITION

During port stops, river cruise ships may be docked side by side, obstructing views and requiring you to pass through other ships to embark and disembark. River ships may moor overnight midstream rather than at a port. Ports are not official docking facilities, and your river cruise ship will moor alongside embankments.

ONBOARD INFORMATION

Dining

All meals on board your cruises are included and are prepared by APT onboard chefs. Meals are served in the dining room in a single seating. No table reservations can be made in the main restaurant. On board, early risers are able to enjoy juice, coffee, teas, fruit and pastries. Each morning, breakfast will be served in the main restaurant. Lunch consists of salads, soups, and a choice of entrées, mains and desserts. Dinner is a multi-course meal, presenting a selection of entrées, mains and desserts. Casual dining is also available. You may dine once at the alternative onboard restaurant, Indochine, where you will savour a five-course dinner. Limited seating is available each night. Bookings to be made on board.

Beverages

On board the Mekong Serenity, coffee and tea are available free of charge throughout the day and during meals. A selection of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages are available all day. Clean drinking water is also provided all day, so a reusable water bottle is highly recommended. French Champagne, premium spirits and selected wines are offered at an additional cost.

Reception

The ship's reception will be available during the day. Should you need any assistance, please call from your suite or pay them a visit during reception hours. The Cruise Director and Hotel Manager will provide a contact number for outside of hours.

Onboard Account

Your accounts are settled at the end of your cruise. Credit card is the preferred method of payment; however, your account can also be settled by cash (US dollars only). Prepaid Cash Cards, Diners Club Cards, or EFTPOS are not accepted. It is important to note that if you are taking a Travel Card pre-loaded with local currency or USD that while it can be used the same way as a credit card, some credit card facilities in Vietnam and Cambodia do not have the ability to process these cards as such. APT recommends that these cards are not the only credit cards you bring with you.

Internet

The Mekong Serenity is equipped with internet facilities, and wireless internet (Wi-Fi) is also available. As all ships use a satellite system and due to the remoteness of the cruise, the service may not always be available. Routing may cause reception to be restricted at times in certain areas.



Mekong Serenity

Swimming Pool

There is a swimming pool located on the Lotus Deck on board the Mekong Serenity. There is no lifeguard available. Please refer to the welcome information in your cabin for hours of operation.

Fitness Centre

The fitness room is outfitted with basic and limited exercise equipment and is available to all guests. Use of the equipment is at sole risk of the user. There is no attendant on duty in the fitness centre. Please refer to the welcome information in your cabin for hours of operation. APT and its affiliates are not responsible for any accident or injury sustained during the use of the exercise equipment on board.

Medical Assistance

Medical services are not available and there are no medical personnel on board the ships in Vietnam. Medical services can be accessed from shore as your ship is usually close to a town. Guests are responsible for all charges that result from visiting a medical facility, or from a medical practitioner visiting the ship. APT is not responsible for the type or quality of the medical services you may receive. For this reason, we recommend travel insurance.

Beauty and Recreation

Enjoy the services of the APT hair stylist, massage and beauty therapists who will pamper you and rejuvenate your spirit while you're on board, for an additional charge. An extensive massage and treatments menu is available on board.

Laundry

All guests will enjoy the laundering of two garments per person, per day. Additional laundry services are available on board and the price lists will be available in the suite. Clothes cannot be dry-cleaned on board. Self-service laundry facilities are not available on board. For safety reasons, you cannot use an iron in the suite. Please note that due to the remoteness of the cruise, the prices can be higher than standard.

Library

The ship has a book collection available to all guests, free of charge. Please return any books that you have borrowed before the end of the cruise. The ship also appreciates book donations.

Onboard Shop

The Mekong Serenity has an onboard boutique offering a limited selection of Vietnamese and Cambodian souvenirs, as well as a small selection of personal and toiletry items.

Audio Guides

During excursions, APT lightweight headsets allow you to hear every word of your guides commentary.

SUITE INFORMATION

Bedding Configuration

All suites on the ship can be configured as either Double or Twin share. Your preference will be noted at the time of booking.

Butler Service

Aboard the Mekong Serenity, the following services are available to guests in select suites.

Silver Butler Service: Guests in Bayon Suites will enjoy Silver Butler Service. Benefits include the laundering or pressing of two garments per person, per day, shoe shining, a daily fruit platter, the booking of appointments, and one spa treatment per person, per cruise.

