



## Mekong Discovery

Private Tour | 19 Days | Physical Level 1

Siem Reap – Phnom Penh – 3N Victoria Mekong Cruise – Saigon – Hoi An –  
Hue – Halong Bay – Hanoi

Embark on a journey through the natural wonders, charming cities and cultural treasures of Vietnam and Cambodia! Including a three-night deluxe cruise on the Mekong, the perfect way to catch a glimpse of authentic daily life. You'll visit the temples of Angkor in Cambodia, as well as vibrant Saigon, charming Hoi An, historic Hanoi and the spectacular Halong Bay in Vietnam.

- Drift along Angkor's moat at sunset
- See the local life in Tonle Sap
- Visit captivating French colonial Phnom Penh
- Spend 3 nights cruising the Mekong
- Test your senses at Noir restaurant in Saigon
- Learn traditional farming techniques in Hoi An
- Cruise the magnificent Halong Bay
- Explore Hanoi's dynamic Old Quarter
- Enjoy the Quintessence of Tonkin show



#### Mekong Discovery tour inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- Most meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking Local Guides
- Cambodia & Vietnam visa fees for Australian passport holders
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides

*The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary.*

#### Private Tours:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of Southeast Asia on a private tour. You will be accompanied by our dedicated local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

#### Physical Level 1:

All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights.

‘Mekong Discovery’ is rated as a **physical level 1** tour. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it’s more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You’ll be getting on and off coaches, walking around the sights and climbing some steps.

- There will be sightseeing on foot for both short and extended periods of time often on uneven surfaces
- You will be required to get on and off small boats without assistance

Of course, our local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

## Itinerary – Mekong Discovery

### Day 1: Siem Reap

Meals included: Nil

You will be met at Siem Reap in the arrivals hall by your Local Guide from Wendy Wu Tours. Together with all other group members who may be arriving at a similar time travel to your hotel for check in.



#### Destination Information

**Siem Reap** - Siem Reap is a bustling tourist destination due to its proximity to both the ancient Khmer national capital city of Angkor as well as Tonle Sap Lake. Angkor Wat is one of the main attractions and is the world's largest religious monument, in addition to being the spiritual and cultural heart of Cambodia. This huge complex of palaces and temples were built on the sprawling alluvial plain to the north of Tonle Sap.

### Day 2: Siem Reap

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Spanning from the 9th to 15th century, the Angkor complex with over 1,000 temples was the seat of the thriving Khmer Empire. UNESCO manages the complex and to enter, your group will drive approximately 6km out of town to the main entrance gate to get your entrance passes, which you must carry with you. If you choose to climb at any site, you must be able to climb and descend without assistance. Begin at the city of Angkor Thom and the enigmatic Bayon, the Elephant Terrace and the Terrace of the Leper King before continuing to the temple of Ta Prohm, enveloped in a labyrinth of jungle. This afternoon is devoted to the fascinating and awe-inspiring Angkor Wat. Later, relax on-board a boat and view the sunset on Angkor Thom's moat.



*Please note: The Central Tower of the Angkor Wat complex is closed on Buddhist holidays and on all other days has a limited number of visitors allowed at any given time, under regulations from UNESCO. If you wish to visit this tower, you will be required to wait in the queue alongside all other visitors. The ability to do this will be determined upon your schedule.*

#### Destination Information

**Angkor Thom** - This fortified city is flanked by a row of 54 stone figures on each side, which leads you through a 23-meter imposing stone entrance gate to the various temples inside.

**Bayon** - Beautifully crafted central towers, decorated with four opposing faces representing King Jayavarman VII. Bayon's stone galleries display extraordinary bas-reliefs incorporating over 11,000 figures.



**Elephant Terrace and Terrace of the Leper King** - Giant viewing platforms used for public ceremonies, which served as a base for the King's grand audience hall.

**Ta Prohm** - Swallowed by the jungle where Strangler Figs and Kapok Trees have entwined themselves around the ruins. Undoubtedly, the most atmospheric ruin at Angkor with several towers, closed courtyards and narrow corridors to explore.

