

Value World Tours

2017 TIPS ON TRAVEL to VIETNAM & CAMBODIA

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To our “*Valued*” Passengers!

The absolute best way of exploring these 2 exotic South Asian destinations!

From bustling Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) to the calm and pristine villages of the unspoiled Cambodian countryside, this fascinating itinerary will satisfy even the most demanding and sophisticated traveller! Superb hotels, all tours and excursions, meals and a fabulous 8 day cruise aboard our deluxe 5* **DELUXE M/V “PRESTIGE 2”**

Mekong River & Delta

The Mekong flows from Southwest China through all the mainland South-East Asian countries - China, Burma (Myanmar), Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam (*a total distance of 4,800 kilometers –or about 2,983 miles*). It connects not just countries and commerce, but also diverse cultures and history. A river journey on the Mekong through Vietnam and Cambodia can offer greater insights and experiences than any other way of exploring two very unique and fascinating lands.

From its marshy source in the highlands of Tibet, the Mekong flows down through China’s Yunnan province in deep gorges and over rapids. Leaving Yunnan, the Mekong forms the Myanmar-Laos border, then curves E and S through NW Laos before marking part of the Laos-Thailand border. From Laos the river descends onto the Cambodian plains, where it receives water from the giant Tonle Sap Lake during the dry season by way of the Tonle River. During the rainy season the floodwaters of the Mekong reverse the direction of the Tonle Sap River and flow into Tonle Sap, a lake that is a natural reservoir, over 150km (93 miles) in length and rich in fishing grounds.

The Mekong finally flows into the South China Sea through its many tributaries in the vast Mekong Delta. The Delta, which covers an area of 39,000 sq. km (about 15,058 sq. miles), is crisscrossed by many channels and canals and is one of the greatest rice-growing areas of Asia. It is a densely populated region with Saigon located just to the east of the Delta. This is a fascinating area to explore, with whole towns floating on rafts, and a richness of river activities. Lush tropical plantations and gardens extend along endless channels. There are over 5,000 km (3,107 miles) of waterways in the Mekong Delta.

The Mekong River is navigable by large vessels for 350km (218 miles) upstream, and Phnom Penh is a designated international port. North of the Cambodian border, the Mekong is navigable in shorter sections as far as the Khone Falls, a series of rapids over 10 km (6 miles) long. Here the Mekong drops 21m (69 feet).

Welcome Aboard!

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Introduction to Vietnam and Cambodia

The changes in economy and politics have only recently opened these countries to foreign tourism. Your participation in traveling to these countries not only helps their economy but also spreads friendship and understanding between our people. You virtually act as an **Ambassador of the United States** when visiting these countries, which were closed to visitors from the west for so long. The impression you leave will have an everlasting effect on future relations between these countries and your own.

It is therefore important that we advise and prepare you for some of the cultural and social differences you will encounter. These *Travel Tips* have been designed to provide useful information and helpful suggestions to ease your adjustment and help you get around any obstacles you may encounter. Your journey will be greatly enhanced if **you take the time to prepare for it**. Thoroughly acquaint yourself with the information provided herewith - but also talk to others who have been there or study one of the many comprehensive guide books available or check the Internet! The effort you put into planning your trip before you go will make all the difference... **THANK YOU!**

Please Note: *The cruise portion of this tour is best described as an expedition cruise. While you will sail in comfort on a ship with all the modern amenities, there are certain aspects of the cruise that are still beyond anyone's control. Delays and changes in the itinerary due to water levels or extended stops at border crossings are to be expected. Leisure cruises along the Mekong are still a novelty to officials and local folk, so your flexibility and patience are kindly requested! ☺*

GENERAL CRUISE & TRAVEL TIPS

VISA REGULATIONS: Travelers from the US **need tourist visas** for entry into Vietnam and Cambodia. While the Vietnamese visa may be obtained prior to your trip or on arrival, you can get the Cambodian visa only at the border. Please note that for your Cambodian visa, you will need to bring one passport size photo (real photos, no photocopies!!!) and a \$35.00 per person application fee (***to be paid in CASH if entering Cambodia through the airport or billed to your cabin if entering Cambodia on the ship.***) **ALSO, please make sure your passport has a minimum of 3 empty pages and is valid 6 months beyond your travel dates so as not to encounter any unnecessary problems at the border.**

CUSTOMS REGULATIONS AND DUTY FREE: Travelers can bring up to \$10,000 into both Vietnam and Cambodia, but they are required to declare it on their customs forms on arrival (*the amount taken out upon exiting must be lower*).

