



## Cruise Details

Name:	Luxury Mekong & Japan in Focus
Reference:	SCENICVIJP080325
Operator:	Scenic River Cruises
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	Scenic Spirit
Regions:	Mekong
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Departs On:	08 Mar 25
Departs From:	Siem Reap
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Arrives On:	02 Apr 25
Arrives At:	Osaka
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Cruise Nights:	25
Total Vacation Days:	26

## Itinerary

### Day 1: Siem Reap (Cambodia)

Welcome to Cambodia and the regional city of Siem Reap. Your hotel, is a step back in time in the definition of luxury and will be your historical home for the next three nights in Siem Reap. This brilliantly appointed accommodation is styled with a mix of French inspired architecture, local interior furnishings and amenities fit for royalty with the attentive staff providing a service beyond expectations.

Enjoy the day at leisure until tonight when you meet your Scenic Tour Director and fellow travelling companions at your welcome briefing and dinner.

Arrives On: 08 Mar 25

### Day 2: Siem Reap (Cambodia)

Your Siem Reap exploration starts with a delicious champagne buffet breakfast at the hotel.

**Freechoice:** As part of Scenic's Freechoice you

have multiple options to choose from.

Explore the 10th-century Banteay Srei Temple, a temple commonly referred to as the Ladies Temple because of its pinkish sandstone and dedication to the Hindu god Shiva. Afterwards visit the Landmine Museum, founded in 1997 with the aim to make the country safe through the removal of mines.

On another option visit Satcha Cambodian Handicraft Incubation Centre. The aim of Satcha is to create the first Cambodian handicraft centre that incubates local artisans, mixing traditional knowledge with contemporary design to showcase Cambodian talents.

Alternatively, if you have enjoyed being on the water, sail on Tonle Sap Lake (July to February), a picturesque UNESCO biosphere reserve and dive deep into discovery when visiting and experiencing the life of a floating village.

Or take flight in a tethered balloon to discover the aerial beauties of the combination between traditional and modern Siem Reap. Enjoy the fresh air and take some remarkable photographs of the skyline as you lift into the skies of Siem Reap overlooking Angkor Wat below before visiting a Lotus Flower workshop. (Not available in November and December 2024).

Alternatively choose the Market Shopping Excursion, transfer to the central market by tuk tuk and shop independently.

Later this afternoon explore Angkor Wat itself, the largest religious monument in the world. Originally constructed as a Hindu temple dedicated to the god Vishnu for the Khmer Empire, it was gradually transformed into a Buddhist temple towards the end of the 12th century. An afternoon visit provides the perfect light for those idealic pictures of this colossal structure.

This evening head to the colourful Cambodian Phare Circus where your VIP premium reserved seating awaits you. Beautifully dressed performers style a stunning show that is more than just a circus. The performers use theatre, music, dance and modern circus arts to tell uniquely Cambodian stories; historical, folk and modern.

Arrives On: 09 Mar 25

### Day 3: Siem Reap (Cambodia)

**Enrich**

Marvel at the sunrise over the magnificent Angkor Wat before moving to a special location near a temple for a scrumptious champagne breakfast with food prepared by an NGO supported local bakery school which also sponsors.

After breakfast, visit the atmospheric, jungle covered Ta Prohm Temple, before stopping at Angkor Thom and the multi-faced Bayon Temple. Fortunately, you have the remainder of the afternoon to discover more of the Siem Reap markets or relax at your luxury hotel after your early morning start.

**Enrich**

Tonight is truly a special and exclusive one, one that is best experienced first hand to fully appreciate it's scale. Your tour directors and Scenic team will leave you in awe as you enter a private magical gala themed dinner at Prasat Kravan, a small 10th-century temple consisting of five reddish brick towers on a common terrace. Including free flow drinks and a show featuring Apsara dancers in front of the candle lit temple ruins, this evening brings a most incredible end to your time in Siem Reap.

Arrives On: 10 Mar 25

#### Day 4: Siem Reap (Cambodia)

Discover the rural side of Cambodia as your coach will transfer you to Kampong Cham where the breathtaking Scenic Spirit awaits. Before arriving, you will be visiting the stunning Khmer bridge at Kampong Kdei, Kampong Thom and a stone cutters village. After boarding, begin your cruise in style with a cocktail reception hosted by your Cruise Director. Take a stroll around the decks to orientate yourself as to where all the amenities are. After your welcome dinner, settling into your private suite does not mean you settle for service. At any time, your dedicated personal butler is free to swing by with a nightcap and delivery of your preferred pillows.