**Angkor Wat** - Surrounded by a 190-meter moat and taking 30 years to build, Angkor Wat represents the Khmer civilisation at its grandest. With its fascinating decorative flourishes, extensive bas-relief and multiple tiers, it is the best-preserved temple within the complex.

### Day 3: Siem Reap

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

In the high-water season, drive to Kampong Phluk is a cluster of three villages of stilts houses built within the floodplain of the Tonle Sap lake. In the lower water season, you will visit Chong Kneas floating village. Get a glimpse into local life at the home of a Khmer family. Return to Siem Reap to enjoy an afternoon at leisure.



### Day 4: Siem Reap – Phnom Penh

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Depart Siem Reap and fly 1 hour to Phnom Penh, a city of attractive boulevards. Visit the Cambodian Royal Palace and the opulent Silver Pagoda by cyclo before travelling to the National Museum with extensive artefacts on display, sightseeing today will involve approximately 3 hours on foot. Make a final stop at Wat Phnom and then enjoy the rest of the day at leisure.



#### Destination Information

**Phnom Penh** - The capital of the Kingdom of Cambodia is built around four river arms formed by a sharp curve in the Mekong River near the junctions of the Bassac and the Tonle Sap tributaries. This charming city has a pleasant blend of oriental and colonial architecture, but reminders of a troubled past are also evident.

**The Royal Palace** - Built in 1866 by the French these ornate buildings are the official residence of the reigning Cambodian royal family and King Sihamoni. View the Throne Hall and Silver Pagoda.

**Silver Pagoda** - This concrete and marble structure includes a floor with over 5,000 silver tiles each weighing 1kg. Famous artefacts include a 90kg solid gold Buddha made in 1907 and an Emerald Buddha said to be made of baccarat crystal.

**National Museum** - Housing the world's finest collection of Khmer pottery, bronzes and sculptures dating from the 4th century.

**Wat Phnom** - Home to a hilltop temple that carries the cities namesake. Locals flock here to pray for good luck and success.

#### Day 5: Phnom Penh

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Reflect on the history of the city with a visit to the Tuol Sleng Museum and Killing Fields. The visit to the Tuol Sleng Museum involves 1 hour on foot. This museum commemorates the atrocities that occurred during the regime of Pol Pot. The transfer south-west to the Killing Fields will take 30 minutes. You will spend about 1 hour here on foot for a harrowing insight into Cambodia's tumultuous past. Most people find it quite confronting and emotional so you will be given time to explore on your own. In the afternoon, experience how traditional arts are preserved with a Cambodian Living Arts tour before enjoying a cold glass of local beer with beautiful views over the riverfront.

##### Destination Information

**Tuol Sleng Museum** - This former school was used by the Khmer Rouge as a detention and torture centre in the late 1970s. Today this building houses paintings and photographs of the victims. You can see the crude cells built in the classrooms and the torture devices used to extract confessions by the regime.

**Killing Fields** - The emotional Killing Fields of Cheung Ek, made famous by the film of the same name. More than 17,000 civilians were killed and buried in mass graves here making this place a chilling reminder of the brutalities of the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime.

**Cambodian Living Arts** – Founded by a genocide survivor, Cambodia Living Arts works to preserve Cambodia's endangered performing arts heritage by helping talented artists develop careers.

#### Day 6: Phnom Penh – Victoria Mekong Cruise

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Spend the morning at leisure, before transferring to Phnom Penh where you board the Victoria Mekong. After a welcome briefing, you will cast off into the waters of the Mekong Delta. Relax with a sundowner on deck and sit down to a sumptuous gala dinner whilst enjoying an Apsara performance on board.



##### Destination Information

**Mekong River** – The 7<sup>th</sup> longest river in Asia and the heart of Southeast Asia civilisation, there is no tapestry of river life as fascinating and varied as the Mekong.

**Day 7: Victoria Mekong Cruise**

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Sail towards the border, passing into Vietnam in the early afternoon. Spend a relaxed morning enjoying the passing scenery and a wealth of onboard activities, such as a cultural lecture and cocktail making. In Vam Nao, go offshore by sampan to visit traditional cottage industries such as traditional clay pottery and local rice cakes. This evening, before dinner, experience a thrilling lion dance performance! Drop anchor at Vam Nao.