When entering Vietnam, visitors should declare all precious metals, jewelry, cameras, radios, videos and unexposed camera and video film that they plan on taking back with them. Even though actual checks are rarely made, on exiting, you may be asked to prove that you brought all these items with you. When leaving the country you should also keep exchange receipts for all the foreign currency you have spent even though the authorities rarely check. The import and export of Vietnamese Dong is forbidden.

Cambodian/Vietnamese Customs also allow 200 cigarettes or the equivalent in tobacco and cigars, 1 open bottle of spirits and a reasonable amount of perfume. On departure from both Vietnam and Cambodia, duty free facilities may be limited and therefore cannot be relied upon.

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VOUCHERS: If traveling within a group or on any set program, vouchers will **not be required** or issued. If traveling as an individual and/or **deviating from the regular itinerary**, we may issue vouchers for services paid for. **When included, vouchers will be listed on the check-off list sent with your final documents.**

AIR TICKETS: Whenever tickets are issued by *us*, they will be sent/emailed with your final documents. In some cases, when tickets are issued directly by the airlines, **they may be sent to you under separate cover. Please consult your check-off list.**

TRANSFERS: If you have purchased your airfare or have prepaid your arrival transfers through us, **please look for our Tour Guides holding your NAME or our yellow triangle Global Tours & Cruises (GTC) Signs *after exiting the Customs Area of the airports!***



In some cases your individual names may be held by someone at the airport who will then transfer you to your hotel.

If you have purchased **land/cruise only** and are arranging for your own arrival and departure transportation, the names and addresses of your hotel and the port locations will be listed on the **Contact Sheet enclosed and sent with your final documents.**

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS: Before leaving home, please ensure that you have your valid **US PASSPORT** and appropriate **VISAS**. Based on our programs and countries visited, **VISAS** are currently required for traveling to ***Cambodia, China, India, Myanmar, Russia, and Vietnam.*** Please make sure your passport has a validity of at least 6 months beyond your scheduled travel dates and check for visa updates with the appropriate foreign consulates at least 90 days prior to your departure.

If you are a holder of a foreign passport, please check with each country's respective consulates!

BAGGAGE: Make a detailed list of everything you pack for the trip, and then leave this list at home. We cannot be responsible for lost baggage, but most airlines will make every effort to recover baggage or make proper compensation if you are able to itemize the suitcase contents. It is also a good idea to tape a piece of paper **INSIDE** your luggage, which shows your full name, home address and telephone number. **The purchase of Travel Insurance is always strongly recommended!**

BAGGAGE WEIGHT: Please remember that weight allowances vary and are **lower** when flying **domestic** and intra-continental routes, **utilizing smaller aircraft.** **Check your airline ticket or call the specific airline for instructions and pack accordingly or you may face over weight charges!**

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OUR FINAL DOCUMENTS – TRAVEL PORTFOLIOS

FREE ELECTRONIC DELIVERY: *Once final payment is received all paper documents including: day by day itinerary, travel tips, airline tickets, contacts and other related information will be sent to you electronically via email. **This service is free, provided we have your email address.***

PHYSICAL DELIVERY OF OUR PORTFOLIO OF GIFTS & PAPER DOCUMENTS:

*If you do not have email OR would prefer to receive paper documents along with our set of useful, travel related items as outlined below, **YOU MUST NOTIFY US AT THE TIME OF BOOKING and prior to the FINAL PAYMENT deadline so that these items can be sent to you approximately 2 weeks prior to your departure via registered or overnight mail. The items are complimentary, you will only be billed the cost of delivery which is usually around \$20 per address.***

The cost of this service will be added to your invoice.

1. LUGGAGE TAGS: Will be provided. *If you would like your luggage to take the same vacation you do – please use them! **Please note:** The tags have been designed to allow you to list up to 6 points of travel (hotel to ship, ship to hotel, etc.). **DO NOT DISCARD THEM!** Simply **cross out** your previous location and **write in your next destination (and room or cabin number if you know it).** This will help our staff and porters deliver your luggage to you in the shortest possible time!*

2. SQUARE LUGGAGE STICKERS: **If provided,** please stick them visibly on your suitcases when possible - the stickers will allow you, our guides and porters to recognize them quicker and get them to their destination faster!