Arrives On: 11 Mar 25

#### Day 5: Kampong Cham (Cambodia)

Awake as you approach Wat Hanchey, an ancient hilltop pagoda and monastery. After learning about life as a novice monk from one of the locals, wander around the complex and admire the view over the Mekong River and surrounding countryside. Sail back to Kampong Cham.

**Freechoice:** Back in Kampong Cham, your Scenic Freechoice excursions this afternoon provides the chance to learn about the history and industries of the area. Your first option is to learn about the local folklore with stops at Phnom Pros (Man Hill and Wat Nokor). Phnom Pros was part of a traditional local legend but more recently was used as a Killing Field during the Khmer Rouge era. The temple now features a Buddha garden and is home to a local troop of monkeys. Wat Nokor Bachey is a unique architectural experiment blending an Angkorian era temple with a new temple built inside it.

Alternatively you can explore Kampong Cham's history and industry with a drive past shop houses, remnants of the French colonial era and the large Central Market. Visit a local rubber plantation established by the French, followed by a tour to view the processing of the raw rubber at a rubber factory before stopping at a village known for growing betel nut, a popular item in Cambodian culture.

Cambodia is known for its villages, so your third option is to visit Kho Penh Village. Only accessible by local remork and located on Pen (Bamboo) Island, across the bamboo bridge / ferry from Kampong Cham, this remote village gives a good insight into the simple rural lifestyle of farmers in Cambodia.

Once back on board Scenic Spirit, enjoy some time to unwind in your spectacular suite. Your dedicated butler can arrange for a beautiful meal to be served in your suite as you enjoy the sights and sounds of the Mekong, overlooking the gorgeous sunset of the Cambodian skyline as you sail to Angkor Ban.

Arrives On: 12 Mar 25

## Day 5: Kampong Cham (Cambodia)

Arrives On: 12 Mar 25

## Day 6: Angkor Ban (Cambodia)

Upon arrival in Angkor Ban, explore its historical rural wooden houses, which survived the Khmer Rouge and visit a local pagoda where a private and solemn excursion at a Buddhist pagoda awaits.

**Enrich**

Receive a blessing from a monk and learn how to pray in a Buddhist pagoda before partaking in a ceremony which contributes to the daily meal of the resident monks.

Afterwards return to Scenic Spirit for lunch and sail downstream to the island of Oknha Tey, where residents are dedicated to the art of silk weaving. Travel by tuk tuk to the farm and learn about the process of silk production. Return to Scenic Spirit where you may wish to absorb more about the local culture with our team by learning how to make and wear the Cambodian scarf.

Enjoy the amenities on Scenic Spirit and truly unwind. What better way to do so than by heading to the Wellness Centre or Beauty Salon for a bit of pampering. This evening, you may wish to dress up for the Scenic Sunset Drinks cocktail reception on the Sun Deck against the backdrop of Phnom Penh's lights and stunning scenery as we approach the capital of Cambodia.

**Sunset Drinks**

Cocktail reception on the sundeck.

Arrives On: 13 Mar 25

## Day 6: Phnom Penh (Cambodia)

Arrives On: 13 Mar 25

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Arrives On: 13 Mar 25

## Day 7: Phnom Penh (Cambodia)

**Freechoice:** Your Scenic Freechoice excursions provide the option to journey to the Killing Fields and tour Tuol Sleng Prison. These locations are a sobering reminder of the terrors unleashed by the Khmer Rouge regime. Although not a delightful tour, visiting these monuments unlocks the keys to understanding the development of this country. You will then return to Scenic Spirit for lunch.

The second Scenic Freechoice excursion today is a hands-on cooking class. Take a trip to the local market with a local chef to purchase your ingredients. Head back to the kitchen to cook your own lunch, testing out the styles and flavours of the Cambodian cuisine.

The third option is to travel by Remok, a local style of Tuk Tuk to

visit the French architecture and history of Phnom Penh. Finish this tour with a stop at the unique designed Central Market for some shopping. At the conclusion of this choice, you can head back to the Scenic Spirit for lunch.

The remainder of the afternoon is at your leisure.

**Sunset Drinks**

Later this evening revel in our Phnom Penh by City Lights tour, giving you an insight to the nightlife of the capital before stopping at a distillery for an exclusive Sundowners tour and tasting behind closed doors.

Arrives On: 14 Mar 25

#### Day 8: Tân Châu (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 15 Mar 25

#### Day 8: Port information not found

Arrives On: 15 Mar 25

#### Day 8: Phnom Penh (Cambodia)

Experience the opulent side of Phnom Penh this afternoon at the Royal Palace with the famous Silver Pagoda, during your included visit to this must-see attraction. Upon returning to the ship, set sail and say goodbye to Phnom Penh as we sail to the Cambodian and Vietnamese border.