**Day 8: Victoria Mekong Cruise**

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Continue downstream to Long Xuyen and disembark to visit the bustling floating market and a local museum. After lunch back onboard, arrive at Tan Loc Island, where you'll be able to explore by electric bike, visiting the Ancient House and a lush garden for tea and fruit - a taste of Mekong hospitality. Alternatively, go by local motor cart to a plum farm where they distill plum wine, which you can taste. Sail on to Can Tho, a Mekong Delta city where the ship will dock. Enjoy a performance of *Đờn ca tài tử* - traditional music of the Mekong, while you sip a farewell cocktail and dinner.

**Day 9: Victoria Mekong Cruise – Saigon**

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Enjoy breakfast onboard and visiting a local floating market by boat. Disembark and bid farewell to the Victoria Mekong, boarding the ship's shuttle bus from Can Tho to Saigon, stopping en route in Cai Be for a delicious local lunch. This evening, dinner will be at Noir, a restaurant that supports Saigon's visually impaired, for a sensory dining experience.

**Destination Information**

**Saigon** - The exuberant city of Saigon is driving Vietnam forward into the modern world, but is also a treasure trove of fascinating heritage. During the 1960s and early 1970s, Saigon was the Pearl of the Orient, which flourished under the American occupation. In more recent times, it was the seat of the South Vietnam government until the events that led to the country's reunification. Today, the old mixes seamlessly with the new and you can wander through timeless alleys to incense-infused temples before catching up with the present in designer malls beneath sleek skyscrapers.

**Noir Restaurant** – A unique culinary experience, Noir is a restaurant where you dine in the dark and experience your food in new ways. Waiters with visual impairments become your eyes and guide you through a delicious meal to challenge your other four senses.

**Day 10: Saigon**

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Confront the reality of guerrilla warfare at the Cu Chi Tunnels. The cramped tunnels were central to a few of the war's strategic operations, including the famous 1968 Tet Offensive, and they did not escape damage. American B52 bombers dropped hundreds of missiles leaving huge tell-tale craters behind. The Cu Chi experience can be emotional for some visitors, but it offers a fascinating window into the hardship and traumas of war. Sightseeing here involves two hours on foot on uneven mud paths through the bush and, if you choose, crawling through some of the tunnels. Return to Saigon to explore its heady mix of local culture and colonial influences. See Notre Dame Cathedral, the Central Post Office, and the chilling War Remnants Museum, stopping for a coffee break at one of the best coffee workshops on the way.

**Destination Information**

**Cu Chi** - the tunnels of Cu Chi are an immense network of connecting underground tunnels located in the Cu Chi district of Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), Vietnam, and are part of a much larger network of tunnels that underlie much of the country. The Cu Chi tunnels were the location of several military campaigns during the Vietnam War, and were the Viet Cong's base of operations for the Tet Offensive in 1968. The tunnels were used by Viet Cong soldiers as hiding spots during combat, as well as serving as communication and supply routes, hospitals, food and weapon caches and living quarters for numerous North Vietnamese fighters. The tunnel systems were of great importance to the Viet Cong in their resistance to American forces, and helped to counter the growing American military effort.

**Notre Dame Cathedral** - Influenced by French design and built between 1863 and 1880, the red brick exterior and 60-metre bell towers overlook downtown Saigon.

**Central Post Office** - Located next to the Notre-Dame Cathedral. The Central Post Office building was constructed in the late 19th century. It counts Gothic, Renaissance and French influences and was designed by Auguste Henri Vildieu and Alfred Foulhoux, but is often erroneously credited as being the work of Gustave Eiffel.

**War Remnants Museum** - Comprised of numerous buildings displaying military equipment, photographs and artefacts relating to the Vietnam War from 1961-1975. This museum illustrates a harrowing period in this nation's history.