3. BADGES: **If provided,** please **wear the badges** at all airports, transfer points, hotels, and at any time you are embarking/disembarking the ship. Not only does your badge assist us in providing adequate security on the vessel by identifying you as a group member to our guides, staff and security personnel, it also allows you to get to know your fellow passengers sooner!

NOTE: Since people go by nicknames, our badges come **blank**. Please print your name the way you would like to be addressed and wear them at least for the first few days.

4. PENS & TRAVEL BAGS: Our unique pens and practical travel bags are not only “**good looking**” but superbly designed to hold everything from your documents to cameras to water bottles! People love them- and you will too!

5. SURPRISE GIFT: Depending on your travel destination and time of year, we **may** include a surprise gift, which may be a hat, an umbrella or “cool shades”...who knows, maybe even a winning lotto ticket! (*but you must promise to give us a fair share if you win ☺*)

PASSENGER MIX: There is usually an international mix of people from all over the world – United Kingdom, France, Germany, Switzerland, Scandinavia. It is an excellent opportunity to meet the people of the world and make new and long lasting friends! Whatever the mix, however, **English is always the primary language used.**

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WEATHER:

There are no good or bad seasons to visit. The weather year round in the southern regions of Indochina is always *hot and humid*. It is basically divided in two seasons: the Wet (May through September, wettest in June and July) when monsoon rains are a daily 2 hour occurrence and the Dry Season (October to April) where the rains are gone – but the heat is always there – no avoiding it! (*Good news is – you are just visiting!*)

CLOTHING SUGGESTIONS:

The dress code is **INFORMAL!** So please - **PACK LIGHTLY!** The emphasis should be on casual wear. For a few dressier dinners in restaurants, the Captain's dinner, and **entering Buddhist shrines, you will need to have a pair of long pants or dresses below the knee (no shorts & t-shirts).** However, for all other days and activities, **due to heat and humidity**, we suggest lightweight cottons, shorts/t-shirts, avoiding synthetic materials as much as possible. In the dry season, long sleeves may be needed, when it can be cooler in the early mornings and evenings. During the wetter months a lightweight raincoat, rain poncho, waterproof jacket, and/or an umbrella will be useful.

SHOES:

Do pay particular attention to footwear - you should have a good pair of comfortable walking shoes with thick rubber soles and firm arch supports and a pair of flip flops. If you buy new shoes, "*break them in*" before the trip. **These cruises involve extensive walking during visits ashore, so you need to be comfortable! When ashore, guests should wear easily removable footwear for visiting Buddhist sites.** At certain times, when the riverbanks and paths are very dusty or muddy, we will ask you to kindly remove your shoes when returning to the ship so that the crew can clean them for you. Suitable footwear aboard the ship would be sneakers, deck shoes, tennis shoes and similar rubber-soled shoes.

PHYSICAL DISABILITIES:

Please note that the majority of the passenger vessels sailing the various rivers of the world (*including this program*) have limited services for the physically impaired. **There are no elevators, and staircases are the norm.** In addition, due to their small size and shallow draft, the ships often anchor at remote undeveloped ports and stops. **While this ability enhances the itineraries, it also means that most of the shore excursions are done on foot.** Therefore, severe walking disabilities may limit the passenger's overall enjoyment on these programs. Passengers should be surefooted for this program.

Regretfully, we do not recommend this cruise to severely disabled passengers, and wheelchairs cannot be brought on board!

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CRUISING ALONG THE MEKONG RIVER

Your enjoyment of the trip will depend in large part on your positive attitude. Here are a few pointers that will help you prepare for your journey regardless of the country you are visiting. Cruising the Mekong River is a **new and unique experience** compared to any other form of travel!

