

·~· HERITAGE LINE ·~·

REFINED WATERWAY VOYAGES

JOURNEY THE LAOTIAN MEKONG RIVER

CRUISE PROGRAMS

9 NIGHTS | 7 NIGHTS | 3 NIGHTS



THE MOTHER OF RIVERS

THE MEANDERING UPPER MEKONG



Southeast Asia's most sacred waterway. Known as the "Mae Nam Khong" to Laotians, or "The Mother of Water", the upper Mekong slowly meanders through the unchanged local life and captivating riverscapes of charming Laos.

It is this imposing river that the last ruler of the Kingdom of Vientiane, King Anouvong, would cross to fight for his realm's independence against the oppressive Siam empire.

Cruise Program Upper Mekong

- 3 Nights | Luang Prabang - Huay Xai
- 3 Nights | Huay Xai - Luang Prabang
- 7 Nights | Huay Xai - Vientiane
- 9 Nights | Vientiane - Huay Xai

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LUANG PRABANG - HUAY XAI

GOLDEN TRIANGLE TRAVERSE

4 DAYS | 3 NIGHTS

A slow voyage along the timeless upper Mekong River revealing captivating landscapes, remote native communities and unique cultural insights.

3 NIGHTS • LUANG PRABANG - HUAY XAI

DAY 1

LUANG PRABANG - PAK OU - KHOK LUANG



In the morning, Heritage Line extends a warm welcome to guests at the mooring of the Heritage Line ‘Anouvong’ in the city center of Luang Prabang. Our dedicated team assists with your check-in and attends to your luggage. Once ready, the captain of the ‘Anouvong’ sets the ship on its captivating 3-night journey along the Upper Mekong.

After spending some time to settle in, our cruise director will provide a welcome and safety briefing in the lounge as we set sail for our first destination, the renowned Pak Ou Caves.



Arriving at the Pak Ou Caves, nestled along the rocky shore of the Mekong, there are two grottoes sheltering approximately 4,000 sacred Buddhist statues and images. We delve into the lower cave, the most impressive and easily accessible. Post-cave visit, Heritage Line offers two optional choices to enhance your excursion: an adventurous kayak tour along the serene Nam Ou River or a visit of the nearby village of Ban Muang Keo, known for traditional silk weaving Lao whisky distillation. We also have the opportunity to visit a local alcohol workshop in this village (depending on time and availability).

As the afternoon progresses, we arrive at our overnight mooring and explore a picturesque village inhabited by Khmu people. Simplicity defines this locale, with bamboo huts elevated on stilts amidst vast rice fields. In this serene setting, we can mingle and meet with different generations – old and young – in the village, both deeply rooted in the land, sustaining their livelihood through manual agriculture. Peel back

the layers of their daily existence, observe their way of life, and engage in insightful conversations to garner a profound understanding of their unique experiences. The highlight is the traditional Baci ceremony, a heartfelt Laotian ritual led by local elders, bestowing blessings upon your journey.



Ease into your first evening with a welcome cocktail and snacks as the sky transforms over the Mekong, followed by a preview of the next day’s program. Welcome to a memorable exploration of Laotian culture along the Mekong. **DINING: L, D**

DAILY INSIGHT: Baci is a cherished Laotian spirit-calling ceremony observed on special occasions such as weddings, funerals, births, departures, returns, illnesses, and ancestral birthdays. Laotian beliefs hold that a human has thirty-two organs, each with a corresponding guardian spirit (khouan). The Baci ceremony calls back any lost or wandering spirits, restoring harmony to the soul, along with bestowing good luck and prosperity.

DAY 2

KHOK LUANG - BAN BAW - KHOK AEK - BAN THANOUN



For early risers, our daily yoga class on the terrace deck, framed by the stunning Mekong backdrop, offers a refreshing start to the day. As the ship progresses towards the morning’s destination, join our guide for an insightful lecture on the history of Lao royalty, with a focus on King Anouvong —the namesake of our vessel.

Our morning sojourn leads us to two traditional adjacent villages, where Lao Loum and Khmu communities have lived side by side for generations, each preserving their own traditions in quiet harmony. Most villagers are farmers, cultivating seasonal crops and tending small gardens, while in Ban Baw, a handful of women keep alive the intricate art of cotton and silk weaving. During our visit, you can witness a demonstration of this enduring craft, observing weavers as they work on traditional handlooms using labor-intensive methods that have remained unchanged through the ages. The village also has a small temple tending to the community’s spiritual life, where those who wish can join the resident monks for a short private meditation session.

Sailing into mid-afternoon, another breath-taking riverine spectacle awaits as we arrive at another remarkable village. Here, three distinct ethnic groups—Hmong, Lao Loum, and Khamo—coexist almost literally under one roof. Each group possesses its own unique history, traditions, ways of life, family dynamics, and housing styles. Venture into the village to a family home where representatives from each ethnic group will showcase and explain their differences and characteristics in day-to-day life.



Back on board, as the afternoon transitions into evening, gather in the lounge for light snacks and a preview of the upcoming day’s program. The evening unfolds with a traditional dance performance on the terrace deck, setting the tone for a memorable barbecue dinner on a splendid sandbank amid astonishing natural beauty.

After dinner, feel free to join us in the lounge for a cosy cinematic setting featuring “Chiang” (Laotian for “elephant”). This cinematic gem, shot in this very region in 1927 and produced by the same visionary behind the first King Kong movie, promises to set the mood for our next day’s adventure. **DINING: B, L, D**

DAILY INSIGHT: The Lao Loum, known for their traditional music and dance, as well as beautiful textiles, wear “Sinh,” traditional costumes consisting of a skirt paired with a French-inspired blouse adorned with “Pha Biang” scarves—now considered Laos’ official traditional costumes for women.



LUANG PRABANG - HUAY XAI

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3 NIGHTS • LUANG PRABANG - HUAY XAI

DAY 3

BAN THANOUN - PAKBENG - KHOK MWE



Wake up with the sun for the option of an invigorating yoga class.