## Day 11: Saigon – Hoi An

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

After breakfast, depart Saigon and fly 1h20 to Da Nang Airport. Drive 45 minutes to your hotel in Hoi An. Enjoy a walking tour through the streets of Hoi An, arriving first at Chua Ong Pagoda. Next, pass by the 200-year old Tan Ky House and take a short break at the Japanese Covered Bridge - one of Hoi An's most iconic structures. Visit the Reaching Out Tea House, an establishment that aids locals with disabilities, for a rejuvenating cup of tea.



### Destination Information

**Hoi An** - Perhaps more than any other place in Vietnam, Hoi An retains the feel of centuries past. Once known as Faifo, Hoi An was an influential port along the Silk Road. For over 500 years merchants from China, Japan, France and Portugal settled in the prosperous town resulting in a distinctive blend of culture, cuisine, religion and architecture.

**Japanese Covered Bridge** - First constructed in the 1590s to link the Japanese and Chinese quarters of the town. This iconic pink hued bridge has been restored to its former splendour.

**Reaching Out** – Provides opportunities for people with disabilities to learn skills and gain meaningful employment. The arts and crafts workshop provides a platform for local people to showcase their talents.

## Day 12: Hoi An

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

This morning visit a local community farming project just outside of Hoi An - Tra Que village where the community has come together to create a large vegetable farm. Learn the traditional methods the farmers use to plant, fertilise and harvest the crop, then try your hand at raking the ground and sowing seeds. Enjoy the rest of your day at leisure, with options to head to the beach or explore Hoi An ancient town.

### Destination Information

**Tra Que Village** - Located a few kilometres from Hoi An, this picturesque village is renowned for its agriculture. Witness local farming techniques and learn about different exotic Vietnamese produce.



**Day 13: Hoi An - Hue**

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Leave Hoi An this morning heading north to Hue. Driving over the scenic Hai Van Pass, passing the fishing village of Lang Co, to enjoy panoramic views of the central coastline. After check in, visit the Imperial Citadel containing the Forbidden Purple City which is still being restored many years after the destruction caused by street fighting and bombing during the American War in Vietnam. Continue with a cruise along the Perfume River to the Thien Mu Pagoda, Hue's oldest and most beautiful pagoda, built on a hillock overlooking the river.



Boarding your cruise could involve navigating your way over and through other boats, moored between it and the dock, sometimes without handrails, ladders or assistance from staff. Finally, visit Tha Om Garden House and its owner, Mr Vinh. Explore the traditional 19th century Hue residence and listen to Mr Vinh's stories of his royal heritage before returning to your hotel.

**Destination Information**

**Hue** - The imperial capital of Vietnam from 1802-1945, when the last emperor abdicated the throne, Hue is still regarded as the seat of Vietnam's culture and religion today.

**Imperial Citadel** - A walled fortress accompanied by cannons, artilleries and surrounded by a moat for protection. Inside the Citadel are numerous gates, courtyards and the Forbidden Purple City.

**Forbidden Purple City** - Constructed for personal use by the Imperial family, their concubines and eunuchs. This royal structure is still being restored many years after the destruction caused by street fighting and bombing during the American war in Vietnam. Wander the grounds and foundations whilst viewing the remaining woodwork and architecture.

**Thien Mu Pagoda** - This seven-storey octagonal tower built on a hillock, overlooking the Perfume River is Hue's oldest and most beautiful pagoda. Wander the grounds where bonsai, ponds and the smell of incense set a peaceful backdrop.

**Day 14: Hoi An – Hanoi**

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

After an early breakfast, head to the Royal Tomb of Minh Mang to explore the opulent and exotic resting place laid out in formal Chinese style. Transfer to Danang and fly 1 hour and 20 minutes to the charming city of Hanoi where you will check into your hotel. This afternoon, visit the serene Temple of Literature, Hanoi's first university. Then take a cyclo tour of Hanoi's Old Quarter. Each cyclo takes one passenger and is operated by a cycle driver behind the carriage. Wrap up your ride with an opportunity to taste some traditional egg coffee, and feel like a local on your plastic stool!