General River Rules

1. **Maritime Law** - As with a pilot on a plane, the Captain of a ship is the **ultimate law**. He is responsible for the ultimate safety and comfort of the vessel and its passengers. It is within the Captain's jurisdiction to change the sequence of stops, ports, etc. if he deems it necessary due to inclement weather conditions, high or low water levels, dock and lock schedules, technical reasons etc. The Captain has the right to remove unruly passengers, quarantine the ship in case of disease and similar. Therefore, although unlikely, **certain changes in schedules may happen**. Though we expect to provide sightseeing of all of the major stops and attractions listed in our cruise program, there is a possibility **that the sequence of touring** may be altered to take into account the operating hours at museums, galleries and monuments. Shore excursions may be changed in response to sailing conditions and other factors. *Your understanding and cooperation in such instances is expected as well as appreciated!*
2. **Cultural Differences** - Remember that you may be traveling through countries whose political, social and cultural backgrounds may be different from your own. Do not let political differences govern your perspective. Instead, travel with an open mind, and you will satisfy your curiosity about the people, their lands, their history and their culture.
3. **Service** - If you receive poor service at any point, try to take it in good humor and solve it directly. If you have any serious complaints, take them to your **guide and/or Cruise Director**.
4. **Bureaucracy** - Expect a little bit of red tape and try not to be bothered by bureaucratic rituals, which may be different from country to country.
5. **5. Do not compare things you see by American standards**. Our ship was specifically built for cruising the unique Mekong Delta. Although quite comfortable, it is small and practical and should not be compared with huge ocean faring vessels. Above all, keep your sense of humor and enjoy the cultural legacies, physical geography and rich variety of the people as you sail through these unique and different lands.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

HOTELS: In this tour & cruise package, we have added a pre/post stays in **Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and Siem Reap, Cambodia**. (*check your itinerary*). We always use **First Class or Deluxe** properties, and a breakfast is included (*for further information consult your vouchers or itinerary*). Other meals are provided as specified in your tour itinerary. In all cases, hotels are carefully selected to provide **the best combination of location, comfort and value**. For actual hotels used on your particular departure, please check the "**Contact List**" included with your final documents.

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The M/V “PRESTIGE II” *5

Launched in 2014, this fabulous, teak enhanced modern vessel features all outside cabins with private BALCONIES, a maximum of 64 passengers and spacious public areas including spa and Jacuzzi! Sumptuous meals are accompanied by FREE beer, soft drinks and non-alcoholic beverages all day and added wine with dinner, a crew of 30, plus multi-lingual Cruise Managers and all your on board activities, concerts, lectures and shore excursions are included!

DOCKING LOCATIONS & TRANSFER INFORMATION TO/FROM SHIP

For all passengers purchasing the full land/cruise package, we include FREE transfers from/to the ship

HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM:

The pick up/ drop off point for all passengers is at 9 am on day of embarkation The drop off time is approximately 1 pm. **Hotel SOFITEL PLAZA, 17 Le Duan District 1, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.**
The drive to My Tho takes about 2 hours

SIEM REAP, CAMBODIA:

The pick up time (9:00)* and drop off point (approximately 13:00)* for all passengers is at the **Sokha Angkor Hotel, National Road No 6 & Sivatha Street Junction Siem Reap, Kingdom of Cambodia**
**NOTE: From town to pier the drive time is about 45 minutes. However, in case of low water, a longer bus transfer may be needed in which case times of pick up/drop off may have to be adjusted.*

The M/V “PRESTIGE II” *5 – SHIP INFORMATION a..b..c’s

Air conditioning

Cabins, restaurant and bar are air-conditioned. Inside the cabins, the system is controllable and adjustable.

Boutique/ Shop

A shop is available, offering a wide range of basic items and souvenirs from Vietnamese and Cambodian handcrafted villages along the Mekong river. The Mekong Prestige supports local communities by buying their product to sell in the shop and most of the profit goes back to local people.

Cabins : All cabins are approximately 215 sq feet in size and feature twin beds that **can** be put together, wardrobe and storage space, a lounge with a sofa, coffee table and a writing desk, private bathroom with shower, toilet and sink, hair dryer and a mini-safe is also available. Air conditioning and climate control are individually adjustable. All cabins have a Private balcony, with large windows and sliding glass doors. The 4 Junior Suites are approximately 250 sq feet and include all cabin amenities plus larger balconies and bathtubs in additions to showers in the bathrooms.

Communication & Internet

Laptops & cell phones run on virtually the entire route but overseas communications are very expensive. In case of emergency, it may be possible to use the cell phone of the ship for a fee. Free WIFI is available on board, in the main lounge, but quality and speed may vary.