After breakfast, we arrive at Pak Beng. Along the riverside opposite of the town and nestled in the jungle lies Laos’ most sustainable elephant sanctuary. Here, in an almost pristine natural setting, we have the privilege of encountering these majestic creatures. Born in Laos and once employed as logging elephants, they now find sanctuary in a peaceful and natural environment, their ability to survive in the wild having been curtailed in captivity. The sanctuary, a symbol of ecotourism and sustainability, reflects a deep commitment to these principles. Witnessing these gentle giants in the rainforest, and learning about their unique stories, makes for an unforgettable experience.

Following lunch, engage in a cooking class where you’ll learn a Lao-Thai dish simple enough to recreate at home later. Food brings back memories, doesn’t it?

As the afternoon unfolds, our journey continues, culminating in our final overnight mooring spot. Subsequently, a farewell dinner is served on the sun deck, marking the conclusion of this remarkable journey.

DINING: B, L, D



DAILY INSIGHT: For hundreds of years, the country has built a special relationship with elephants. The first Laotian kingdom was named Lan-Xang or “Kingdom of the Million Elephants”. Did you also know that Laos has established a network of 101 “elephant corridors” to help elephants move safely between protected areas? These corridors are essential for ensuring that elephants have enough

food and water and that they can avoid conflict with humans. They are also important for connecting elephant populations in different parts of Laos, which helps to maintain genetic diversity.

DAY 4

KHOK MWE - HUAY XAI



After an exhilarating 3-night cruise, today invites a more leisurely pace, allowing you to savour the memories created during our journey. With a substantial distance to cover before reaching Huay Xai, our final destination, the day unfolds with a blend of relaxation and exploration.

Feel free to extend your morning snooze if desired. Breakfast is intentionally simplified, with fewer choices or à la carte, as we prepare for a diverse culinary brunch later- a prelude to bidding farewell. As we sail into the heart of the Golden Triangle, the morning is yours to relax or engage in our captivating presentation unravelling the intricate history of the Golden Triangle, exploring its complexities of colonialism, opium, conflicts, and the roles played by Burma, Thailand, Laos, Britain, China. The Golden Triangle, where Myanmar, Thailand, and Laos meet, extends far into each country. The name “Golden Triangle” was originally invented by the CIA, referring to this area.



We are passing the confluence of the Mekong and Nam Tha River, a major tributary known as the “Green River”. Our captain expertly navigates through rocks, rapids, and sandbanks, offering a fascinating observation from the terrace deck. Relax and relish the concluding tranquil hours of our voyage, with lunch served until approximately an hour before arrival.



As we dock at Huay Xai pier in the afternoon, we facilitate a seamless transfer to the Lao-Thai border, bidding you farewell in front of the Lao immigration office. We extend our best wishes for a pleasant onward journey.

DINING: B, L

DAILY INSIGHT: Laotians proudly embrace the title of the highest consumers of sticky rice (khao niaow) globally, referring to themselves as luk khao niaow, meaning “children of sticky rice.” This staple has remained a fundamental part of every Laotian meal for centuries.





HUAY XAI - LUANG PRABANG

GOLDEN TRIANGLE TRAVERSE

4 DAYS | 3 NIGHTS

A slow voyage along the timeless Upper Mekong River revealing captivating landscapes, remote native communities and unique cultural insights.

DAY 1

HUAY XAI - PAK SITH - HUAY TING



In the morning, Heritage Line extends a warm welcome to guests at the Lao immigration office. After gathering all passengers, we embark on a minivan journey to Huay Xai Pier, where the Heritage Line ‘Anouvong’ awaits. Our dedicated team facilitates your check-in and ensures the smooth handling of your luggage. Once preparations are complete, the captain charts the course for ‘Anouvong’s’ enthralling 3-night voyage along the Upper Mekong.

As the ship progresses towards its initial destination, join our cruise director for a welcome and safety briefing in the lounge. Arriving at the confluence of the Mekong and a significant tributary, allow the gentle currents to carry you downstream, providing uninterrupted views of natural beauty.

Our journey begins at Ban Pak Sith, a small riverside village mainly inhabited by the Khmu ethnic minority. Life here is simple and closely tied to nature, with families primarily sustained by rice and vegetable farming. Some households continue the traditional craft of blacksmithing, producing essential tools such as knives, hoes, and spades. Here, if available, the village blacksmith will demonstrate his time-honored methods and skills. Before returning on board, we also spend some time connecting with local students and enjoy their lively skill performance.



Before dinner, step into the storied past of Laos with an engaging onboard talk aboard Anouvong, where our expert guide delves into the rich history of the country and its former royal dynasties. Then, feel free to join us in the lounge for a cosy cinematic setting featuring “Chiang” (Laotian for “elephant”). This cinematic gem, shot in this very region in 1927 and

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3 NIGHTS • HUAY XAI - LUANG PRABANG

produced by the same visionary behind the first King Kong movie, promises to set the mood for our next day’s adventure. **DINING: L, D**

DAILY INSIGHT: Across the Mekong River, Huay Xai (Laos) and Chiang Khong (Thailand) stand facing each other. The Fourth Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge connects their customs immigration offices, symbolising the peaceful relations between the two countries. Before its opening in 2013, foreign travelers crossed the river via ferry.

DAY 2

HUAY TING - PAKBENG - KHOK AEK



For the early risers, an open invitation awaits at our daily morning yoga class on the terrace deck, where the breath-taking Mekong scenery becomes a serene backdrop.

Our journey unfolds as we arrive in the charming town of Pakbeng in the morning. Along the riverside opposite of the town and nestled in the jungle lies Laos’ most sustainable elephant sanctuary. Here, in an almost pristine natural setting, we have the privilege of encountering these majestic creatures. Born in Laos and once employed as logging elephants, they now find sanctuary in a peaceful and natural environment, their ability to survive in the wild having been curtailed in captivity. The sanctuary, a symbol of ecotourism and sustainability, reflects a deep commitment to these principles. Witnessing these gentle giants in the rainforest, and learning about their unique stories, makes for an unforgettable experience.