Gold Butler Service: Guests in Angkor Suites will enjoy Gold Butler Service. Benefits include a packing and unpacking service, the laundering or pressing of two garments per person, per day, shoe shining, one bottle of French champagne, a daily fruit platter and pre-dinner canapés, tea and coffee service, the booking of appointments, and one spa treatment per person, per cruise.

In-Room Entertainment

In each suite on board the ship, there is a flat-panel TV with a range of channels. TV reception may vary depending on the remoteness of the ship's location.

Telephone

Each suite has its own telephone, which may be used to call within the ship.

Air Conditioning and Heating

All suites on board the Mekong Serenity have individual climate control.

Adaptors and Electricity

Electricity is 220V on board your river ship and throughout Vietnam and Cambodia. A plug adaptor is necessary if you plan to bring appliances from home. Please note, the ship has European sockets.

Hair Dryer

Each suite is equipped with a hair dryer.

Bathroom Amenities

Shampoo, conditioner, soap and body wash are provided.

Safety Deposit Box

All suites are equipped with a safe and it is recommended that you place your valuables inside. Items that exceed the size of your safe can be checked into the ship's safe, located at reception.

Additional Suite Amenities

Each suite has a minibar that is stocked with soft drinks and local beer, replenished daily.

Housekeeping

APT housekeeping staff will attend to your suite twice daily. Should you require any additional housekeeping requests, please contact reception for any assistance.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted anywhere inside the ship. Smoking is only permitted on the Orchid Deck. Smoking in your cabin, including your balcony is not permitted.

Learn About Your Destination

It may be useful to do some research on the locations you will be visiting. Familiarise yourself with the cities and towns mentioned in your itinerary, the language spoken and transport information. The more you know about a destination, the more you will appreciate all that you will see. During your travels, you will encounter new customs, different lifestyles and environments. This process of discovery and understanding is one of the many benefits of travelling. Despite language barriers, a smile is universal. Friendliness and tolerance towards others, including your fellow travellers, Tour Director and driver is essential for everyone's enjoyment on tour.

SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Vietnam and Cambodia are developing countries and as a result there may be times when you may want to contribute to the communities and people you visit. There is absolutely no obligation to do this but as a responsible tourism operator we would like to make some suggestions. We are proud to bring this vibrant region to you as well as providing you with an experience of a lifetime, we take very seriously the responsibility to leave the region better off for APT's visit. APT believes that all children should be encouraged to attend school, rather than beg for gifts and treats from the tourist trade, which may prove more lucrative for them in the short term but creates a reliance on others to survive. APT has a list of recommended organisations to support through the established OneTomorrow Charitable Fund. OneTomorrow is the APT Travel Group's (ATG) not-for-profit charitable fund. More details and information can be found at www.onetomorrow.com.au

VIETNAM

Culture and People

The Chinese, Indian and French presence throughout Vietnam's history reflect the diversity of its customs, food and spiritual practices. During your journey, you'll find that people are receptive to foreigners and will welcome you warmly. They love to share a joke and their story with you. There is little evidence of animosity as a result of the Vietnam War. A healthy curiosity does however exist in regard to westerners, and you may find yourself frequently engaged in conversation with the locals wanting to practice their English.

Vietnamese Cuisine

Vietnamese cuisine is a harmonious fusion of flavours, with dishes known for their freshness and balance. From the iconic pho and bánh mì to the fragrant rice paper rolls and flavourful noodle dishes, Vietnamese cuisine celebrates the use of herbs, spices, and vibrant ingredients to create truly memorable dining experiences. Traditional Vietnamese cooking is greatly admired for its fresh ingredients, minimal use of dairy and oil, complementary textures, and reliance on herbs and vegetables. With the balance between fresh herbs and meats and a selective use of spices to reach a fine taste, Vietnamese food is considered one of the healthiest cuisines worldwide.

Language

Vietnamese is the official language of Vietnam. English is becoming popular in Vietnam, however some elderly people still speak French as a result of past colonial rule and there are still French shop signs in some places in southern Vietnam.

