Cruise Details

Name:	Indochina Mekong Journey
Reference:	EMERALDEWHS180427-2
Operator:	Emerald Cruises
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	Emerald Harmony
Regions:	Mekong
Departs On:	18 Apr 27
Departs From:	Hanoi
Arrives On:	10 May 27
Arrives At:	Ho Chi Minh City
Cruise Nights:	22
Total Vacation Days:	23

Itinerary

Day 1: Hanoi (Vietnam)

Xin Chao and welcome to Vietnam. On arrival in the capital, Hanoi, you'll be transferred to the city and your hotel for your included one-night stay. Relax at the hotel, explore the historic streets of this ancient city, or take a stroll with the locals around wander Hanoi's romantic West Lake. This evening, you'll meet your Tour Director for your Welcome Dinner and briefing for the exciting days ahead.

Arrives On: 18 Apr 27

Day 2: Hanoi (Vietnam)

This morning after breakfast, you'll leave Hanoi and travel to UNESCO World Heritage-listed Halong Bay where you'll board your elegant Au Co cruise ship. Cruise through the bays, passing countless limestone Karst islets and soak up the magnificent scenery of one of the most spectacular natural wonders in Asia. Enjoy the immersive experiences available on board, learn

more about the key local livelihoods of the region, or simply choose to relax. Towards the end of the day, the ship will anchor for the night in the Trinh Nu area among breathtaking karst formations, where dinner will be served on board. Included Excursion
Two-night Halong Bay cruise on the elegant Au Co cruise ship

Arrives On: 19 Apr 27

Day 2: Ha Long Bay (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 19 Apr 27

Day 3: Ha Long Bay (Vietnam)

Today, continue cruising deeper into the region's more untouched areas bound for serene Lan Ha Bay. From a smaller boat, enjoy swimming on secluded quiet coves and kayaking in Ho Ba Ham Lake. Later, you'll pay a visit to Cua Van fishing village, which is reached by rowing boat. Spend the day at this charming community and enjoy a unique glimpse into the traditional life of Vietnamese fishermen and the surrounding natural beauty. Afterwards, you'll return to your cruise ship and following dinner, can try your hand at squid fishing on board with the crew.

Arrives On: 20 Apr 27

Day 4: Ha Long Bay (Vietnam)

Enjoy breakfast and sunrise over this magical 'Bay of the Descending Dragon.' Then cruise through incredible rock formations and explore mythical Sung Sot Cave, before arriving back at port for your transfer to Hanoi. The remainder of the day is yours at leisure in Hanoi. For your EmeraldPLUS experience, enjoy dinner at KOTO (Know One Teach One), a special restaurant established to train and educate disadvantaged children. EmeraldPLUS
Dinner at KOTO Restaurant

Arrives On: 21 Apr 27

Day 4: Hanoi (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 21 Apr 27

Day 5: Hanoi (Vietnam)

This morning, embark on a guided city tour and learn about 'Uncle Ho,', Ho Chi Minh, revered as the father of modern Vietnam. Admire the stark exterior of his imposing mausoleum, before continuing to the Ho Chi Minh Quarter to glimpse his humble stilt house and the small, but iconic One Pillar Pagoda. Then explore the nearby Temple of Literature, Vietnam's first university

established to educate Vietnam’s royalty, mandarins and members of the elite. The university functioned for an incredible 700 years, and its charming gardens and well-preserved architecture offer a fascinating glimpse into the nation’s storied past. After lunch, visit Hanoi’s Old Quarter also known as the ‘36 streets’. This atmospheric and bustling area of ancient narrow streets and alleys is home to literally thousands of small businesses as well as revered temples and traditional ‘tube houses.’ The Old Quarter is a fascinating place to explore, with plenty of photo opportunities at every turn. You can also visit the local-style Hang Be Market. Then enjoy a stroll around the legendary Hoàn Kiem Lake, located nearby in the heart of Hanoi. Here, you can walk across the iconic Red Bridge to ancient Ngoc Son Temple located on Jade Islet within the lake. Later, enjoy a traditional water puppet show, a unique North Vietnamese art form depicting scenes from rural life and episodes of historical significance. Included Excursion
Visit Hanoi’s Old Quarter Included Excursion
A traditional water puppet show

Arrives On: 22 Apr 27

Day 6: Hanoi (Vietnam)

Bid farewell to Hanoi and transfer to the airport to board your flight to Laos and Vientiane, Southeast Asia’s smallest capital city, resting along the banks of the Mekong River. After lunch, visit The Cooperative Orthotic and Prosthetic Enterprise (COPE). This organisation's key mission is to help people with mobility-related disabilities move on by supporting access to physical rehabilitation services in the Lao PDR. Check in to your hotel for your included stay and afterwards, enjoy time at leisure to discover the ‘Old World’ charms of this delightful city.