Following lunch, roll up your sleeves for a hands-on cooking class where you will learn to prepare Lao-Thai classics that you can easily recreate at home. Because nothing stirs up memories quite like the taste of a good meal.

Sailing into the afternoon, another breath-taking riverine spectacle awaits as we arrive at another Ban Khok Aek. Here, three distinct ethnic groups—Hmong, Lao Loum, and Khmu—coexist almost literally under one roof. Each group possesses its own unique history, traditions, ways of life, family dynamics, and housing styles. Venture into the village to a family home where representatives from each ethnic group will showcase and explain their differences and characteristics in day-to-day life. The theory provided the day before, through our lecture, suddenly comes alive before your eyes.



As the afternoon transitions into evening, join us at the bar for snacks and a preview of the next day’s program. Before dinner, villagers grace us with a performance on the terrace deck, featuring the traditional “Kene” instrument and/or a unique dance.

Later, join us in the lounge for a cosy screening of “The Rocket”, a 90-minute Lao film about a boy seeking redemption in a land scarred by war. **DINING: B, L, D**

DAILY INSIGHT: For hundreds of years, the country has built a special relationship with elephants. The first Laotian kingdom was named Lan-Xang or “Kingdom of the Million Elephants”. Did you also know that Laos has established a network of 101 “elephant corridors” to help elephants move safely between protected areas? These corridors are essential for ensuring that elephants have enough food and water and that they can avoid conflict with humans. They are also important for connecting elephant populations in different parts of Laos, which helps to maintain genetic diversity.



HUAY XAI - LUANG PRABANG

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3 NIGHTS • HUAY XAI - LUANG PRABANG

DAY 3
KHOK AEK - BAN BAW - KHOK LUANG -
KHOK PHOU



Embrace the early morning as the river bathes in the sun’s initial rays, offering an open invitation to partake in our daily yoga class.

After breakfast, our morning sojourn leads us to two traditional adjacent villages, where Lao Loum and Khmu communities have lived side by side for generations, each preserving their own traditions in quiet harmony. Most villagers are farmers, cultivating seasonal crops and tending small gardens, while in Ban Baw, a handful of women keep alive the intricate art of cotton and silk weaving. During our visit, you can witness a demonstration of this enduring craft, observing weavers as they work on traditional handlooms using labor-intensive methods that have remained unchanged through the ages. The village also has a small temple tending to the community’s spiritual life, where those who wish can join the resident monks for a short private meditation session.



Back on board for lunch, and we resume our meandering journey down the river toward Khok Luang. This village is home to the Khmu ethnic group spanning China, Laos, Thailand, Burma, and Vietnam. Strolling through the village, we gather for a Baci ceremony - a heartfelt Laotian ritual led by local elders (and possibly monks), bestowing blessings upon your journey.

Upon returning to the ship for a refresh, the evening unfolds with a cocktail on the sandbank, followed by a farewell dinner meticulously arranged in this perfect setting. Revel in the ambiance of your last evening on the Laotian Mekong River, as the hues of the blue hour gracefully give way to the tranquillity of the night. **DINING: B, L, D**



DAILY INSIGHT: Heritage Line Anouvong’s restaurant pays homage to ‘Louis Delaporte,’ a French explorer who was part of the first European group to navigate the entire Mekong River from South to North (1866-1868). This expedition aimed to link Saigon with the riches of the former Siam empire and southern China, contributing to the exploration of the Mekong’s cultural and historical tapestry.

DAY 4
KHOK PHOU - PAK OU - LUANG PRABANG



Concluding our exhilarating 3-night cruise, we approach the illustrious Pak Ou Caves, a prelude to our arrival in Luang Prabang. Today’s breakfast, thoughtfully curated with a streamlined à la carte selection, paves the way for a diverse culinary brunch before our guests disembark.



Arriving at the Pak Ou Caves, nestled along the rocky shore of the Mekong, there are two grottoes sheltering approximately 4,000 sacred Buddhist statues and images. We delve into the lower cave,

the most impressive and easily accessible. Post-cave visit, Heritage Line offers two optional choices to enhance your excursion: an adventurous kayak tour along the serene Nam Ou River or a visit to the nearby village of Ban Muang Keo, known for traditional silk weaving and Lao whisky distillation. We also have the opportunity to visit a local alcohol workshop in this village (depending on time and availability).



Back on board, relax and relish the concluding tranquil hours of our voyage, with lunch served until approximately an hour before arrival.

We arrive in the later afternoon. Upon check-out, we extend our assistance with luggage and any additional requirements, bidding you farewell at the pier in the town centre, wishing you a pleasant onward journey. **DINING: B, L**

DAILY INSIGHT: The lower cave at Pak Ou Cave, known as Tham Ting, is considered holy, serving as a gathering place for locals during water festivals for offerings and prayers. Travellers often stop here to seek blessings for their journey.

All mentioned times are approximate. Although it is our intention to operate the proposed itinerary as outlined above, we cannot be held responsible for any changes of the program and activities that might be necessary due to operational factors.





HUAY XAI - VIENTIANE

LAOTIAN SERENDIPITY

8 DAYS | 7 NIGHTS

This longer cruise at a leisurely pace offers a blissful journey through beautiful Laos. Perfect to experience the unhurried riverine life with naturally stunning backdrops, paired with mesmerizing excursions and charming local rendezvous.

7 NIGHTS • HUAY XAI - VIENTIANE

DAY 1

HUAY XAI - PAK SITH - HUAY TING



In the morning, Heritage Line extends a warm welcome to guests at the Lao immigration office. After gathering all passengers, we embark on a minivan journey to Huay Xai Pier, where the Heritage Line ‘Anouvong’ awaits. Our dedicated team facilitates your check-in and ensures the smooth handling of your luggage. Once preparations are complete, the captain charts the course for ‘Anouvong’s’ enthralling 7-night voyage along the Upper Mekong.

As the ship progresses towards its initial destination, join our cruise director for a welcome and safety briefing in the lounge. Arriving at the confluence of the Mekong and a significant tributary, allow the gentle currents to carry you downstream, providing uninterrupted views of natural beauty.