A relaxing afternoon of sailing will allow you to take advantage of the many exclusive facilities on board Scenic Spirit. You may wish to unwind in the Scenic Spirit library to learn more about the ports you are visiting. Or head to the heart of this ship, the Scenic Spirit Lounge, which is a great place to unwind with a glass of wine and meet other guests. You may wish to socialise by the pool with a refreshing cocktail and swim, or just settle into the private comfort of your luxury suite.

After clearing immigration into Vietnam at the border, experience a fantastically themed dinner on board the Scenic Spirit along with a lion dance performed by locals on the expansive Sun Deck.

Arrives On: 15 Mar 25

#### Day 9: Tân Châu (Vietnam)

You may wish to start your day with some exercise in the on board gym, try stretching at the early morning yoga class or relax in the sauna before setting off to on a Scenic Freechoice excursion of your choosing in the areas surrounding Tân Châu.

**Freechoice:** A prime example of leaving the city life behind will be found at Tra Su Bird Sanctuary in Tra Su Forest where you travel by sampan through endless waterways flanked by mangroves and lush greenery. This eco reserve spans 850 hectares and is known as an ecological haven for fauna and flora, with more than 100 species of water birds

known to reside here.

If you would like to experience the community side of Vietnam, look no further than Evergreen Island for a morning of discovery about the local farmers. Back in Tan Chau, experience a ride in a Xe Loi. This commonly used form of transportation in rural Vietnam will take you to 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.

The third Scenic Freechoice excursion involves boarding a speedboat to visit Chau Doc, a major city in the Mekong Delta. Upon arrival, continue on board a coach to visit Tay An temple, which is a mixture of Indian and Islamic style architecture located at the foot of Sam Mountain. Then board another sampan to visit Vinh Te canal and view life along the riverfront of Chau Doc, stop at a family-operated fish farm and then return to Scenic Spirit.

What better way to end the first day in Vietnam than a refreshing cocktail by the pool on board the Spirit along with a great view of the Mekong as you set sail for Sa Dec.

Arrives On: 16 Mar 25

#### Day 10: Sa Déc (Vietnam)

Upon arrival in Sa Dec, board your sampan to explore and interact with the sellers in the lively wet market where you will see live fishes, frogs and even snakes. This 2-hour exploration lets you dive deep into the local lifestyle. You can also see the home of Mr. Huynh Thuy Le who inspired marguerite Duras novel L'Amant a story of tragic love told by your entertaining expert. After your morning excursion, head back to the Scenic Spirit for lunch whilst sailing downstream to Cai Be.

**Freechoice:** This afternoon enjoy your choice from the Scenic Freechoice activities. Re-board your sampan, pass the location of the morning floating market and soak in the local life on your way to visit Cai Be town. Stop at local cottage industries and a French colonial or traditional Vietnamese house.

Alternatively take a sampan from Scenic Spirit to savour a delicious afternoon tea at the Le Longanier, a French colonial house restaurant, where staff will welcome you with tea, coffee and a range of local fruit and snacks for your tasting. You can dive into a local experience with a band playing music and performing traditional Vietnamese songs.

Alternatively, if you are enjoying the comforts of the luxurious Scenic Spirit, our highly skilled bar team is ready to welcome you for a hands-on cocktail/mocktail making class featuring fresh local ingredients. Create delicious favourites from the Scenic Spirit menu.

Back on board you will have time to relax and overlook the gorgeous sunset of the Vietnamese skyline and life on the Mekong River before your engaging farewell dinner with the crew.

Arrives On: 17 Mar 25

#### Day 10: Cái Bè (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 17 Mar 25

### Day 11: Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 18 Mar 25

### Day 12: Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam)

After breakfast, travel to the Cu Chi Tunnels and spend the morning learning about the development and establishment of this hidden covered tunnel network that the Viet Cong soldiers hid in for months on end. Return to HCMC to explore the Reunification Palace, the former Presidential House of South Vietnam which become famous in 1975 with images of tanks crashing through its gates leading to the South's surrender and end of the War of Independence. Enjoy tonight's farewell dinner with your fellow travellers.

Arrives On: 19 Mar 25

### Day 13: Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam)

After check-out head to the airport for your flight to Tokyo, Japan's capital and the world's most populous metropolis. Check-into your hotel, your Special Stay for the next three nights. With direct access to four subway lines, the hotel was recently rated in the Forbes Travel Guide as Tokyo's exclusive Japanese decor 5-star luxury hotel. Rooms overlook the most picturesque sites in Tokyo, such as the Imperial Palace, the 500-year-old Hie Jinja Shrine and beautiful landscaped Japanese gardens. This evening meet for your welcome reception and dinner.