Arrives On: 23 Apr 27

Day 6: Vientiane (Laos)

Arrives On: 23 Apr 27

Day 7: Vientiane (Laos)

Enjoy a morning city tour of Vientiane, which includes a visit to iconic landmarks, Pha That Luang and Patuxay (Victory) Monument. After lunch, you’ll drive into the rugged interiors of Laos and the quaint riverside town of Vang Vieng, where you’ll check in to your hotel for the night. For the remainder of the day, soak up the stunning mountain and karst scenery that surrounds Vang Vieng, or prior to sunset, join an<u> </u>Emerald DiscoverMORE excursion. DiscoverMORE
Long Tail Boat cruise (extra expense)

Arrives On: 24 Apr 27

Day 7: Vang Vieng (Laos)

Arrives On: 24 Apr 27

Day 8: Vang Vieng (Laos)

Vang Vieng is home to some breathtaking natural formations and beautiful landscapes. Take in the sheer natural beauty of the region with a visit to Chang Caves, originally discovered by villagers seeking refuge deep in the forest during the wars. Later, transfer to the local train station to experience travelling on the new high-speed train to Luang Prabang, the heart of Laotian spirituality and former royal capital. Here, enjoy a three-night included stay at yout hotel – within walking distance to Luang Prabang's famous night markets.

Arrives On: 25 Apr 27

Day 8: Luang Prabang (Laos)

Arrives On: 25 Apr 27

Day 9: Luang Prabang (Laos)

Discover key landmarks within the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Old Town, including the exquisite, 16th century temple, Wat Xieng Thong and former Royal Palace, now converted into the National Museum. Later, enjoy a boat cruise along the Mekong River, stopping at a local village which specialises in traditional rice wine before continuing to the Pak Ou Caves, a sacred grotto crammed with thousands of multi-sized golden Buddhas. After returning to Luang Prabang, let the locals show you how to play Pétanque, also known as Petong in Laos. Tonight, enjoy your free time, perhaps shopping for souvenirs and sampling local cuisine at the vibrant night market.

Arrives On: 26 Apr 27

Day 10: Luang Prabang (Laos)

Rise early to witness the incredible sight of Buddhist monks move silently through the atmospheric streets as they collect alms. Later, travel to Kuang Si waterfalls, a set of picturesque, tiered falls and swimming holes set amongst the lush, dense jungle. This afternoon, join an Emerald DiscoverMORE excursion, before enjoying your Farewell Dinner with your fellow guests this evening. DiscoverMORE
Ban Chan (Laos Pottery House) – Pottery lesson (extra expense)

Arrives On: 27 Apr 27

Day 11: Luang Prabang (Laos)

Enjoy your morning at leisure or join an Emerald DiscoverMORE excursion before you farewell Laos and fly to Siem Reap, Cambodia. Sous Sdei and welcome to Cambodia. Upon arrival in Siem Reap, you'll be met at the airport and transferred to your hotel for your included three-night stay. This beautiful hotel, a deluxe boutique property of world-class design, takes great care in honouring the environment and paying homage to the traditional and local aesthetics. In the evening, you'll meet your Cambodian Tour Director to learn more about the exciting days that lie ahead. DiscoverMORE
Ock Pop Tok Living Craft Centre – natural dyeing class (extra expense)

Arrives On: 28 Apr 27

Day 11: Siem Reap (Cambodia)

Arrives On: 28 Apr 27

Day 12: Siem Reap (Cambodia)

Today, start with a visit to Angkor Thom, not a single temple such as the historic sites it neighbours, but rather one of the most remarkable royal cities of the Angkor Period and an architectural wonder. As the last capital of the Khmer Empire, it was a fortified city, home to priests, officials of the palace, military and buildings for administering the kingdom. Afterwards, visit the sacred Temple of Ta Prohm. In an incredible standoff between human creation and nature, the jungle's root systems have reclaimed this spiritual location now enshrouded in wild vegetation. The backdrop to many Hollywood scenes, the incredible Ta Prohm is both a cinematic and contemplative location. This afternoon is free time to visit the markets or try a DiscoverMORE tour. This evening as part of your EmeraldPLUS programme, attend Phare, The Cambodian Circus, where a combination of acrobatics, music and dance tell a uniquely Cambodian story. EmeraldPLUS
Phare Cambodian Circus performance. Included Excursion
Visit to Angkor Thom Included Excursion
Visit to Ta Prohm Temple DiscoverMORE
Siem Reap Countryside by Vespa (extra expense) DiscoverMORE
Evening – Sunset Drinks Gondola Boat at Bayon (extra expense) DiscoverMORE
Evening - Cambodian Street Food Discovery Tour (extra expense) DiscoverMORE
Evening – Local Fare at Phare Circus (extra expense)

