

A red circular logo with the text "Craig travel" in white, where "Craig" is on the top line and "travel" is on the bottom line.

INDOCHINA'S HIDDEN CHARMS

BOOK BY NOV 29
SAVE \$200 PP

NOV 8-27, 2025 | 20 DAYS | 47 MEALS | ALL EXCURSIONS
PANDAW CRUISES • RV MEKONG PANDAW
JOURNEY LEADER: JOAN PITMAN

Angkor Wat, One of the most important archaeological sites of Southeast Asia

Experience an exciting voyage on the Mekong River, journeying through Indochina and exploring Cambodia's secluded backwaters. As one of the most sought-after new river cruising destinations, this wonderful trip is sure to book up quickly!

Showcasing the best of the region, our journey begins in Hanoi, Vietnam's vibrant northern capital. After a magical overnight cruise on Ha Long Bay, we fly to the legendary and thrilling Saigon. Then, board the elegant RV Mekong Pandaw, designed for cruising these waters and sure to delight even the most discerning travellers. Sail along the Mekong and Tonle Sap Rivers, exploring quaint villages and ancient temples. Enjoy time in Phnom Penh, Cambodia's capital, before heading to Siem Reap to marvel at the magnificent ruins of Angkor, Southeast Asia's most impressive ancient temples.

Designed for the experienced traveller, this journey moves at a good pace, with ample time to experience the uniqueness of this fascinating part of the world.



Inclusive Features

- Return economy airfare with Air Canada from the cities listed plus internal flights (Bangkok to Hanoi, Hanoi to Saigon, and Siem Reap to Bangkok)
- Deluxe hotel stays in Hanoi (3 nights), Ho Chi Minh (2 nights), Siem Reap (3 nights), plus Bangkok (1 night)
- 7-night deluxe cruise on the RV Mekong Pandaw
- 1-night traditional wooden junk cruise in Ha Long Bay
- All outside staterooms on RV Mekong Pandaw with private facilities
- All cruise meals with beverages and complimentary local beer/spirits, water, tea, juices, and soft drinks on board (wine at extra cost) on RV Mekong Pandaw
- Welcome Cocktail and Farewell Reception
- Escorted excursions in each port and local guides throughout the cruise
- 47 meals as noted in the itinerary (B - 17 breakfasts, L - 14 lunches, D - 16 dinners)
- Transfers between airports, hotels and the ship
- All sightseeing and entrance fees on tours
- Bottled water on transfers and sightseeing
- Baggage handling at the hotels and shipside
- Services of your local Cruise Director and our Journey Leader from Canada
- Gratuities for all included services (guides, drivers, hotel and ship staff)
- Visa fees (for Canadian passport holders)
- All taxes and fees including departure and port taxes
- Airport transfers in Canada or equivalent value with purchase of group airfare

Journey Leader

Joan Pitman was in the airline industry for 25 years and remains in the travel industry today. As a Tour Director she has travelled extensively to Alaska, Asia, across Canada and the US, and Europe. Personal travel has also taken her to South America, Australia, Asia, New Zealand, Africa, Central America, and Bali. A Whistler weekender since the mid 70's, and a full time resident from 2000, Joan and her husband **George** also maintain a home in Vancouver. Joan and George have 6 children between them and 9 grandchildren. They are looking forward to sharing this exciting Indochina journey with all those who will join them.



NOV 8/9, Saturday/Sunday DEPART CANADA

Tour members gather in Toronto or Vancouver for the evening flight to Bangkok, arriving early Monday morning.

NOV 10, Monday ARRIVE HANOI, VIETNAM

Connecting in Bangkok, we continue to Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam and second largest city. Upon arrival we transfer to our hotel with the balance of the day at leisure to relax.
Pan Pacific Hanoi (3 nights) D

NOV 11, Tuesday HANOI

Immersing ourselves in Hanoi's vibrant back alley culture will be a treat this morning, as we wander through the labyrinth of hidden alleyways to uncover secret water wells and ancient staircases. We'll marvel at the fascinating and innovative architecture and enjoy a refreshing drink at a 'locals only' store. Photo opportunities abound! BLD

NOV 12, Wednesday HANOI

We will see a peaceful series of walled courtyards and graceful gateways, and one of the best serving examples of traditional Vietnamese architecture at the Temple of Literature, followed by the miniature One Pillar Pagoda and Ho Chi Minh's Stilt House (viewed through the windows). After enjoying lunch at a local restaurant, we'll embark on a walking tour of the Ancient Quarter or 36 Streets District.