**Destination Information**

**Hanoi** - With a population of approximately four million, Hanoi is a charming and richly historic city of lakes, shaded boulevards and leafy open parks. The centre is an architectural museum piece housing groups of ochre coloured buildings holding the air of provincial French towns of the 1930s, a "Paris of the Orient" as people have called it.

## Day 15: Hanoi

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Discover the sights of Hanoi today. First stop at the Ho Chi Minh Quarter and Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum, followed by the Humble House on Stilts and the One Pillar Pagoda. Next, drive to the Ethnology Museum (closed on Mondays). This evening, attend The Quintessence of Tonkin show, an artistic open-air performance celebrating the rich history of northern Vietnam.

*Please note: Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum is closed for entry on Mondays and Fridays every week and from September to December each year. During these times we are unable to enter the Mausoleum; however, we can view it from the outside.*



### Destination Information

**Ho Chi Minh Quarter** - Dedicated to the father of modern Vietnam and where Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum stands in Ba Dinh Square. Ho Chi Minh first declared independence from French rule in 1945.

**Humble House on Stilts** - In the grounds of the Presidential Palace sits the 2 storey wooden home of Ho Chi Minh who ruled Vietnam from here until his death in 1969.

**One Pillar Pagoda** - Rebuilt in 1955 after damage during the French evacuation, the pagoda is made of wood and sits on a single pillar. Designed to reflect the shape of a lotus flower emerging from the water, it has become a popular spot for locals to enjoy the tranquil surroundings.

**Museum of Ethnology** - Widely acknowledged as the best in the country, it has an extensive display dedicated to Vietnam's 54 ethnic minority groups.

## Day 16: Hanoi – Halong Bay

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Drive around 2 and a half hours today from Hanoi to Halong, where you will take an overnight cruise to the far-most corners of the bay by boat. There is usually a crowd of boats at the docks; however, the cruise itself will be scenic and relaxing. Boarding your boat could involve navigating your way over and through other boats, moored between it and the dock, sometimes without handrails, ladders or assistance from staff.



Enjoy lunch onboard as you cruise out into the bay, stopping to anchor for an afternoon of activities (which are subject to change due to cruise selection and weather conditions). Sightseeing includes visiting underground caves on the islands, which require climbing up and down steps inside and outside of the caves. End the day on deck with a drink in hand to watch the sunset over the bay followed by a freshly prepared dinner, before retiring to your cabin for the night.

*You will need to pack a smaller overnight bag for your trip to Halong Bay. Main luggage will be left in safe storage at the hotel in Hanoi and picked up your return.*

*Please note: Weather conditions such as mist, fog, wind, rain and storms may delay the departure time of your cruise, or in some cases your cruise may be cancelled. Notifications of any delays or cancellations may not be known until your group's arrival in Halong Bay. If your cruise is cancelled after your arrival in Halong Bay, you will have lunch in Halong City and return to Hanoi. If notification of the cruise cancellation is given prior to your departure for Halong Bay an alternative day trip will be arranged to Hoa Lu and Tam Coc or 'Halong Bay on Land', an area located approximately 2 hours from Hanoi. Our guides will make every effort to inform the group at the earliest possible moment should there be any itinerary changes.*

#### **Destination Information**

**Halong Bay** - Compared to the landscape of the limestone islets of Guilin in China and Krabi in southern Thailand, Halong Bay shares a common border with China in the north and harbours some of the most stunning scenery in Vietnam. Unique rock sculptures jut out dramatically from the clear emerald waters of the Gulf of Tonkin and numerous grottoes have created an enchanting, timeless world, looking out onto the horizon with the sails of the junks and sampans completing the picture.

#### **Day 17: Halong Bay – Hanoi**

Meals included: Brunch, Dinner

Spend the morning sailing through Halong Bay. After an early lunch (or brunch meal) disembark your cruise and return to Hanoi.

#### **Days 18-19: Depart Hanoi**

Meals included: Breakfast

You will be transferred 1 hour from the hotel to the airport, according to the departure time of your international flight. Any time before your flight is at leisure. Arrive home to Australia the same or the following day.