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Daily Information

A program of the events on board is produced daily and delivered to your cabin each evening. For your convenience, it is also posted on the bulletin board at the Reception desk.

Dining

Breakfast & Lunch are served buffet style with local Vietnamese & Cambodian food and Asian fusion cuisine. Dinner is served in one sitting service and you can enjoy free local beer or wine. The gourmet food menu is changed every day, using local sources, featuring both Asian and French influenced International cuisine. A choice of main courses for dinner including vegetarian selections are always available.

Dipping Pool/Jacuzzi

You can enjoy wonderful bubble pool while cruising, located on the Sun Deck.

Dress Code

Dress code is informal. We advise bringing cotton garments comfortable and practical. Do not forget wool jacket, waterproof light, walking shoes for excursions, bathing suit, sunglasses and sun hat and sunscreen products.

Electricity

All outlets are 220 V. The outlet in your bathroom is convertible to 110 V and is to be used for electric shavers only. A converter and an adapter are needed for all other 110 V appliances used in your cabin. We suggest you bring along a converter and appropriate adaptors/plugs –see below.

- 1) **UNIVERSAL TRANSFORMER** to convert from the US 110 Volts to the 220 (please check your electronic devices as some newer models automatically convert within a voltage range).
- 2) **UNIVERSAL ADAPTER PLUGS** for sockets, which are different than at home. Since there are no supplies of converters/adapters on board we highly recommend you purchase transformer adapter plug set at any travel or appliance store before you leave. “2 round plug about 1 inch apart” is the one needed.

NOTE TO CAMERA & VIDEO OPERATORS: Most Asian countries have a different TV system (*PAL/SECAM*) than the United States (*NTSC*). **They are not compatible!** The same is true for DVD codes, DVDs in Asia are encoded differently than in the US. DVDs you purchase during their trip may therefore not operate in your DVD player! Also, film or memory cards for cameras may be different and not readily available.

Bring along enough supplies, including batteries or a recharger!

Excursions

When moored, you are welcome to come and go from the ship. ***We ask all passengers to hand in their key before leaving the ship so the staff can track who is on board and who is not.*** The sailing time will be advised on the Daily Schedule and passengers are requested to consult this before leaving the ship. Group shore excursions are organized by the Cruise Director and are accompanied by a member of the ship’s crew. Details of these are posted in the schedule as well.

Fitness Facilities

A gym is located near the Indoor bar Lounge and the use of this facility is free of charge.

Food & Drink

On the boat, mineral (natural) water, non-alcoholic drinks such as sodas (except fresh juices and cocktails), local beer, tea and coffee are included in the price of your trip and free of charge in the restaurant, bar and lounge. Free **Local wine** is also included at dinner aboard the ship. All other drinks are at your expense.

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Health & Vaccination

No vaccinations are required at this time. There is no Doctor on board. However, in case of emergency, local medical stations are within reach on land.

Language

English is the primary language on board and daily excursions with English speaking guides in each destination are included as outlined in the tour and cruise program.

Laundry

A regular on board laundry service is available to passengers and a price list and laundry bag are placed in each cabin. If you wish to use this service, please place items in the laundry bag provided and leave them in your cabin. They will be picked up by your cabin steward and returned the next day. Costs will be signed to your cabin.

Massage and Spa

Two massage salons are available on the Sun Deck for a surcharge. Please contact the reception to book these services.

Money Matters

The currency used on board is the **USD (\$)**. The Vietnamese Dong is also accepted. The Purser will be happy to give you any exchange rate information you may need. Please be advised to bring with you new, **undamaged** notes in small denominations. Credit cards are also taken on board (**Visa & MasterCard only**). All on-board expenses will be charged to your shipboard account and settled at the end of the cruise (in USD or Credit card).

Reception Desk

Located on the Upper Deck, the Reception Desk is open 24 hours a day

Smoking Policy

For the safety and comfort of our passengers, all enclosed public areas as well as cabins, are strictly non-smoking. Smoking is only possible on Sun Deck.

Time Difference

Cambodia & Vietnam Standard Time Zone is: UTC/GMT + 7 hours

Tipping

We leave to your discretion tips for crew, guides and drivers during excursions. See suggestions below.