Arrives On: 29 Apr 27

Day 13: Siem Reap (Cambodia)

Rise early and witness the sunrise over Angkor Wat. Afterwards walk through this UNESCO World Heritage-listed site known for its elaborate decorations and intricate carvings throughout. This afternoon, enjoy free time to explore Siem Reap, or join a DiscoverMORE excursion. Later, as part of your EmeraldPLUS experience, enjoy an immersive evening dinner at Satcha Handicraft Centre, accompanied by an Apsara dance performance. EmeraldPLUS
Apsara dance performance and dinner show Included Excursion
Sunrise visit to Angkor Wat DiscoverMORE
Banteay Srei Temple and APOPO (extra expense) DiscoverMORE
Tonlé Sap and Lotus Workshop (extra expense, operating Aug-Feb only) DiscoverMORE
Khmer Cooking Class (extra expense) DiscoverMORE
Senteurs d'Angkor Workshop (extra expense)

Arrives On: 30 Apr 27

Day 14: Siem Reap (Cambodia)

Today, leave Siem Reap and venture to the town of Rokar Koang to embark your Emerald Cruises award-winning Star-Ship. En route, stop in Kampong Kdei and see the impressive Angkor Bridge, before having lunch at a local restaurant. On arrival, you'll be welcomed by your captain and crew. Later, set sail up the Tonle River, past Phnom Penh at night to Kampong Tralach whilst enjoying your first dinner on board with your fellow guests.

Arrives On: 01 May 27

Day 14: Rokar Koang (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 01 May 27

Day 15: Kampong Tralach (Cambodia)

Begin the day with an Ox Cart ride in Kampong Tralach to a local temple before driving to Oudong. Oudong was Cambodia's former royal capital until it relocated to Phnom Penh in 1866. In Oudong Monastery's main temple, receive a traditional Buddhist blessing from the resident monks, as part of your EmeraldPLUS experience. Return to Emerald Harmony and sail to Phnom Penh. Spend the afternoon at leisure, either experiencing one of our DiscoverMORE excursions, visiting the Central Market, or relaxing on board. After dinner, as part of your EmeraldPLUS experience, enjoy Phnom Penh by night on a remork (local Tuk-Tuk) tour. EmeraldPLUS
A traditional Buddhist Monk blessing EmeraldPLUS
Phnom Penh by night on a remork (Tuk-Tuk) tour DiscoverMORE
A silk farm

tour at Koh Oknha Tei (extra expense) DiscoverMORE
Craft Beer Adventure by remork (extra expense) DiscoverMORE
Samai Distillery (extra expense)

Arrives On: 02 May 27

Day 15: Oudong (Cambodia)

Arrives On: 02 May 27

Day 15: Phnom Penh (Cambodia)

Arrives On: 02 May 27

Day 16: Phnom Penh (Cambodia)

This morning, learn more about the Khmer Rouge and the darkest days of Cambodia's history. A short drive will take you to the Killing Fields at Choeung Ek, where you'll be able to stroll through the fields, visit the memorial and understand more about the country's sombre chapter. Afterwards, visit the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum (known as 'S-21'), a former school converted to the Khmer Rouge's main prison and torture headquarters. Back on board, savour a Cambodian Street Fair lunch, before visiting the majestic Royal Palace, with its French-inspired gardens. This evening, for your EmeraldPLUS experience, enjoy a cultural performance by the Cambodian Student and Children's Organisation, before sailing for the border. EmeraldPLUS
Cultural Performance by the Cambodian Student and Children's Organisation Included Excursion
Killing Fields at Choeung Ek and Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum Included Excursion
A visit to the Royal Palace

Arrives On: 03 May 27

Day 17: Port information not found

Today, you'll cross the border into Vietnam and sail on to Tan Chau. Relax on board, or join our DiscoverMORE excursion to Tra Su Bird Sanctuary, before returning for a late lunch on board. This afternoon, embark on a sampan to Evergreen Island for a stroll through a local village, revealing the lives of the local farming community. Reboard your sampan to travel back to Tan Chau and as part of our EmeraldPLUS, programme, visit the recently renovated Cao Dai temple. The religion of Cao Dai is a syncretic, monotheistic religion established in southern Vietnam in the city of Tây Ninh in 1926. Here, you will learn more about the mix of ideas that form

the basis of this fascinating religion. Afterwards ride in a Xe Loi (local form of cyclo) from the temple back to your sampan before returning to Emerald Harmony where, later this evening as part of our EmeraldPLUS, programme, you'll be delighted by a traditional Lion Dance performance on board. EmeraldPLUS
A visit to a local Cao Dai Temple and Xe Loi ride EmeraldPLUS
A Lion Dance performance on board Included Excursion
A visit to Evergreen Island DiscoverMORE
A visit to Tra Su Bird Sanctuary (extra expense)