Ancient homes and temples are interspersed with stores in this souvenir hunter's paradise. An exciting traditional water puppet show will top off our day! BLD

NOV 13, Thursday HANOI / HA LONG BAY

We drive to Vietnam's Ha Long Bay and board a not-so-traditional wooden Junk for a cruise amongst this UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its magnificent natural beauty. On board, we will enjoy a seafood lunch and cruise through the islands as we explore a series of breathtaking caves and grottoes. **Paradise Junk Cruise** (1 night) BLD

NOV 14, Friday HA LONG BAY/HANOI/HO CHI MINH

We disembark and make our way back to Hanoi, with lunch at a local restaurant en route, to board our flight to the southern city of Ho Chi Minh, formerly known as Saigon. We will visit the majestic Presidential Palace, delve into the rich heritage at the History Museum, marvel at the stunning Notre Dame Cathedral, reflect on the past at the War Remnants Museum, and experience the vibrant atmosphere of Ben Thanh Market.

Sofitel Plaza Saigon (2 nights) BLD

NOV 15, Saturday HO CHI MINH

Saigon, once the capital of the French colony of Cochinchina and the "Paris of the Orient" is now Vietnam's largest city. This industrial, cultural and educational hub still retains vestiges of its colonial past. We will tour the incredible underground network at Cu Chi Tunnels, followed by China Town and Temples. BLD

NOV 16, Sunday MY THO / EMBARK / BEN TRE

We depart for the port for embarkation, enjoy lunch, then journey by sampans through mangroves and bamboo forests to the fruit orchards of Ben Tre while sailing along the Mekong Delta. **RV Mekong Pandaw** (7 nights) BLD

NOV 17, Monday CON PHUOC

Our first taste of life on the Mekong River today, as we visit Con Phuoc Island to see local craftspeople weaving bamboo baskets the traditional way. You may wish to try your hand at making one on your own following a demonstration. BLD

NOV 18, Tuesday CHAU DOC / CAMBODIA BORDER

Visit a Moslem Cham tribal village and a catfish farm in Chau Doc, followed by a short drive to Sam Mountain, where we climb the 400 steps to visit the Hang Pagoda. Back on board for lunch, we sail upstream to the Cambodian border for formalities. BLD

NOV 19, Wednesday PHNOM PENH

This morning we are in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, famous for its French colonial architecture, busy cafes, vibrant nightlife and renovated river "corniche." Our morning visit will be by private cyclo, a style of transport unique to the Orient which provides an excellent way to experience the hustle and bustle of the city. Visit the Royal Palace, the spectacular Silver Pagoda and the National Museum displaying Khmer crafts. After lunch, we visit the Killing Fields and Genocide Museum. We will spend the night in port. BLD

NOV 20, Thursday KAMPONG TRALACH

We embark on a scenic cruise along the picturesque Tonle Sap River. Visit a silver-making village near Kampong Tralac, explore riverside villages, markets, and temples by ox-cart, immersing ourselves in the local way of life. The villagers are eager to share their culture with us, featuring a traditional dance performance and cocktails around a village fire pit. BLD



Fishermen on the banks of the Mekong River



Cruise amongst UNESCO World Heritage Site Ha Long Bay



Buddhist monks at Angkor Wat

NOV 21, Friday OUDONG / SILK ISLAND

Following a stop at the Vipassana Dhura Meditation Centre, we drive to the ancient capital of Cambodia, Oudong. Discover some of the historical wonders before returning to the ship to sail to Koh Nghe Tei (Silk Island) to study the entire silk-making process from worms to weavers. BLD

NOV 22, Saturday ANGKOR BAN / WAT HANCHEY

We delight in a sunrise cruise to Angkor Ban village to observe the daily lives of the locals and visit the library donated by Pandaw to Angkor Ban Secondary School. Our journey continues to Wat Hanchey, a significant center of worship during the Chenla period, situated atop a hill overlooking the majestic Mekong River. BLD

NOV 23, Sunday DISEMBARK / SIEM REAP

After breakfast on board, we transfer by coach to Siem Reap. This afternoon is at leisure to relax at our resort or head into the market to shop or have a drink.