Towels for Pool and Sun Deck

Towels in your cabins are changed daily. For use on the Sun Deck and Pool, Towels will be graciously delivered by the Bar attendant.

Useful Information

SHOPPING: Indo-China offers a variety of goods for the tourist such as lacquer wear, clothing and fabrics, in particular silk and cottons. It is one of the world's largest exporters of gems and jewellery, but these you should purchase only from a reputable dealer. Hill tribe crafts, including embroidered goods, such as bags and clothing, and ornaments are also good buys. **REMEMBER: Bargaining is EXPECTED!** Whenever you make purchases, please note that the majority of items are handmade and may contain imperfections natural in goods that have not been mass-produced. It is worth taking a little time to check each item that you wish to buy in order to avoid disappointment. We regret that neither we or the *ship owners* can be held responsible for problems relating to purchases you make while cruising.

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MONEY MATTERS ON THE LAND PORTION:

While Traveler Checks and Credit Cards are growing in acceptance – their use is still LIMITED to hotels, banks and selected shops in major cities ONLY!

CASH IS STILL KING – and the US \$ DOLLAR is the preferred currency!

Vietnam's unit of currency, the **Dong**, currently circulates in bank notes of 100,000, 50,000, 20,000, 10,000, 5,000, 2,000, 1,000, 500, and 200 denominations. Please check the web for current exchange rates a few days prior to leaving. The US dollar is, however, the most favored and easily exchangeable foreign currency, and we would strongly recommend taking US Dollars in cash, as it can be difficult in areas outside of the main cities to change travelers checks.

In **Cambodia**, the currency is the New Riel (KHR). However the **US Dollar is widely accepted** everywhere.

THE DO'S AND DON'TS: The people of Vietnam and Cambodia are generally tolerant and easy going. However please try to avoid political discussion and remember that both countries are strict regimes and Vietnam's National Hero is "Uncle" Ho Chi Minh. The history and relationship of these two countries has not been simple for the last 50 years, but time passes and wounds heal. The one thing that **does** cause upset *is any form of disrespect for their national religion, Buddhism*. Unlike many faiths, Buddhists make their temples open to foreigners, permitting the snapping of cameras and invasion of their sacred space. **However, they ask that you take your shoes, socks and hats/caps off and to observe the following "rules":**

- Do not point with your feet.
- In the company of **Monks** and elders never cross your legs.
- Do not touch people on the head or the upper body.
- Do not shake hands with Monks and Nuns as people in general rarely shake hands. Instead, smile and bow or simply nod your head. In Cambodia the Indian palm greeting is used most often.
- Females should never sit down next to a Monk.
- Shorts and skirts should be longish (below the knees). For both sexes it is okay to expose arms.

GRATUITIES:

Tipping today has become commonplace in all countries of the world. Due to the nature of these new economies, salaries for regular folk are pitiful compared to the rising costs and inflation in their countries - let alone if we compare them to western standards. **Consequently, for the majority of the people working in the service industries (*hotels, restaurants, travel*), tips and gratuities have become a large part of their income. Therefore, your gracious generosity will be appreciated throughout your trip.** However, unlike in many places in the west including the United States - where tips are either tacked on to your bill or demanded (*regardless of the quality of service*), tips in the "east" are still left to your discretion! **Therefore, no service - no tip!** The choice is still yours. Nevertheless, since we repeatedly get asked to provide guidelines - here they are:

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TIPPING SUGGESTIONS: Tips are divided in 2 separate categories:

1) **Individual tips:** To staff/personnel on land & cruise portions who have earned your gratitude (Cruise Director, Country Guides, local guides, motor coach drivers, motorboat drivers, specific waiters at hotels or other ground personnel that have gone beyond the call of duty to help you). These should be provided directly to that individual service provider.

2) **Pooled tips:** For a group of individuals working as a team to serve you on a specific portion of the trip (the ship's crew).

1) INDIVIDUAL TIPPING: While you are in cities or on shore excursions, you will have various drivers and local guides. The so-called standard tip is **\$1 per person for the driver and \$2 for the local guide**. A \$1 tip will also be appreciated by porters. A \$1 per person/per day should be left at hotels for your maid. For taxi cabs or at restaurants add 10 to 15% to your final bill amount. Additionally, depending on voyage, you will have 1 or 2 Country Guides who will accompany you on the cruise as an onboard resource for their country (a different set for Vietnam and Cambodia). At the end of their stay, **\$3 tip per day/ per person** will be appreciated.