Arrives On: 04 May 27

Day 17: Tân Châu (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 04 May 27

Day 18: Giêng Island (Vietnam)

Known as 'Mango Island,' Cu Lao Gieng is a small, scenic island untouched by tourism located along the upper Mekong River. Travel by local motorcycle rickshaw through the island's villages to visit families who work in a variety of local industries, including mango farming, boat construction and temple incense sticks. Return to Emerald Harmony by sampan and sail to My An Hung Island. Recognised as a cultural and historical destination, this small rural village specialises in cultivating red-hot chilli and peppers. As part of your EmeraldPLUS experience, listen to local folk singing, wander through coconut farms and immerse yourself in traditional village life. EmeraldPLUS
Listen to some local folk singing in My An Hung Included Excursion
See the local industries in Gieng Island Included Excursion
A visit to My An Hung village

Arrives On: 05 May 27

Day 18: My An Hung (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 05 May 27

Day 19: Sa Déc (Vietnam)

Take a short ride on a sampan to Sa Đéc, a Mekong Delta hidden gem. Enjoy a walking tour around town with a stop at the home of Mr. Huynh Thuy Le, who inspired Marguerite Duras' celebrated novel, L'Amant, and a stroll through Sa Đéc's bustling central market. Return to Emerald Harmony by sampan for lunch, while cruising to Cái Bè. Upon arrival, travel via sampan to Tan Phong, a small island located nearby, rich in alluvial soil suitable for cultivating

tropical fruit orchards year-round. At this established ecotourism destination, try a hands-on experience at a workshop specialising in weaving water hyacinth into artistic crafts. Board a motorised buggy for a ride through fruit orchards, stopping to sample tropical fruits. Reboard the sampan and cruise back to Cái Bè, discovering local cottage industries where families produce rice-paper and sweets from pop-corn, pop-rice and coconuts. Return to Emerald Harmony. Included Excursion
A visit to the bustling Sa Dec Markets and the home of Mr. Huynh Thuy Le Included Excursion
An excursion to the local industries of Cai Be

Arrives On: 06 May 27

Day 19: Cái Bè (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 06 May 27

Day 20: My Tho (Vietnam)

After sailing from My Tho, you'll leave the Mekong Delta and enter the Cho Gao canal, considered one of Vietnam's major arterial canals that connects Tien Giang Province with Ho Chi Minh City. Today, you'll be fascinated watching the heavy commercial traffic navigating this important waterway, where upwards of 1,800 vessels transit each day. Relax on board, taking in the everchanging vistas of mangroves, cargo barges and local fishing boats. Tonight, you'll dock in the heart of Ho Chi Minh City, where you can admire the city lights; due to Vietnamese customs regulations, you'll not be permitted to venture ashore.

Arrives On: 07 May 27

Day 20: Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 07 May 27

Day 21: Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam)

After disembarkation, you'll be driven north of Ho Chi Minh City to the legendary Cu Chi Tunnels. Watch the city's modern skyline fade into the distance as the road winds through rice paddies, villages and scenes typical to southern Vietnam. Spend a couple of hours with a local guide walking around Cu Chi's historic grounds, a site of strategic military importance during wartime. Upon your return to Ho Chi Minh City, enjoy Vietnam's a beloved national dish, Pho (noodle soup) for lunch then check in to your hotel for your included two-night stay. Tonight join one of the special Emerald DiscoverMORE excursions. Included Excursion
Cu Chi Tunnels DiscoverMORE
Evening Saigon Street Food

walking tour (extra expense) DiscoverMORE
Saigon After Dark by Vintage Jeep (extra expense)

Arrives On: 08 May 27

Day 22: Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam)

Enjoy a guided tour of Ho Chi Minh City, starting with a visit to the city's most iconic building, the Reunification, or Independence Palace. Formerly the South Vietnamese Presidential Palace, images of the building were seen around the world on 30 April 1975 when tanks stormed the gates as Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese. Then, stroll through Ho Chi Minh City's colonial quarter, walking past scenes of everyday life on the way. Admire the beautiful architecture of the Opera House, Notre Dame Cathedral and the old Saigon Post Office and listen to the stories about the glory days of French Indochina and how that era continues to influence aspects of modern Vietnamese culture. Tonight, enjoy your farewell dinner with your fellow guests. Included Excursion
An orientation tour of Ho Chi Minh City

Arrives On: 09 May 27

Day 23: Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam)

After breakfast this morning, you will be transferred to the Ho Chi Minh City airport to catch your onward or homebound flight. While every effort is made to adhere to the planned itinerary, changes in river conditions, ad hoc local government regulations or local festivities may require journey modifications. These will be made based on the advice of local authorities or for safety reasons. Hotels are indicative and are subject to change.

Arrives On: 10 May 27

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