Our journey begins at Ban Pak Sith, a small riverside village mainly inhabited by the Khmu ethnic minority. Life here is simple and closely tied to nature, with families primarily sustained by rice and vegetable farming. Some households continue the traditional craft of blacksmithing, producing essential tools such as knives, hoes, and spades. Here, if available, the village blacksmith will demonstrate his time-honored methods and skills. Before returning on board, we also spend some time connecting with local students and enjoy their lively skill performance.

Before dinner, step into the storied past of Laos with an engaging onboard talk aboard Anouvong, where our expert guide delves into the rich history of the country and its former royal dynasties. Then, feel free

to join us in the lounge for a cosy cinematic setting featuring “Chiang” (Laotian for “elephant”). This cinematic gem, shot in this very region in 1927 and produced by the same visionary behind the first King Kong movie, promises to set the mood for our next day’s adventure. **DINING: L, D**

DAILY INSIGHT: Across the Mekong River, Huay Xai (Laos) and Chiang Khong (Thailand) stand facing each other. The Fourth Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge connects their customs immigration offices, symbolizing the peaceful relations between the two countries. Before its opening in 2013, foreign travellers crossed the river via ferry.

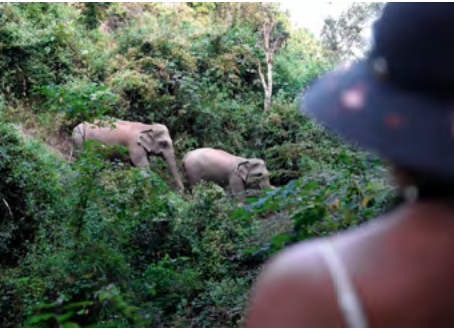
DAY 2

HUAY TING - PAKBENG - KHOK AEK



For the early risers, an open invitation awaits at our daily morning yoga class on the terrace deck, where the breath-taking Mekong scenery becomes a serene backdrop.

Our journey unfolds as we arrive in the charming town of Pakbeng in the morning. Along the riverside opposite of the town and nestled in the jungle lies Laos’ most sustainable elephant sanctuary. Here, in an almost pristine natural setting, we have the privilege of encountering these majestic creatures. Born in Laos and once employed as logging elephants, they now find sanctuary in a peaceful and natural environment, their ability to survive in the wild having been curtailed in captivity. The sanctuary, a symbol of ecotourism and sustainability, reflects a deep commitment to these principles. Witnessing these gentle giants in the rainforest, and learning about their unique stories, makes for an unforgettable experience.



Sailing into the afternoon, another breath-taking riverine spectacle awaits as we arrive at another Ban Khok Aek. Here, three distinct ethnic groups—Hmong, Lao Loum, and Khmu—coexist almost literally under one roof. Each group possesses its own unique history, traditions, ways of life, family dynamics, and housing styles. Venture into the village to a family home where representatives from each ethnic group will showcase and explain their differences and characteristics in day-to-day life. The theory provided the day before, through our lecture, suddenly comes alive before your eyes.



As the afternoon transitions into evening, join us at the bar for snacks and a preview of the next day’s program. Before dinner, villagers grace us with a performance on the terrace deck, featuring the traditional “Kene” instrument and/or a unique dance.

After dinner, join us in the lounge for a cosy screening of “The Rocket”, a 90-minute Lao film about a boy seeking redemption in a land scarred by war. **DINING: B, L, D**

DAILY INSIGHT: For hundreds of years, the country has built a special relationship with elephants. The first Laotian kingdom was named Lan-Xang or “Kingdom of the Million Elephants”. Did you also know that Laos has established a network of 101 “elephant corridors” to help elephants move safely between protected areas? These corridors are essential for ensuring that elephants have enough food and water and that they can avoid conflict with humans. They are also important for connecting elephant populations in different parts of Laos, which helps to maintain genetic diversity.



HUAY XAI - VIENTIANE

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7 NIGHTS • HUAY XAI - VIENTIANE

DAY 3

KHOK AEK - KHOK LUANG - PAK OU - LUANG PRABANG



Embrace the early morning as the river bathes in the sun’s initial rays, offering an open invitation to partake in our daily yoga class.

As we sail along the outskirts of the Golden Triangle towards Luang Prabang, the morning is yours to relax or engage in our captivating presentation unravelling the intricate history of the Golden Triangle, exploring its complexities of colonialism, opium, conflicts, and the roles played by Burma, Thailand, Laos, Britain, China, and more. The Golden Triangle, where Myanmar, Thailand, and Laos meet, extends far into each country. The name “Golden Triangle” was originally invented by the CIA referring to this area. Afterwards, our morning sojourn leads us to a picturesque village of Khok Luang inhabited by the Khmu people. Simplicity defines this locale, with bamboo huts elevated on stilts amidst vast rice fields. In this serene setting, we can mingle and meet with different generations - old and young - in the village, both deeply rooted in the land, sustaining their livelihood through manual agriculture. Peel back the layers of their daily existence, observing their way of life, and engage in insightful conversations to garner a profound understanding of their unique experiences.



The ship zig-zags down the river until we reach in the afternoon the Pak Ou Caves nestled along the rocky shore of the Mekong. There are two grottoes sheltering approximately 4,000 sacred Buddhist statues and images. We delve into the lower cave, the most impressive and easily accessible. Post-cave visit, Heritage Line offers two optional choices to enhance your excursion: an adventurous kayak tour along the serene Nam Ou River or a visit to the nearby village of Ban Muang Keo, known for traditional silk weaving. We also have the opportunity to visit a local alcohol workshop in this village (depending on time and availability).

Continuing our course, we head to Luang Prabang, one of Southeast Asia’s most enchanting towns. Arriving in the early evening, there’s time for a stroll through downtown Luang Prabang after dinner. Immerse yourself in the town’s therapeutic aura, slowing down to the depth of your soul. **DINING: B, L, D**

DAILY INSIGHT: Silk’s introduction to Laos came through the migration of the Tai-Lao peoples from Southern China. Bringing knowledge of silk cultivation, dyeing techniques, and weaving on upright wooden looms, the Tai-Lao communities interacted with the indigenous Mon-Khmer people upon arriving in Laos. This cultural exchange infused Lao textiles with unique diversity and intricate designs, defining them to this day.