## Mekong Discovery Travel Information

### Visas

Entry visas are required for visitors to Cambodia and Vietnam. Particularly when arriving by port into Cambodia, a physical visa is required and therefore must be applied for in advance of travel. Wendy Wu Tours' Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining one. We will supply you with all paperwork and submit the visa application on your behalf. Visas for Vietnam are issued with specific start and expiry dates which are based on the dates stated on the visa application form. Travel must be completed within those dates. Please be advised that your passport must have at least 6-months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia. Visa application forms and all relevant documentation are due in our office 60 days prior to departure; if received after this, urgent visa processing fees will apply.

To stay up to date with the latest visa requirements and travel advice visit [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au).

### Insurance

It is a condition of booking with us that you take out suitable travel insurance. You must provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number when you book with us or as soon as possible thereafter. These details will be available to your Local Guide should they be required. Wendy Wu Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

### Eating in South East Asia

Southeast Asia is home to an incredibly rich food history. The local cuisine is known for its intense flavours, spices and some of the freshest ingredients you can find. In general, meals include either rice or noodles and are packed full of flavour. Lemongrass, ginger, lime leaves, coriander, fish sauce and soy sauce are used in most local dishes. Whilst Southeast Asian food has a reputation for being hot and spicy, each region actually has its own distinct characteristics. Vietnam, for example, is perhaps best known for its fresh and aromatic dishes – relying heavily on flavours from fresh herbs such as mint, basil and dill.

Your itinerary has been carefully crafted to introduce you to a range of local dishes and we hope that you enjoy the culinary adventure ahead. All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from dinner on the day of your groups' arrival until breakfast on your day of departure. When dining in Southeast Asia, although some restaurants have adopted a western approach to dining, expect some restaurants to follow the traditional communal style of eating. Typically, this will mean each diner has their own small bowl and may serve themselves from a variety of shared dishes. At some local restaurants, appetizers and main courses might be served when they are ready instead of following a particular order.

Determining when it's appropriate to use chopsticks, forks or spoons can be challenging for some travellers, even other Asians, as each country has different customs. In Vietnam, dishes are normally placed in the centre and people serve food for themselves with their own chopsticks and bowl. In Thailand and some other countries in Southeast Asia, fork and spoon are used for most dishes and chopsticks are typically provided to eat noodles. Usually chopsticks or other utensils are provided to scoop the food into your bowl to prevent your own chopsticks from touching the food that remains on the table. Dining in Southeast Asia is fairly casual with not too many rules. Leaving food on the plate is not considered rude.





Please refer to your travel guide for more information on Southeast Asian cuisine, including information for travellers with restricted diets.

### Accommodation

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between Australia and Southeast Asia. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your Local Guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

### Transport

**Coaches:** Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. However, mini buses may be used for smaller groups (under 10 passengers). Roads in South East Asia have generally improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road - not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the itinerary are approximations only.

**Planes:** Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

### Development in South East Asia

Although South East Asia is developing quickly, it still lacks the international standards of civil infrastructure and tourist facilities. Concepts of personal responsibility are also different to those in Australia. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in Australia; for example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade. All of our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense, refer to notices and follow advice from your Local Guides.

### Cambodia and Vietnam public holidays

If you are travelling within the below Cambodian and Vietnamese Public Holidays please note that celebrations can last a couple of days and during these times some businesses will be closed and coach, air and train travel may be affected. Tourist attractions will be open, but may be crowded. In Vietnam Tet Holiday is between 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 2019, 25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> Jan 2020, International Labour Day is on 1<sup>st</sup> May every year, Reunification Day is on 30<sup>th</sup> April every year and National Independence Day is on 2<sup>nd</sup> September every year. In Cambodia Khmer New Year is 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> April every year, the King's birthday is 14<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> May and the Water festival is between 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> November.

### Tipping Policy

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and Southeast Asia is no exception. However, it is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time. In order to avoid any inconvenience Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount is given to your Local Guide at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed to local guides and drivers throughout your tour. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for your Local Guide.

### After your booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au) as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

We also recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful [www.travelvax.com.au](http://www.travelvax.com.au)

### Itinerary changes

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate; in these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

**Last updated: May 2019**