TOUR GUIDES/CRUISE MANAGERS are the Travel Experts that are with you to make your travel experience easy and comfortable. They will be your guiding angels throughout your vacation. They will lead you, educate you, entertain you and if need be, scold you - **but we are certain you** will find their assistance indispensable in providing you with the utmost travel experience possible! Since they are essentially at your disposal 24 hours a day, we recommend an amount of **\$5 per person/per day x the number of days they are with you. On Mekong packages you will enjoy 2 Tour Directors – ONE for Vietnam and another for Cambodia .**

2) **POOLED TIPPING (CREWS ON SHIP):** For ship crews we implement a Pool System whereby all the crew members, from the Captain to the "lowly" deck hand share in the gratuities collected from all passengers. The reason for doing this is that during the course of your cruise, you will actually see and meet only about 1/2 of the crew - mainly the restaurant and bar staff and maybe your cabin maid. However, there are many more crew members you will not see whose good work is equally important to the smooth operation of the cruise - from the engine crew who sweat in the "bowels" of the ship and who keep us afloat, to the many crew members who arrange for our busses & excursions, to the catering people who travel to our ports in advance of the ship in order to obtain and provide us with the best available food and beverage supplies... and on and on. Therefore, to ensure equality for all, we ask that you place your total gratuities for the crew in an envelope and put it in the Tips Box . Suggested amount: **\$10 per person/per day x 7 days spent on board = \$70 per person. Cruise manager \$30 per person.**

IMPORTANT FINAL NOTE ON TIPPING: The above suggestions are given as guidelines ONLY! You may leave as little or as much as you feel comfortable with. If you endear yourself to any particular crew member and wish to award them directly - please feel free to do so! **Another helpful tip:** Bring **\$250 pp in new \$1/\$5/\$10/\$20 bills**---not only are they useful for tipping, but also for small purchases during the trip. But please make sure they are **NEW** and undamaged...

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SUGGESTED READING BEFORE YOU GO!!

| <u>Title of Book</u> | <u>Author</u> |
|---|---|
| <u>INDOCHINA</u> | |
| Travelers Vietnam, Laos & Cambodia Companion | Chris Taylor Alain Evrard (photos) |
| <u>Vietnam:</u> | |
| The Rough Guide to Vietnam | Jan Dodd |
| Catfish and Mandala | Andrew Pham |
| The House on Dream Street | Dana Sachs |
| Blue Dragon, White Tiger | Tran Van Dinh |
| The Cat from Hue | John Laurence |
| <u>Cambodia:</u> | |
| Lonely Planet Guide- Cambodia | Nick Ray |
| The Gate: | Francois Bizot |
| Angkor: An introduction to the Temples | Dawn Rooney |
| Brother Enemy | Nayan Chanda |
| <u>INTERNET:</u> | |
| Lonely Planet | www.lonelyplanet.com |
| Our VIDEOS on YouTube..... | https://www.youtube.com/user/ValueRiverCruises |

EMERGENCY CONTACTS:

For the hotel names and addresses used for your specific departure - please consult the **CONTACT SHEET** supplied with your final documents. In addition, the following addresses may be useful to you:

Phnom Penh, CAMBODIA
Embassy of the United States of America
#1 Street 96, Sangkat Wat Phnom
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Ph: (855-23) 728-000
Fax: (855-23) 728-600

Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) - VIETNAM
U.S. Consulate General
4 Le Duan Blvd., District No. 1
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Ph: (84-8) 822 9433
Fax: (84-8) 822 9434
Email: uscongenhcmc@state.gov

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SOME USEFUL **VIETNAMESE** WORDS AND PHRASES*

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Hi! – Chào | <i>like the Italian “Ciao”</i> |
| Good Morning – Chào Buổi Sáng (not very common) | <i>[tshou boi san]</i> |
| How much does it cost? – Bao nhiêu tiền ? | <i>[bao nju tin]</i> |
| Too Much! - Mắc quá! | <i>[mak wa(w)]</i> |
| My name is – Tôi tên là | <i>[toi ten la]</i> |
| Thank you – Cám ơn | <i>[kam on]</i> |
| Please – Kèm ơn | <i>[kam on]</i> |
| Bye – Chào | <i>like Italian “Ciao”</i> |
| Goodbye - Tạm Biệt | <i>[tm bit]</i> |
| Yes – Có | <i>[ko]</i> |
| No – Không | <i>[kong]</i> |