Arrives On: 20 Mar 25

### Day 13: Tokyo (Japan)

Arrives On: 20 Mar 25

### Day 14: Tokyo (Japan)

Visit the Asakusa district, known as the centre of Tokyo's shitamachi or 'low city' capsulizing the atmosphere of Tokyo's past, paying your respects at Sensoji temple, the city's oldest Buddhist temple.

**Enrich**

Given by Taiko Masters, partake in an interactive, private group demonstration and lesson in playing the Taiko drums.

After lunch visit the epicentre of Tokyo's teenage youth as you wander along Takeshita Street Harajuku, known for its colourful street art, youth fashion, quirky vintage clothing and cosplay stores and dessert shops and carts that specialise in sweet crêpes, donuts, and bubble tea.

**Freechoice Dining:** Choose from



dining at a ninja themed restaurant using Horigotatsu style seating or culturally immerse yourself in the traditional Japanese evening Izakaya bar scene serving Yaki-tori and Kushiyaki with your Tour Director as they show you their favourite places to go. Alternatively dine in at Nobu restaurant.

Arrives On: 21 Mar 25

#### Day 15: Tokyo (Japan)

Begin the day in the beautiful Imperial Palace's East Gardens, part of the inner palace area and the former site of Edo Castle's innermost circles of defence when the Tokugawa shogun ruled Japan from 1603 to 1867.

**Freechoice:**

Visit the Imperial Shinto Meiji Shrine, before walking across the often referred to as 'the world's busiest pedestrian crossing' and seeing the famous Hachiko dog statue in Shibuya. Alternatively, wander through picturesque Shinjuku-Gyoen Gardens before witnessing the Shinjuku entertainment district come alive at dusk.

Arrives On: 22 Mar 25

#### Day 16: Fuji Five Lakes (Japan)

Arrives On: 23 Mar 25

#### Day 16: Hakone (Japan)

Arrives On: 23 Mar 25

#### Day 16: Tokyo (Japan)

Cruise on Lake Ashinoko on the First-class deck of your pirate ship with Mt Fuji as a backdrop before admiring the stunning scenery during your cable car ride up to the hot springs of the Owakudani geothermal area. Venture deep into the stunning scenery of Kawaguchiko Area. Discover the incredible workmanship involved in creating kimonos during the Muromachi Period (1333-1573) at the Itchiku Kubota Art Museum. Enjoy a Special Stay overlooking Lake Ashinoko.

Arrives On: 23 Mar 25

#### Day 17: Hakone (Japan)

Relax in your Green (Business) Class seats on the Hikari Shinkansen train to the culturally rich city of Kyoto. Later after lunch in Kyoto, visit Nijo castle, built in 1603 as the Kyoto residence of Tokugawa Ieyasu, the first shogun of the Edo Period before settling into your hotel and a Teppanyaki feast for dinner.



Arrives On: 24 Mar 25

### Day 17: Kyoto (Japan)

Arrives On: 24 Mar 25

### Day 18: Kyoto (Japan)

Begin the day gliding through the surreal Arashiyama Bamboo Grove by traditional rickshaw before exploring and enjoying a vegetarian meal at the World Heritage listed Tenryu-ji Temple. Later wander the gardens around the famous Kinkaku-ji or Golden Pavilion because it is completely covered in gold leaf. Later this evening stroll through the Gion area, Kyoto's famous Geisha District before dinner.

**Freechoice Dining:** Enjoy the option of dining at Kyoto Kishin Restaurant, known for its mix of Kyoto cuisine and French dishes or try Japanese Shabu Shabu at Hyoto Restaurant.

Arrives On: 25 Mar 25

### Day 19: Kyoto (Japan)

**Freechoice:** Revel in the atmosphere of the ancient preservation districts or visit the Silver Pavilion before strolling along part of the famous Philosopher's Walk, an approximately two kilometre long, beautiful stone path walk along a canal through the northern part of Kyoto's Higashiyama district.

**Enrich**

Partake in a Japanese tea ceremony while dressed in a traditional Japanese kimono, a great photo opportunity.

This afternoon, enjoy some free time in Nishiki Market, a market renowned as Kyoto's kitchen with over 100 stalls and shops for shopping or relaxation.

**Enrich**

Tonight's dinner will allow you to interact with a Geiko and Maiko who'll host your meal. It's an excellent opportunity to learn about what is involved in becoming a Geisha and the art of Japanese hospitality.

