Cruise Details

Name:	Temple Discovery and Meandering along the Mekong Cruise
Reference:	SCENICVIMR151227-29
Operator:	Scenic River Cruises
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	Scenic Spirit
Regions:	Mekong
Departs On:	15 Dec 27
Departs From:	Siem Reap
Arrives On:	27 Dec 27
Arrives At:	Ho Chi Minh City
Cruise Nights:	12
Total Vacation Days:	13

Itinerary

Day 1: Siem Reap (Cambodia)

Welcome to Cambodia and the regional city of Siem Reap where ancient and contemporary worlds exist side by side.

Check in to the Raffles Grand Hotel d'Angkor, a legendary address that has defined Siem Reap's sense of colonial grandeur since the 1930s. French-inspired architecture, richly appointed interiors and service of the highest standard make this a true highlight of the journey. The remainder of the day is yours to settle in and explore the surrounds.

Arrives On: 15 Dec 27

Day 2: Siem Reap (Cambodia)

Your Siem Reap exploration starts with a delicious champagne buffet breakfast at the hotel. Scenic Freechoice:
Enjoy a range of Scenic Freechoice activities. The 10th-century Banteay Srei Temple, referred to as the Ladies Temple for

its rose-pink sandstone and dedication to the Hindu god Shiva, is one of the most intricately carved structures in the Angkor region, best paired with a visit to the Landmine Museum, which has been working since 1997 to clear Cambodia's countryside of unexploded ordnance.

Other options include a visit to the Senteurs d'Angkor workshop, where skilled artisans produce soaps, balms, candles and spices by hand using traditional methods, with guests invited to try their hand at each workstation.

A village walk through Ta Brak offers a quieter, more personal perspective on daily life in the region.

Those drawn to the water may join a cruise on Tonle Sap (available July to February), a vast inland biosphere reserve where entire communities live on floating platforms.

Alternatively, a behind the scenes tour of the Angkor Wildlife Aquarium offers insight into the Mekong's ecosystem, including feeding sessions and close encounters with resident species. This afternoon, visit Angkor Wat itself as the softer afternoon light plays across its towers and galleries, creating ideal conditions to take in this extraordinary site. This evening, your VIP reserved seats await at the Phare Circus, where Cambodian performers weave storytelling, music and acrobatics into a show of genuine artistry.

Arrives On: 16 Dec 27

Day 3: Siem Reap (Cambodia)

Scenic Enrich
An early start brings its own reward this morning. Arrive at Angkor Wat before the crowds to witness the sunrise reflecting across the temple's moat, a sight of rare and lasting beauty. Afterwards, gather at a private location near a temple for a champagne breakfast, with food thoughtfully prepared by a Scenic-supported NGO bakery school. The morning continues with a visit to the jungle-enveloped Ta Prohm Temple, where tree roots have slowly claimed the ancient stonework over centuries, before moving on to Angkor Thom and the remarkable Bayon Temple, its dozens of carved stone faces gazing out in every direction. The afternoon is yours to rest or revisit the markets after an early start. Scenic Enrich
As evening falls, your Tour Director and the Scenic team escort you into one of the most exclusive experiences of the entire journey. A private gala dinner awaits within the grounds of Prasat Kravan, a small but deeply atmospheric 10th-century temple of five reddish brick towers. Apsara dancers perform by candlelight as complimentary drinks flow freely, an evening that belongs entirely to Scenic guests.

Arrives On: 17 Dec 27

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: 18 Dec 27

Day 4: Port information not found

Arrives On: 18 Dec 27

Day 5: Kampong Cham (Cambodia)

Awake as you approach Wat Hanchey, an ancient hilltop pagoda and monastery to meet the resident novice monks. Walk (or drive) to the top for some of the best elevated views of the cruise. This afternoon is spent sailing upstream along the Mekong River before returning to Kampong Cham, the quaint but largest city in the north and home to most of Cambodia's Muslim population.

The remainder of the day is free to discover the main boulevard along the river front filled with its colourfully painted Chinese shopfronts, restaurants and colonial buildings. Be sure to visit the night market once setup.