A few numbers (useful for bargaining):

| | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| One - Một | <i>[mot]</i> |
| Two – Hai | <i>like English greeting “hi”</i> |
| Three – Ba | <i>[ba]</i> |
| Four - Bốn | <i>[bon]</i> |
| Five – Năm | <i>[namn]</i> |
| Six – Sáu | <i>[sau]</i> |
| Seven - Bảy | <i>[bai]</i> |
| Eight – Tám | <i>[tamn]</i> |
| Nine – Chín | <i>[shin]</i> |
| Ten - Mười | <i>[moi]</i> |

Twenty – Hai Mươi

Twenty One – Hai Mươi Một

Thirty – Ba Mươi

One Hundred - Một Trăm, Two Hundred – Hai Trăm, One Thousand - Một Ngàn, One Million - Một Triệu

Pronunciation Guide: Vietnamese is a “tone” language – the same word pronounced differently can have a totally different meaning! Here are some tips on stress points when pronouncing words.

Á: upward stress denotes upward pronunciation.

À: downward stress denotes downward pronunciation.

Ạ: a dot below the vowel means it is a “heavy” vowel.

Â: this sign means that the vowel is elongated. There is a tiny wave in its pronunciation.

Words ending with the consonant –n sound almost like the English word ending –ng.

Words starting with t- and k-/c- sound softer, almost like initial d- and g- sounds

GOOD LUCK! (no one said it would be easy 😊)

**This section provided by a Vietnamese expatriate.*

Value World Tours

Items You May Wish to Bring Along:

- Shower caps
- **Skin cream, Sun block and other cosmetics for sun protection.**
- **Insect repellent (past passengers recommend OFF wipes or put “Bounce” in their pockets)**
- Spare set of eyeglasses for emergencies. If you wear contact lenses, bring a pair of eyeglasses for occasions when contacts are bothersome to wear, such as in strong wind or dust.
- **Medications**, which are vital to your health. These should be accompanied by a letter from your doctor (signed and dated), certifying that such medications are vital to your health. Dosage should be indicated. (Or often medications kept in their original prescription bottle suffices.) Always pack any personal medications in your carry-on luggage, not in your checked baggage. Past Passengers recommend Imodium Extra Strength.
- Common remedies such as laxatives, indigestion tablets, aspirin and travel sickness pills (*the latter will probably not be needed while on the protected river waters but may be useful on speedboat rides if one is very susceptible to motion sickness*).
- **Sunglasses.**
- **Umbrella (good for downpours and as sun block)**
- **Plenty of film, memory cards, or blank video cassettes.**
- Sewing, cosmetic, first aid kits, etc.
- Laundry soap packets and flat sink stopper.
- Diet sweeteners if you do not use sugar.
- **Instant coffee especially if you prefer decaffeinated!**
- **Binoculars** (excellent for viewing scenes from the rivers).
- **Batteries for cameras, shaver etc.**
- **Electrical Extension Cord if needed (not available on most ships)**
- **Transformer and plug adapters (purchased at K-Mart, Thrifty, appliance stores)**

Average annual temperatures: (Oct to April – DRY season / May to Sept – WET season)

| | Hanoi (North) VIETNAM | Saigon (South) VIETNAM | Phnom Penh CAMBODIA |
|-------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Month | Av. Temp (Fahrenheit) | Av. Temp (Fahrenheit) | Av. Temp (Fahrenheit) |
| Jan | 81 | 81 | 82 |
| Feb | 82 | 82 | 84 |
| Mar | 84 | 84 | 81 |
| Apr | 86 | 86 | 90 |
| May | 84 | 84 | 84 |
| Jun | 84 | 84 | 86 |
| Jul | 82 | 82 | 90 |
| Aug | 82 | 82 | 88 |
| Sep | 81 | 81 | 84 |
| Oct | 81 | 81 | 82 |
| Nov | 81 | 81 | 81 |
| Dec | 81 | 79 | 79 |

Source: Various Internet sites

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