DAY 4

LUANG PRABANG

Start your day with the beauty of a sunrise, accompanied by freshly brewed coffee and a selection of teas in the bar lounge. Rejuvenate your mind and body with our daily Yoga class on the terrace deck, nestled at the footstep of one of Laos’ most iconic temples. After breakfast, embark on an enchanting walking tour through Luang Prabang’s UNESCO World Heritage Site. Explore the old town and its scenic peninsula, where the Mekong and Nam Khan Rivers converge. Marvel at Luang Prabang’s distinctive architecture, accompanied by fascinating tales of the houses and landmarks. Take a leisure stroll along small roads adorned with antique structures and majestic mango trees.



Return to the ship for lunch and refreshment. The afternoon explores Luang Prabang’s cultural heritage, visiting the former Royal Palace transformed into the National Museum. Admire local art and historical treasures once owned by the Lao royal family. Continue with a soft hike to Mount Phousi to take in panoramic views over the town. Afterwards, explore the city center at your own pace



or relax in one of the street cafés before joining an insightful lecture on Lao life onboard. Afterwards, explore the city center at your own pace or relax in one of the street cafés before returning on board.

The evening continues with a cultural experience onboard as local elders join for a traditional Baci ceremony, a sacred ritual to bestow luck and blessings, followed by a captivating traditional performance in the lounge. Dinner is then served on the terrace with views of Luang Prabang’s picturesque riverfront. **DINING: B, L, D**

DAILY INSIGHT: Wat Xieng Thong temple’s rear wall, adorned with colored glass pieces on a red background, represents the Bodhi Tree, where Gautama Buddha attained enlightenment - a refuge from worldly desires in Buddhist belief.

DAY 5

LUANG PRABANG - KUANG SI - XAYABURI



Before the sun is fully risen, witness the spiritual Buddhist tradition of the morning alms round, known as “Tak Bat” in Lao. Wake before dawn to observe hundreds of saffron-robed monks in a serene procession—a tradition deeply rooted in Lao culture.

Bid farewell to Luang Prabang as we continue our downstream cruise on the Mekong River. Our first stop is the innovative and socially responsible Laos Buffalo Dairy Farm. From a lack of dairy products decades ago, Laos now produces locally made cheeses, ice cream, and yogurt distributed to markets. Our journey proceeds to the cascading Kuang Si waterfalls, a picturesque park offering a leisurely hike to marvel at the turquoise waters and immerse in the beauty of Mother Nature. Bring some swim wear and refresh with a jump in the waterfall’s shallow pools.





HUAY XAI - VIENTIANE

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Returning to the vessel, we cruise toward the nation’s first famous dam and hydroelectric power plant. Before reaching the Xayaburi Hydroelectric Dam, delve into an insightful lecture on energy production’s role in Laos’ economy and its potential to become the ‘battery’ of Southeast Asia. We moor near the dam in preparation for the early passage the next day. After dinner, our lounge cinema screens another classic movie. **DINING: B, L, D**

DAILY INSIGHT: The Tak Bat Devo ritual, where “Tak Bat” means offering food to monks and “Devo” signifies “The Buddha’s descent from the celestial world,” dates back to the origins of Buddhism. Monks in Luang Prabang, dressed in saffron robes, line up at dawn to receive food offerings, replicating the Buddha’s daily almsgiving practice.

DAY 6

XAYABURI - DON SAYNHAN



In the morning, witness the towering structure of Xayaburi Hydroelectric Dam, soaring impressively at 32.6 meters (107 feet). The ship navigates this elevation with the assistance of a massive water gate.

During the morning sail, roll up your sleeves for a hands-on cooking class and learn to prepare Lao-Thai classics that you can easily recreate at home. Because nothing stirs up memories quite like the taste of a good meal. As the shorelines become rockier with narrow passages, we reach Don Saynhan in the afternoon. Once ashore, we going to explore the surrounding area, taking a local “Tuk Tuk” inland to visit the ‘Khao Cave’. Traveling through lush jungle-like surroundings, the cave, home to a longstanding bat population, serves as a crucial fertilizer source for the village. Stroll inside to witness stalagmites and stalactites.



In the evening, join us for some prelude snacks at the bar with our guide to provide you with an outlook for the next day. Later, we anchor at a splendid sandbank for a romantic barbecue dinner under the stars, followed by a cosy outdoor movie screening. **DINING: B, L, D**

DAILY INSIGHT: With 1,285 MW, Xayaburi is Laos’ largest hydropower plant and one of the Mekong River’s largest, featuring the world’s largest and most powerful oil-free Kaplan runners built to date.

DAY 7

DON SAYNHAN - PHA LIEP - PAK LAY



On our final full day, the expedition leads us to the enchanting village of Pha Liep, framed by majestic limestone mountains, creating a breathtaking backdrop. In this region, the Lao Loum community predominantly relies on agriculture. Today, we delve into two distinct “industrial” pursuits. First, witness the craftsmanship involved in producing traditional longtail boats. Though termed a factory, the construction of these iconic watercraft, still vital for transportation in Laos, is a labour-intensive manual process. The second venture is perhaps more enjoyable - a local whiskey distillery. Being the owner not only grants the craftsman the occasional quality check but also ensures a business that never runs dry in Laos. Lao whiskey is a national staple, with every Laotian having a bottle at home. We recommend trying a bottle, mixing the classic “Laotian whiskey cola” - a delightful variation of the renowned Cuba Libre.