Arrives On: 19 Dec 27

Day 5: Kampong Cham (Cambodia)

Arrives On: 19 Dec 27

Day 6: Kampong Cham (Cambodia)

From Kampong Cham, your Scenic Freechoices this morning provide the chance to learn about the history and industries of the area. Scenic Freechoice:
Choose to learn about local folklore at Phnom Pros, a mountaintop pagoda that has long been part of a traditional legend. Tragically, in more modern times, the site was used as a Killing Field by the Khmer Rouge. The temple now features a Buddha Garden and is home to a local troop of monkeys. Afterwards, visit Wat Nokor Bachey, a unique architectural experiment that blends an Angkorian era temple with a new temple built inside it.

Alternatively, 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 before stopping at a village known for growing betel nut, an important part of Cambodian culture.

Your third option today is a visit to Kho Penh Village. Located on Pen (Bamboo) Island, it's only accessible by local remork after crossing by bamboo bridge or ferry from Kampong

Cham. This remote village gives you a fascinating insight into the simple, rural lifestyle of farmers in Cambodia. Back on board, spend the afternoon relaxing and getting to know the facilities of the most luxurious ship on the river, Scenic Spirit as she sails to Angkor Ban.

Arrives On: 20 Dec 27

Day 6: Angkor Ban (Cambodia)

Arrives On: 20 Dec 27

Day 7: 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 segregated and solemn excursion at a Buddhist pagoda awaits. Scenic Enrich
Receive a traditional blessing from a monk and learn how to pray in a Buddhist pagoda before partaking in an alms ceremony, which contributes to the daily meal of the resident monks. Afterwards reboard Scenic Spirit for lunch and sail downstream to the island of Oknha Tey, 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 and some free time. The option to immerse yourself in local culture with our team is available by learning how to make and wear the Cambodian scarf.

Some down time is a great way to relax and what better way to do that than heading to the Wellness Centre or Beauty Salon for a bit of pampering. Get an outfit ready for an evening of style with a Scenic Sunset Drinks cocktail reception on the sundeck against the backdrop of Phnom Penh’s lights and stunning scenery as we approach the capital of Cambodia. Scenic Sunset Drinks
Later this evening, revel in our Phnom Penh by City Lights tour. You’ll get to witness the nightlife of the capital before stopping at a local rum distillery for your exclusive Scenic Sundowners experience, including a private tour and tasting.

Arrives On: 21 Dec 27

Day 7: Phnom Penh (Cambodia)

Arrives On: 21 Dec 27

Day 7: Phnom Penh (Cambodia)

Arrives On: 21 Dec 27

Day 8: Phnom Penh (Cambodia)

After breakfast, it will be time to head out and explore the city. Scenic Freechoice:
You can choose to journey to the infamous Killing Fields and take a tour of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, housed inside a former prison. These sites are a sobering reminder of the terrors unleashed by the Khmer Rouge regime in the 1970s. This moving tour will give you a deeper insight into the tumultuous history of Cambodia and the resilience of its people.

Passionate foodies may like to choose a hands-on cooking class. Take a trip to the bustling market with a local chef to purchase your ingredients, then head back to the kitchen to cook your own lunch, testing out the styles and flavours of Cambodian cuisine.

Alternatively, travel by remork, a local style of tuk tuk, to explore the French architecture, backstreets and history of Phnom Penh. Finish the tour with shopping at the Central Market, famed for its unique Art Deco design and bright yellow façade. At the conclusion of your tour, return to Scenic Spirit for lunch. The remainder of the afternoon is at leisure.

Before dinner, enjoy a cultural performance by the Cambodian Student and Children’s Organisation on the sun deck.

Arrives On: 22 Dec 27

Day 9: Phnom Penh (Cambodia)

Even the most developing countries have a standard of luxury and opulence. You can experience this this morning at the Royal Palace with the famous Silver Pagoda within, on your included visit to this must-see attraction. Set on the riverfront, this dazzling palace was built in the 1860s and still serves as the official residence of the King of Cambodia. Upon return to Scenic Spirit, 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 the Scenic Spirit. Sometimes everyone needs a break from the hustle and bustle of this exciting cruise and for those bookworms, kick back in the Scenic Spirit library, or head to the heart of this ship, which is the Scenic Spirit lounge, a great place to unwind with a glass of wine. Obtain some background knowledge of each port and get the key information for the exciting activities ahead. With travelling throughout South-East Asia comes the heat and what better way to cool down than socialising with a fresh cocktail and swimming in the pool all or just settle into the private comfort of your luxury suite and private balcony.