Useful Phrases (Vietnam)

English	Vietnamese	Phonetic
Hello	Xin Chau	Sin Chow
Goodbye	Tạm Biệt	Tum be-et
Yes	Vâng	Vung
No	Không	Kom
Please	Xin vui lòng	Sin voeey lom
Thank you	Cảm ơn	Gum Urn
Too expensive	Quá đắt	Muk Kwah
Delicious	Ngon	N'yom

Currency

Vietnam's official currency is Dong. When travelling to Vietnam it is recommended to take Vietnamese Dong as it is more likely accepted at smaller markets/stores along the Mekong River. Alternatively, US dollars may provide you with the best exchange rate when converting to local currency. It is a good idea to have smaller denominations of US dollars (\$1, \$5 and \$10) as some of the smaller vendors may not be able to provide you with change for larger notes. Please ensure your US currency is in good condition as sellers may not accept dirty or torn notes.

Banking

Banks are open during the following hours: 8am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday, 8am to 12.30pm Saturday. ATMs are found in most major cities and operate on a 24-hour basis giving out local currency. Check with your bank that your card is capable of working in ATMs outside of your home country as well as any possible bank fees for withdrawals.

Bargaining

Bargaining or bartering does not have to be a daunting experience, this is a part of everyday life throughout most of Asia, and locals both expect and enjoy it. Here are some tips to assist with getting the best price at local markets.

Relax & Smile

Don't let this process stress or annoy you. If you treat it like a game, the chances are the vendors will offer you a fair price. Stay calm, keep smiling and enjoy the experience.

Start Low

The vendor is always going to ask for an over-the-top price to begin with. As a general rule, take 50–60% off what they have asked for and work your way up to an agreed price.

Don't Feel Guilty

Remember, it may seem like a cheap price to you, but in the end, if the vendor is not happy with the price, they will not sell it to you.

Time

Vietnam and Cambodia: Three hours (or four hours during Day Light Savings) behind Australian Eastern Standard Time, five hours behind New Zealand Standard Time and seven hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time.

Weather

Vietnam is a diverse country, spanning several climatic zones. Southern Vietnam is always humid. From May to October, the south (Ho Chi Minh City) weathers a wet season comprising daily, heavy – but short-lived and predictable – afternoon rain showers, which break up the otherwise hot and humid days. Temperatures are on average in the low 30s. From November to April, the dry season is sunny and humid, and sunscreen and hats are highly recommended. Weather patterns in central Vietnam (Hoi An and Hue) can vary tremendously due to the nearby Truong Son mountain range. The north of Vietnam (Hanoi) has a very distinct summer, running from May to October, and is subject to occasional monsoons at this time during winter months, from November through to April, temperatures in the low teens are not uncommon. February and March can be damp and subject to drizzling rain.

Discover Vietnam

Hanoi

Vietnam's beautiful and enchanting capital of Hanoi, is a charming city rich in Vietnamese legend and tradition. The tangled streets of Hanoi's Old Quarter provides an alluring and idyllic atmosphere, where pretty tree-lined boulevards and the fading facades of grand villas allude to a French colonial past. The well-preserved traditional temples, meanwhile, lend a gracious flavour to this beautiful city.

Mai Chau

For a truly authentic experience, we veer off the beaten path to Mai Chau. This remote farming community in the country's north-west feels world's away from Vietnam's bustling cities. Explore the scenic valley on foot or by bicycle, bypassing emerald rice fields, rolling mountains and tranquil villages home to several ethnic groups including the White Thai and H'mong.

Ha Long Bay

Carefully sculpted over millions of years, Ha Long Bay is one of nature's most inspiring displays. Covering an area of approximately 1,550 square kilometres and comprising around 2,000 individual islets, this magnificent World Heritage-listed natural wonder is without a doubt one of Vietnam's most beautiful regions. Thousands of limestone karsts and tiny islets, most of which are uninhabited and untouched by humans, can be seen rising from the stunning waters.

Ho Chi Minh City

This southern metropolis is a buzzing city of commerce. With 8.4 million people, it is Vietnam's largest city and seems to explode with noise and chaos. Renamed Ho Chi Minh City after the Viet Cong victory, this city is simply fascinating to explore. Colourful markets appear around every corner and mopeds swarm the streets.

Hoi An

Situated on the south-central coast of Vietnam, this former trading centre became a popular tourist destination in the mid-1990s and received World Heritage-listed status in 1999. Hoi An's Old Town is exceptionally well preserved, and is certainly a cultural highlight for tourists. The absence of cars from its historic streets makes it a perfect place to spend time taking in the sights on foot.

Mekong River

Flowing from Tibet through China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia into Vietnam, the Mekong River is known for its rice production, alluring landscapes and rural communities. The banks of the river are lined with local villages, some of which are no more than a collection of bamboo structures designed to provide shelter for farmers and fishermen.