After this mix of entertaining local culture on the ground, we set sail once more, gliding along the Mekong’s gentle currents to our mooring location for the night. In the afternoon, you may opt to join a presentation on “Laos Today,” offering insights

into the country’s contemporary life along the river, or simply unwind on board as the scenery drifts by. Subsequently, a farewell dinner is served on the sun deck, marking the conclusion of this remarkable journey. **DINING: B, L, D**



DAILY INSIGHT: The word “chopsticks” likely comes from Chinese pidgin English “chop chop,” meaning “quickly.” Explorer William Dampier’s book “Voyages and Descriptions,” published in 1699, contains the earliest written English use of the term.

DAY 8

PAK LAY - VIENTIANE



Start your last day on board with a morning Yoga session on the deck. Today, breakfast is arranged on the terrace deck (weather permitting), allowing you to relish the last sailing hours with panoramic views. Check-out is by 9 o’clock with adjacent transfer to Vientiane and an estimated arrival in the city around 12:30 hrs. We bid you farewell at your designated hotel in the centre, wishing you a pleasant onward journey. **DINING: B**

DAILY INSIGHT: Vientiane became capital in 1563. In 1779, Siam invaded Laos, leading to the complete destruction of the city. The city’s rebuilding only took place in the 1890s when the French arrived.

All mentioned times are approximate. Although it is our intention to operate the proposed itinerary as outlined above, we cannot be held responsible for any changes of the program and activities that might be necessary due to operational factors.





VIENTIANE - HUAY XAI

LAOTIAN SERENDIPITY

10 DAYS | 9 NIGHTS

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HERITAGE LINE

REFINED WATERWAY VOYAGES

9 NIGHTS • VIENTIANE - HUAY XAI

DAY 1

VIENTIANE - PAK LAY - PHA LIEP



In the morning, Heritage Line extends a heartfelt welcome to our esteemed guests, with individual pickups at their hotels for a comfortable minivan transfer to the moored vessel at Pay Lay. Arriving around lunchtime, you'll step onto the ship, the Heritage Line 'Anouvong'. Our dedicated team ensures a seamless check-in process and takes care of your luggage. Once all preparations are complete, the captain sets the course for the enthralling voyage along the Upper Mekong.

Following lunch, immerse yourself in the sailing day's afternoon, exploring the ship and marvelling at the breath-taking landscape as it gracefully navigates the river's course. In the afternoon, our knowledgeable guide presents a captivating lecture on the history of Lao royalty, with a particular focus on King Anouvong - the distinguished namesake of our vessel.



As the sun sets, join us on the terrace deck for a delightful cocktail reception, marking the beginning of an unforgettable exploration of the Laotian Mekong.

After a delightful dinner, our lounge transforms into a cosy cinema, featuring a classic movie as evening entertainment. It's the perfect way to unwind before retiring to your accommodations for the first night onboard, ensuring a memorable start to your Mekong River adventure. **DINING: L, D**

DAILY INSIGHT: Vientiane became capital in 1563. In 1779, Siam invaded Laos, leading to the complete destruction of the city. The city's rebuilding only took place in the 1890s when the French arrived.

DAY 2

PHA LIEP - DON SAYNHAN



Embarking on the first morning of your Upper Mekong adventure, our expedition takes us to the enchanting village of Pha Liep. This hidden gem is framed by majestic limestone mountains, creating an awesome backdrop that sets the stage for a truly captivating experience. It's a remarkable setting to explore one of the first local villages along our journey, offering a genuine encounter with the unique charm and culture of the region.



In this region, the Lao Loum community predominantly relies on agriculture. Today however, we delve into two distinct "industrial" pursuits. First, witness the craftsmanship involved in producing traditional longtail boats. Though termed a factory, the construction of these iconic watercraft, still vital for transportation in Laos, is a labour-intensive manual process. The second venture is perhaps more enjoyable - a local whiskey distillery. Being the owner not only grants the craftsman the occasional quality check but also ensures a business that never runs dry in Laos. Lao whiskey is a national staple, with every Laotian having a bottle at home. We recommend trying a bottle, mixing the classic "Laotian whiskey cola" - a delightful variation of the renowned Cuba Libre.

Thereafter, we continue on our journey, arriving at Don Saynhan in the afternoon. Once ashore, we go to explore the surrounding area, taking a local "Tuk Tuk" inland to visit the 'Khao Cave'. Traveling through lush jungle-like surroundings, the cave, home to a longstanding bat population, serves as a crucial fertilizer source for the village. Stroll inside to witness stalagmites and stalactites.



The ship moors here overnight. Join us for prelude snacks at the bar with our guide offering insights for the next day. Enjoy the evening on the deck or opt for post-dinner reflexology to ease into slumber. **DINING: B, L, D**

DAILY INSIGHT: The Lao Loum is well-known for its traditional music and dance, as well as its beautiful textiles. The traditional costumes of Lao Loum's women, "Sinh", consist of a skirt paired with a French-inspired blouse adorned with "Pha Biang" scarves, are now considered Laos' official traditional costumes for women.

DAY 3

DON SAYNHAN - PAK YAN - XAYABURI



Begin your day with a refreshing session of yoga and leisure, setting the tone for a relaxing morning.

We disembark for another excursion at Pak Yan, a charming village where Hmong, Lao, and Khmu people live together, reflecting a rich blend of cultures and traditions. Many Hmong families resettled here after the 1993 repatriation program, returning from Thailand to rebuild their lives in this close-knit community. The elevated vantage point of the village offers splendid views of the meandering Mekong, providing ample opportunities to capture superb photos.

Returning to the vessel, as we cruise northbound towards the nation's famous first dam and hydroelectric power plant later in the day, our knowledgeable guide will share fascinating insights into the pivotal role of energy production in Laos' economy. Discover its potential to become the 'battery' of Southeast Asia



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during an engaging evening discussion. The following morning, the journey will bring you up close to this significant structure as we pass through the huge water gate. We take our mooring position nearby the dam to be ready for next days’ early passage. After dinner, join us in the lounge for a cosy screening of “The Rocket”, a 90-minute Lao film about a boy seeking redemption in a land scarred by war. **DINING: B, L, D**



DAILY INSIGHT: Laotians proudly embrace the title of the highest consumers of sticky rice (khao niaow) globally, referring to themselves as luk khao niaow, meaning “children of sticky rice.” This staple has remained a fundamental part of every Laotian meal for centuries.