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

Arrives On: 23 Dec 27

Day 9: Port information not found

Arrives On: 23 Dec 27

Day 9: Tân Châu (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 23 Dec 27

Day 10: Tân Châu (Vietnam)

You may want to start the day with some exercise in the on-board gym, an early morning yoga class or relax your muscles in the sauna. Then set off to discover the areas surrounding Tan Chau. Scenic Freechoice:
You could leave the city life behind at Tra Su Bird Sanctuary in Tra Su Forest. Travel by sampan through endless tranquil waterways, flanked by mangroves and lush greenery. This eco reserve spans 850 hectares and is an ecological haven for fauna and flora, home to more than 100 species of waterbirds.

Or experience a traditional way of life on Evergreen Island, joining local farmers for a morning of discovery. Back in Tan Chau, ride in a xe loi, a three-wheeled bicycle rickshaw that was introduced by the French in the 19th century and is a common form of transportation in rural Vietnam. Visit the recently renovated, brightly coloured Cao Dai temple. Caodaism is a new religion, established in 1926 in the southern Vietnamese city of Tây Ninh, and brings together beliefs and practices from Buddhism, Christianity, Taoism and Confucianism. Here, you will learn more about the mix of ideas that form the basis of this fascinating religion.

For your third choice, board a speedboat to visit Chau Doc, a major city in the Mekong Delta, and Tay An temple. Set at the foot of Sam Mountain, this elaborate temple is a mixture of Indian and Islamic architecture. Afterwards, board another sampan to visit Vinh Te canal and view life along the riverfront of Chau Doc, before making your way back to Scenic Spirit. What better way to end the first day in Vietnam than a delicious 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: 24 Dec 27

Day 11: Sa Déc (Vietnam)

When you arrive in Sa Dec, board your sampan once again to explore the lively wet market where you can meet the sellers and marvel at their wares, including live fish, frogs and even snakes. This two-hour exploration will take you deep into the local lifestyle. You can also see the grand home of Mr. Huynh Thuy Le, a Chinese merchant who inspired Marguerite Duras' novel L'Amant. Your expert guide will reveal the secrets behind this passionate tale of tragic love. After your morning excursion, head back to the Scenic Spirit for lunch whilst enjoying a relaxing afternoon at leisure on board sailing downstream to Cai Be.

Arrives On: 25 Dec 27

Day 12: Cái Bè (Vietnam)

Start the day with a full gourmet breakfast – complete with champagne – before heading out to explore Cai Be. Scenic Freechoice: Choose to travel via sampan to Tan Phong, a small island located near Cai Be town that is rich in alluvial soil suitable for tropical fruit orchards all year round. With a total area of more than 1,000 hectares, surrounded by silted sandbanks, canals and a mild temperature, Tan Phong has long been a friendly destination for eco-tourism. On arrival, try a hands-on experience at a workshop specialised in weaving water hyacinth into artistic crafts. Board a motorised buggy for a ride through endless fruit orchards, stopping to enjoy the tropical fruits and interact with a farm owner. Reboard the sampan and cruise to Cái Bè town to discover the local cottage industry where families make rice-paper and sweets from pop-corn, pop-rice and coconut.

Alternatively, take a sampan to Le Longanier, a French colonial house restaurant, to savour a delicious morning tea. The elegantly-dressed staff will welcome you with tea, coffee and a range of local fruit and snacks. Listen to the local band playing music and traditional Vietnamese songs.

If you would prefer to enjoy the comforts of your ship, our highly skilled bar team is ready to welcome you to a hands-on cocktail/mocktail making class featuring fresh local ingredients. Back on board, set sail for My Tho. This afternoon you will have time to relax onboard and overlook life on the Mekong River before watching the gorgeous sunset against the Vietnamese skyline. Tonight, enjoy your farewell dinner with the crew.

Arrives On: 26 Dec 27

Day 13: Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 27 Dec 27

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