CAMBODIA

Culture and People

Smiling faces, warm welcomes, and fascinating stories reward travellers in Cambodia. The country has opened its arms to tourists, and in its main cities, such as Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, English is readily spoken. Head into the provinces, and you'll see people engaged in the rhythm of rural life and time-honoured traditions. While the unique blend of Khmer beliefs, as well as Buddhist and Hindu influences have shaped the people and culture of Cambodia.

Cambodian Cuisine

Khmer cuisine, the traditional food of Cambodia, offers a delightful combination of flavours and influences and is different to the other foods of Southeast Asia, so it's not the same as Thai or Vietnamese food. With an emphasis on fresh ingredients like lemongrass, galangal, and kaffir lime, Khmer dishes such as fish amok, curry, and banana blossom salads demonstrate the country's unique culinary traditions and diverse cultural heritage. Khmer cuisine has an emphasis on simplicity, freshness and seasonality.

Language

Khmer is the official language of Cambodia. English is becoming popular in Cambodia. Buddhist and Hindu influences have shaped the people and culture of Cambodia.

Useful Phrases (Cambodia)

English	Khmer	Phonetic
Hello	Suesday	Sues day (like Tuesday)
Goodbye	Lea	Lee-high
Yes (Male)	Baat	Baht
Yes (Female)	Yaa	Jar
No	Otayw	Ot-tay
Please	Soam	Somme
Thank you	Arkun	Or-gloon
Too expensive	Tly Nah	Clay-nah
Delicious	Ch'Ngun	Chnang

Currency

The official currency is the Cambodian Riel, however, they prefer US dollars to be used for all purchases. When withdrawing money from an ATM in Cambodia, US dollars will be dispensed. It is recommended

to carry smaller denominations of US dollars as it may be difficult to get change. Coins are not commonly used in Cambodia.

Banking

Banks are open during the following hours: 8am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday, 8am to 12.30pm Saturday. ATMs are found in most towns and operate on a 24-hour basis giving out local currency. Check with your bank that your card is capable of working in ATMs outside of your home country as well as any possible bank fees for withdrawals.

Time

Cambodia: Three hours behind Australian Eastern Standard Time, five hours behind New Zealand Standard Time and seven hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time.

Weather

As a tropical country, Cambodia is bathed in almost all-year sunshine and has a high average temperature. There are two distinct seasons, the dry and the monsoon. The monsoon lasts from May to October with south westerly winds ushering in the clouds that bring 75-80% of the annual rainfall often in spectacular intense bursts for an hour at a time with fantastic lightning displays. The dry season runs from November to April averaging temperatures from 27-40°C. The coolest and most comfortable for those from cooler climates are from October to January.

Discover Cambodia

Phnom Penh

Overlooking the banks of the Mekong River and Tonlé Sap River, Cambodia's capital offers a plethora of iconic landmarks, surrounded by beautiful scenery. Once known as the 'Paris of the East', this ethereal city is filled with French colonial buildings, beautiful temples and delicious food. You'll notice that Phnom Penh's Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda have retained their magnificence despite the region's war-ravaged past.

Siem Reap

Siem Reap is most famous for Angkor Archaeological Park – a vast complex of soaring towers, temples and exquisite sculptures. The city's mellow tree-lined streets, fascinating French-era shops, houses, gourmet delights and sprawling markets make a wonderful complement to the Angkor temples.

APT Travel Centres

Australia

Level 4, 1230 Nepean Highway,
Cheltenham, VIC 3192

P: 1300 278 278 (within Australia)

W: aptouring.com.au

New Zealand

Level 1, 20 Augustus Terrace,
Parnell, Auckland 1151

P: 0800 278 687 (within New Zealand)

W: aptouring.co.nz

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48 Warwick Street, London,
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P: 0800 012 6686 (within the UK)

W: aptouring.co.uk

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999 Canada Place, Vancouver,
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P: 1800 290 8687 (within North America)

W: aptouring.com



LUXURY TRAVEL

This document is designed as a guideline to assist you when preparing for your tour. Much of the information within is subject to change and while all care has been taken to ensure all information is correct at time of printing, we cannot take responsibility for any subsequent changes. Printed in Australia. Effective June 2024. Australian Pacific Touring Pty Ltd. ABN 44 004 684 619. ATAS accreditation #A10825. APT-5081

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