DAY 4

XAYABURI – HATSOK – MOEUNG KAI



As the morning unfolds, our journey takes us past the dam, with a bit of sailing upstream before we approach the lock. During this time, guests are invited to a brief guided visit to the wheelhouse. Here, the captain unveils the intricacies of his instruments, offering insights into the challenges of navigating this dynamic river and piloting through the water gate. Leaving the gate behind, this sailing day is dedicated to pampering and relaxation for mind and body. Become one with the therapeutic Mekong for a bit and be assured we fulfil our role as your gracious hosts for the day.

The morning program brings some culinary indulgence, we would like to make Lao-Thai cuisine more accessible for you by offering another cooking class with a different dish that you can copy easily later at home. Food brings back memories, doesn’t it?

After a delightful lunch and maybe some soothing siesta in your stateroom, we take a leisurely stroll through the small village of Ban Hatsok, where our guide highlights seasonal fruits, vegetables, and local crops like corn and tapioca. Climbing the steps to a serene pagoda, we have the chance to engage with monk for a deeper glimpse into the spiritual life of the community.



There remains plenty of time to continue the spoiling in the afternoon, for those seeking relaxation, a spa treatment beckons, offering a serene retreat for both the soul and body - a flawless choice for a leisurely finale of the pampering day. **DINING: B, L,D**

DAILY INSIGHT: The lower cave at Pak Ou Cave is named Tham Ting and holds special significance as a “holy cave.” Locals gather here during water festivals to make offerings and pray. Passengers and boatmen travelling on the Mekong also often stop here for brief worship and to seek good luck during their journey.

DAY 5

MOEUNG KAI - KUANG SI - LUANG PRABANG



Embark on a delightful morning with yoga and freshly brewed coffee or tea in the bar-lounge or the open deck – always the best choice to begin a day. Enjoy a full breakfast to recharge batteries for the exciting morning outing to come.

Our first destination today is an innovative and socially responsible Laos Buffalo Dairy Farm. Witness how Laos has transformed from a lack of dairy products decades ago to now producing locally made cheeses, ice cream, and yogurt distributed to markets.

We continue our tour to the nearby mesmerising Kuang Si waterfalls, a picturesque natural park that is the perfect setting for a leisurely hike and swim. The many cascades are not typical waterfalls as one of us would imagine them, making them so attractive to watch. At the same time, the turquoise and shallow pools formed on the top of the falls allow you to take a refreshing dip.



Once back to the ship, we’ll enjoy a late lunch continuing our sail towards Luang Prabang, renowned as one of Southeast Asia’s most enchanting towns. Upon arriving in the later afternoon, seize the opportunity for a leisurely stroll through downtown Luang Prabang, capturing the magical hues of the sunset. Dinner is served aboard the ship and should you wish to extend your exploration of Luang Prabang, feel free to do so after to enjoy a serene evening experience. **DINING: B, L,D**

DAILY INSIGHT: Heritage Line Anouvong’s restaurant pays homage to ‘Louis Delaporte,’ a French explorer who was part of the first European group to navigate the entire Mekong River from South to North (1866-1868). This expedition aimed to link Saigon with the riches of the former Siam empire and southern China, contributing to the exploration of the Mekong’s cultural and historical tapestry.

DAY 6

LUANG PRABANG

Start your day with the beauty of a sunrise, accompanied by freshly brewed coffee and a selection of teas in the bar lounge. Rejuvenate your mind and body with our daily Yoga class on the terrace deck, nestled at the footstep of one of Laos’ most iconic temples.

After breakfast, embark on an enchanting walking tour through Luang Prabang’s UNESCO World Heritage Site. Explore the old town and its scenic peninsula, where the Mekong and Nam Khan Rivers converge. Marvel at Luang Prabang’s distinctive architecture, accompanied by fascinating tales of the houses and landmarks. Stroll leisurely along small roads adorned with antique structures and majestic mango trees.

Return to the ship for lunch and refreshment. The afternoon explores Luang Prabang’s cultural heritage, visiting the former Royal Palace transformed into the National Museum. Admire local art and historical treasures once owned by the Lao royal family. Continue with a soft hike to Mount Phousi to take in panoramic views over the town. Afterwards, explore



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the city center at your own pace or relax in one of the street cafés before joining an insightful lecture on Lao life by a regional professor onboard. Afterwards, explore the city center at your own pace or relax in one of the street cafés before returning on board.



The evening continues with a cultural experience onboard as local elders join for a traditional Baci ceremony, a sacred ritual to bestow luck and blessings, followed by a captivating traditional performance in the lounge. Dinner is then served on the terrace with views of Luang Prabang’s picturesque riverfront.

DINING: B, L, D

DAILY INSIGHT: Wat Xieng Thong temple’s rear wall, adorned with colored glass pieces on a red background, represents the Bodhi Tree, where Gautama Buddha attained enlightenment - a refuge from worldly desires in Buddhist belief.

DAY 7

LUANG PRABANG - PAK OU - KHOK LUANG



Before the sun is fully risen, witness the spiritual Buddhist tradition of the morning alms round, known as “Tak Bat” in Lao. Wake before dawn to observe hundreds of saffron-robed monks in a serene procession—a tradition deeply rooted in Lao culture.

Bid farewell to Luang Prabang as we continue our upstream cruise on the Mekong River heading towards the renowned Pak Ou Caves, our expert guide presents an engaging lecture on the intricate tapestry of Laos’ diverse ethnic groups along the Mekong River. Over the next few days, you will see more of the fascinating array of cultural lifestyles, characteristics, and traditions.

HERITAGE LINE

9 NIGHTS • VIENTIANE - HUAY XAI



Arriving at the Pak Ou Caves, nestled along the rocky shore of the Mekong. There are two grottoes sheltering approximately 4,000 sacred Buddhist statues and images. We delve into the lower cave, the most impressive and easily accessible. Post-cave visit, Heritage Line offers two optional choices to enhance your excursion: an adventurous kayak tour along the serene Nam Ou River or a visit of the nearby village of Ban Muang Keo, known for traditional silk weaving. We also have the opportunity to visit a local alcohol workshop in this village (depending on time and availability).