Victoria Angkor Resort (3 nights) BD

NOV 24, Monday SIEM REAP

This morning we visit Angkor Thom, the last capital of the Khmers. We shall see the Elephant and Leper King Terraces together with the stunning Bayon Temple, with its

extensive and detailed relief carvings, and the Baphuon. Our next stop is Ta Prohm, a temple site reclaimed by the jungle and only recently rediscovered. This afternoon explore the world's largest temple, Angkor Wat. With the volume of stone equaling that of the pyramids in Egypt, this temple took 30 years to complete and has been occupied by Buddhist Monks ever since. Of special note are the bas-reliefs on the exterior walls. Then, we visit a school dedicated to teaching traditional arts, stone and wood carving, lacquerware and more. BLD

NOV 25, Tuesday SIEM REAP

This morning we have a special treat; a Khmer cooking class at a local restaurant. Following a briefing we will visit the morning market to purchase the ingredients that we will need. Back at the restaurant, we will help prepare a three-course meal of local delicacies which we will then enjoy at lunch. This afternoon, we visit the Banteay Srei, the "Citadel of Women". This tiny enchanting temple is one of the jewels of this Khmer. Built with red sandstone in the 10th century and dedicated to the Hindu God Shiva, this is the most Indian of all Angkor temples. Finally, we visit Banteay Samre, dating from the early 12th Century. BLD

NOV 26, Wednesday SIEM REAP / BANGKOK

After breakfast we transfer to the airport for our flight to Bangkok. Upon arrival, we take the hotel shuttle to our hotel and enjoy the rest of the day at leisure.

Novotel Bangkok Suvarna Airport Hotel (1 night) B

NOV 27, Thursday BANGKOK / CANADA

After breakfast we join the hotel's free shuttle transfer to Bangkok airport for our flights home. B

Our River Boat • RV Mekong Pandaw

The beautiful **RV Mekong Pandaw** was designed to provide luxurious cruising on Asia's legendary Mekong River. It carries a maximum of just 48 guests and has three decks. All staterooms are 170 sq. ft. or larger, ensuring that all of our creature comforts are exceeded. Public areas include a main restaurant serving Asian and Western specialties; a small gift shop; lounge and bar; library, spa, plus a pool table on the Sun Deck. All staterooms feature twin beds (that can be converted into one large bed), a comfortable sitting area, safe, private bathroom with shower, bathrobe, slippers, hairdryer and more. All staterooms are outside, with panoramic French windows leading to personal deck space, and individually controlled air conditioning. Smoking is not allowed anywhere within the ship and the ship does not have an elevator. Most of the ship's staff speak English.

Sun Deck: bar with complimentary ice cream from sunrise to sunset.

Upper Deck: saloon bar and staterooms.

Main Deck: gallery, store, dining hall, and staterooms.

Lower Deck: gym, library, front desk, spa, and gift shop.



CT Rating 3.5/5 - Challenging: Members can expect a busy itinerary in a region known for hot and humid conditions - daytime temperatures will exceed 30°C. The visits to Angkor involve long walks with many steps and over rough terrain. The riverboat does not have an elevator. Members must be fully mobile and physically active to fully enjoy this journey.

**Book and deposit by November 29, 2024
and save \$200 per person**

Tour/ Cruise Cost in Canadian Dollars Per Person

| | |
|--|----------|
| Land / Cruise Only* (Join/ leave at hotel) | \$10,295 |
| Vancouver | \$12,325 |
| Victoria..... | \$12,395 |
| Calgary / Edmonton..... | \$12,425 |
| Winnipeg / Regina / Saskatoon..... | \$12,595 |
| Toronto | \$12,575 |
| Ottawa / Montreal..... | \$12,675 |
| Halifax / St. John's..... | \$12,825 |
| Single Supplement | \$2,395 |

Singles are limited. *Land/Cruise only price is based on joining at the hotel in Hanoi and leaving at the hotel in Bangkok, and includes three domestic flights: Bangkok to Hanoi, Hanoi to Saigon, and Siem Reap to Bangkok.

Rates are per person based on sharing an Upper Deck Outside Twin cabin. Airfares from other gateways are available on request. Airfares and air carriers are subject to change and will be confirmed prior to final payment. Refer to inclusive features. Prices are based on a minimum of 20 members and on rates, taxes, and fees effective July 2024 and are subject to change due to factors beyond our control. Visa fees are included for Cambodia and Vietnam for Canadian passport holders.

Insurance is NOT INCLUDED but is highly recommended. Premiums are calculated based on the individual's age, destination (country), trip length, and trip booking window – please contact our staff to receive a quote. Your coverage starts on the effective date of your confirmation of coverage. Please discuss your insurance coverage prior to booking. Check our website for the most current information. Refer to the enrollment form for terms and conditions.

**Final payment is due July 30, 2025
Deposit is \$900 per person**

To reserve your spot on this tour, you can either book online through our website or submit an enrollment form along with your deposit to:



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