Arrives On: 26 Mar 25

### Day 20: Kyoto (Japan)

Begin your day with an early visit to Fushimi Inari, famous for its thousands of vermilion torii gates and its appearance in the film 'Memoirs of a Geisha'. Continue to Nara, Japan's first permanent capital established in the year 710 as Heijō, the city now known as Nara. Here you'll visit Todaiji Temple, constructed in 752 as the head temple of all provincial Buddhist temples of Japan. The Temple grew so powerful that the capital was moved from Nara to Nagaoka in 784 in order to lower the temple's influence on government affairs. Also see deer in Nara Park before stopping for sake tasting at Matsui brewery and museum.

**Ryokan Upgrade** - For a unique insight into Japanese culture, choose to stay tonight at Hiiragiya Ryokan (at

additional cost, must be pre-booked before departure). This traditional Japanese Inn has tatami mat flooring with futon beds, sliding shoji paper doors, onsen hot spring baths and private facilities, and includes dinner and breakfast.

Arrives On: 27 Mar 25

#### Day 20: Nara City (Japan)

Arrives On: 27 Mar 25

#### Day 21: Himeji (Japan)

Arrives On: 28 Mar 25

#### Day 21: Okayama (Japan)

Arrives On: 28 Mar 25

#### Day 21: Kyoto (Japan)

Kirin is one of Japan's top four beer producers and has been producing beer in Kobe since 1997. Travel to the brewery for lunch and a factory tour to see the technology and automation at play before trying some samples of the produce. After lunch visit Himeji Castle, an original and Japan's most spectacular castle and one of the few remaining original feudal castles. Afterwards relax on the Shinkansen and then check into your hotel in Okayama for the night.

Arrives On: 28 Mar 25

#### Day 22: Kurashiki (Japan)

Begin your day walking around the Kurashiki canal area before visiting the Ohashi House, a former Edo Period merchant house built in 1796. After lunch visit to the 300-year-old Korakuen Garden, one of the Three Great Gardens of Japan. Travel on the Shinkansen to Hiroshima and check into your hotel for two nights. Tonight, sample Okonomiyaki, a delicious savoury Japanese-style pancake and specialty of the region.

Arrives On: 29 Mar 25

#### Day 22: Hiroshima (Japan)

Arrives On: 29 Mar 25

### Day 23: Hiroshima (Japan)

Sail by ferry to Miyajima Island to visit Daisho-in Temple and its famous floating Torii Gate at the Itsukushima Shrine, also built over the water. This evening is yours at leisure in Hiroshima.

Arrives On: 30 Mar 25

### Day 23: Itsukushima (Japan)

Arrives On: 30 Mar 25

### Day 24: Hiroshima (Japan)

**Enrich**  
Experience an emotional visit to the Peace Park and Museum, dedicated to the legacy of Hiroshima as the first city in the world to suffer a nuclear attack. Move to Orizuru Tower to learn how to create your own special origami crane offering for the Orizuru Wall.

After lunch travel by Shinkansen to Osaka where you will enjoy a two-night Special Stay. This evening catch the Osaka Metro to wander around the lively entertainment area of Dotonbori and Hozenji Yokocho food alley, where you can have the opportunity to choose your own meal from one of the many traditional food stalls. You are free to make your way back to hotel in your own time or return with your Tour Director.

Arrives On: 31 Mar 25

### Day 24: Osaka (Japan)

Arrives On: 31 Mar 25

### Day 25: Osaka (Japan)

Drive to the birthplace of the Japanese state and cradle of Japanese culture in Asuka, in Nara Prefecture. Wander through the Inabuchi terraced rice paddy fields, the ancient Tobiishi stone bridge, famous in Japanese folklore and visit Ishibutai tumulus, the largest known megalithic structure in Japan.

**Enrich**  
Learn about the history, life and training routine of a sumo wrestler during a private visit to a Sumo Museum in Kehayaza, where Sumo originated. After the welcome ceremony, see a demonstration of Jinku and the wrestlers in action in the dohyo.

Enjoy your Club Floor benefits before transferring to Sky Garden for night-time views of the skyline of Osaka, before settling into your farewell dinner at the Hilton Plaza West.

Arrives On: 01 Apr 25

## Day 25: Asuka, Nara (Japan)

Arrives On: 01 Apr 25

## Day 26: Osaka (Japan)

Depart today with treasured memories of your wonderful time in Japan.

The itinerary is a guide only and may be amended for operational reasons. As such Scenic cannot guarantee the journey will operate unaltered from the itinerary stated above. Please refer to our terms and conditions for further information.

Arrives On: 02 Apr 25

For more information on this cruise, please call +44 (0)1202 767926.

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