As the afternoon progresses, we arrive at our overnight mooring and explore a picturesque village inhabited by Khmu people. Simplicity defines this locale, with bamboo huts elevated on stilts amidst vast rice fields. In this serene setting, we can mingle and meet with different generations – old and young – in the village, both deeply rooted in the land, sustaining their livelihood through manual agriculture. Peel back the layers of their daily existence, observe their way of life, and engage in insightful conversations to garner a profound understanding of their unique experiences.

The evening begins with a sunset snack time in the lounge with a preview of the upcoming day’s program before dinner. DINING: B, L, D

DAILY INSIGHT: The lower cave at Pak Ou Cave is named Tham Ting and holds special significance as a “holy cave.” Locals gather here during water festivals to make offerings and pray. Passengers and boatmen travelling on the Mekong also often stop here for brief worship and to seek good luck during their journey

DAY 8

KHOK LUANG - BAN BAW - KHOK AEK - BAN THANOUN



For those who rise with the sun, our everyday morning yoga class on the terrace deck with stunning Mekong backdrop is a great start into the day. During the morning sail, you may opt to join a presentation on “Laos’s Fabrics and Textiles,” exploring the country’s intricate weaving traditions and the cultural stories behind them, or simply unwind on board as the scenery drifts by. Later, today’s morning sojourn leads us to two traditional adjacent villages, where Lao Loum and Khmu communities have lived side by side for generations, each preserving their own traditions in quiet harmony. Most villagers are farmers, cultivating seasonal crops and tending small gardens, while in Ban Baw, a handful of women keep alive the intricate art of cotton and silk weaving. During our visit, you can witness a demonstration of this enduring craft, observing weavers as they work on traditional handlooms using labor-intensive methods that have remained unchanged through the ages. The village also has a small temple tending to the community’s spiritual life, where those who wish can join the resident monks for a short private meditation session.



The sailing time into the mid-afternoon offers again a breath-taking riverine cinema. We arrive at another village which has a very interesting character to it. In this place, three distinct ethnic groups - Hmong, Lao Loum, and Khamo – live together almost under “one roof”. Each possesses its unique history, traditions, ways of life, family dynamics, and housing styles. We venture into the village to a family home where



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representatives from each of these ethnic groups going to show and explain to us their still kept unique differences and characteristics in day-to-day life.

In the evening, join us for some prelude snacks at the bar with our guide to provide you with an outlook for the next day. Later, we anchor at a splendid sandbank for a romantic barbecue dinner under the stars, followed by a cosy outdoor movie screening. **DINING: B, L, D**

DAY 9
BAN THANOUN - PAKBENG - KHOK MWE



Wake up early to catch the sun’s first rays on the river and join our daily yoga class if you like.

Our voyage brings us in the morning to the charming town of Pakbeng. Along the riverside opposite of the town and nestled in the jungle lies Laos’ most sustainable elephant sanctuary. Here, in an almost pristine natural setting, we have the privilege of encountering these majestic creatures. Born in Laos and once employed as logging elephants, they now find sanctuary in a peaceful and natural environment, their ability to survive in the wild having been curtailed in captivity. The sanctuary, a symbol of ecotourism and sustainability, reflects a deep commitment to these principles. Witnessing these gentle giants in the rainforest, and learning about their unique stories, makes for an unforgettable experience.



In the afternoon, our journey continues as we glide along the Mekong’s gentle currents to our final overnight mooring spot. On board, our second hands-on cooking class invites you to master traditional Lao-Thai recipes, perfect for bringing the authentic flavors of the Mekong back home with you. Subsequently, a farewell dinner is served on the sun deck, marking the conclusion of this remarkable journey. **DINING: B, L, D**

DAILY INSIGHT: For hundreds of years, the country has built a special relationship with elephants. The first Laotian kingdom was named Lan-Xang or “Kingdom of the Million Elephants”. Did you also know that Laos has established a network of 101 “elephant corridors” to help elephants move safely between protected areas? These corridors are essential for ensuring that elephants have enough food and water and that they can avoid conflict with humans. They are also important for connecting elephant populations in different parts of Laos, which helps to maintain genetic diversity.

DAY 10
KHOK MWE - HUAY XAI



After an excitement-packed 9-night cruise, we take it a bit slower today, allowing you to digest all the memories collected. We have quite some river mileage to sail throughout the day until we reach Huay Xai - our final destination.

You can sleep a bit longer in the morning (if you like). The day unfolds with gentle cruising along the magnificent Mekong River, an ideal time to unwind and reflect on the journey so far.



In the mid-morning, we would like to invite you to an enthralling presentation that unravels the intricate history of the Golden Triangle, composed of its complexities of colonialism, opium, conflicts, and the multifaceted roles played by Burma, Thailand, Laos, Britain, China, and more. We are approximately at the confluence of the Mekong with the Nam Tha River, one of the Mekong’s major tributaries, known as the “Green River.” Originating near the Chinese border, 325 km to the northeast, it joins the Mekong at this juncture.

Here, the river widens, yet our skilled captain remains vigilant, navigating safely amidst rocks, stones, rapids, and sandbanks, making the sailing experience a fascinating observation from the open deck. This is also the moment right before the appetite kicks in. Kick back and enjoy the final peaceful hours of our voyage. Lunch will be served until one hour prior to arrival (approx.).



Upon arrival at Huay Xai pier in the afternoon, we provide assistance with your luggage and a seamless transfer to the Lao - Thai border (see details in our embarkation guide). We bid you farewell right in front of the Lao immigration office and wish you a pleasant onward journey. **DINING: B, L**

DAILY INSIGHT: The lower cave at Pak Ou Cave is named Tham Ting and holds special significance as a “holy cave.” Locals gather here during water festivals to make offerings and pray. Passengers and boatmen travelling on the Mekong also often stop here for brief worship and to seek good luck during their journey.

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