



WALKING VIETNAM & CAMBODIA 2013

CRUISING THE MEKONG



WALKING VIETNAM & CAMBODIA

January 11-23, 2013 * 13 Days * \$3975

Tour Pace: **1+**

Walk Challenge: **1+**

DAY 1: JAN 11: ARRIVE HO CHI MINH CITY (SAIGON), VIETNAM

Welcome to Vietnam! A WAI representative will meet you at the Ho Chi Minh City Tan Son Nhat International Airport as you exit customs and arrange transportation to our hotel in downtown Ho Chi Minh City. Since travelers are arriving from across the Pacific throughout the day and into the evening, no formal activities are planned for today.

DAY 2: JAN 12: ACTIVITIES FROM HO CHI MINH CITY (BLD)

Walk #1: Old Saigon Walk – 8 km (5 miles), rated 2

Walking Saigon offers an intriguing kaleidoscope of traditional Vietnamese markets; the Notre Dame Cathedral – holdover from the French occupation; the War Remnants Museum, uncomfortable reminder of the painful period we know as the Vietnam War; and a blend of the hustle and bustle of 4 million motorbikes amidst a fast-paced, hard-working culture.

DAY 3: JAN 13: SAILING: HO CHI MINH CITY (BLD)



This morning, we depart for the strange and fascinating Cu Chi Tunnels. Built during the Vietnam War to protect from bombing raids, the tunnels extend underground for over 212 km and range in depth from 3 to 12 meters! They feature the remnants of a living city: schools, community kitchens, sleeping quarters, and hospitals,

as well as military production facilities. In the afternoon, we visit the Presidential Palace (Reunification Palace), then board our floating hotel, the RV *Toum Tiou II*. After embarkation and welcome by the crew, we enjoy our first dinner aboard as our ship sets sail from Saigon for the mighty Mekong River.

DAY 4: JAN 14: SAILING: MY THO-THOI SON ISLAND, VIETNAM (BLD)

Walk #2a: My Tho/Thoi Son Island Walk – 7 km (4.5 miles), rated 1+

We cross the Cho Gao canal this morning, a buzzing body of water alive with all manner of shipping on all types of watercraft! A walk in My Tho ("Fragrant

Herb") explores a busy waterfront and takes us past markets selling all manner of goods. At Thoi Son Island, small boats transfer us to the island; here, our local guide leads us through the island, where we enjoy rural life, tropical foliage, and the ever-present smiles of the people.

DAY 5: JAN 15: SAILING: CAI BE - SA DEC, VIETNAM (BLD)

Walk #2b: Sa Dec Canal Walk – 3 km (2 miles), rated 1

This morning we board local sampans for a ride through the fascinating Cai Be floating markets where local farmers sell and trade their wares. Our small boats continue through narrow fingers of the Mekong waterway to Vinh Long, while life unfolds all around us on the river. After lunch aboard ship, the Mekong town of Sa Dec provides another chance to explore areas foreigners never see. Our walk venue is a small canal lined by homes, tiny bonsai farms, schools, and markets. Scenes of life in small town Vietnam are timeless and delightful.

DAY 6: JAN 16: SAILING: CHAU DOC – BORDER CROSSING – PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA (BLD)

Our morning visit to Chau Doc begins with a visit to a floating village and a community of the local Cham, a Muslim minority group. Then, relax aboard ship while our vessel goes through the (sometimes lengthy) border procedures allowing us into Cambodian waters. Embarking once more, we'll enjoy magnificent views as we continue sailing to bustling Phnom Penh, capital of Cambodia.



DAY 7: JAN 17: ACTIVITIES IN PHNOM PENH (BLD)

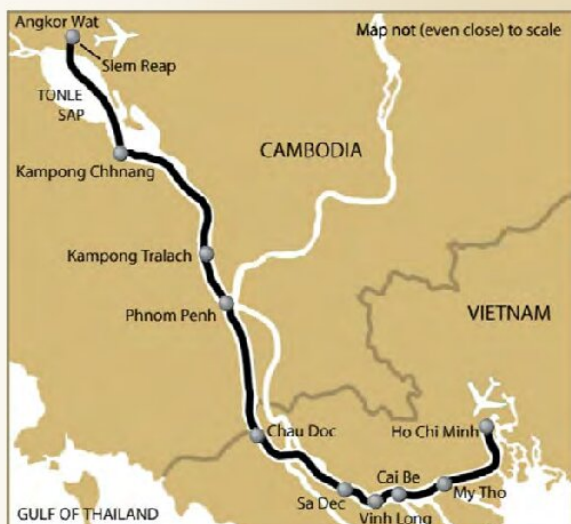
Walk #3: Phnom Penh Capital Walk – 8 km (5 miles), rated 1+

After breakfast, our walk through Phnom Penh introduces us to a city of Buddhist temples, remnants of French colonial architecture, and intriguing street activity indicative of Cambodia's struggle to establish a new post-Khmer Rouge identity. Our walk finishes with a tour of the National Museum, repository of Cambodia's past glories. Following lunch aboard ship, a sobering visit to Toul Sleng Genocide Museum (S21) detention, torture and execution center reminds us of the brutal Khmer Rouge years, and the seemingly endless Cambodian civil war that followed. A fun visit to the local markets precedes a tuk-tuk (motorcycle taxi) ride through the bustling streets of Phnom Penh. This evening, an enchanting Apsara Folklore Dance is performed for you by equally enchanting children from a local orphanage.

DAY 8: JAN 18: SAILING: PHNOM PENH – KAMPONG TRALACH, CAMBODIA (BLD)

Walk #4: Kampong Tralach Walk – 6 km (3.5 miles), rated 1

Our second morning in Phnom Penh begins with a tour of the impressive Royal Palace, with its richly ornamented Silver Pagoda. We return to the ship in time for lunch while we set sail up the Tonle Sap River for Kampong Tralach, enjoying more timeless scenes of life along the river, which seems the source of life both here and in Vietnam. The highlight here is a walk from the tiny riverside community through the countryside to a local Buddhist temple, Pagoda Wat Kampong. One stark contrast between Vietnam and Cambodia is the increase in the presence of religion in Cambodia, specifically Buddhism.



Caption:

Description:

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