

THE MEKONG ASIA'S ARTERY

Journeys

VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA BY LAND AND A MEKONG CRUISE

15 March – 03 April 2018 | 19 nights

The mighty Mekong is one of the world's great rivers, carving its way through six Asian countries to bring life-giving water and food, while often causing death and destruction through flooding. The river is also a vital transport artery, linking communities and serving as a trade route. Perhaps the finest and most comfortable way of experiencing all this majestic river offers is in the colonial-era splendour of a Pandaw ship.

The Pandaw experience is all about exploring remote and often hard-to-navigate rivers in specially-designed luxury small ships. The company behind the experience has recreated the splendour of a bygone age, handcrafting new ships in brass and teak to original designs. Coupled with service that befits a five-star hotel, and you have a luxurious tropical journey.

But a Pandaw adventure isn't just about the ship, as romantic and comfortable as it is. Cruising on a river or a lake means you can stop frequently to explore, learn, and experience places you wouldn't otherwise reach. Daily shore excursions will introduce you to life in and around the river: ethnic minority villages, fish farms, floating markets and life on the backwaters.

We have built Pandaw cruises into several of our tours because our clients have had such good experiences with them. Next March, *Vietnam and Cambodia by land and a Mekong cruise* can take you from near the mouth of the Mekong Delta, upstream to Tonle Sap – the weird lake connected to a river that flows into and out of the lake in different seasons. You'll even travel far enough to see the unusual freshwater dolphins.

Just as the Mekong links different Asian countries together, so we will use the Pandaw cruise to link together two different land journeys. We will traverse bustling, vibrant, progressive Vietnam from the colonial heritage of Hanoi, through ancient capitals in the centre to bustling Ho Chi Minh City in the south. Cambodia will be a stark contrast, especially the ancient remains of Angkor Wat. Sailing the Mekong on a Pandaw ship is the thread that ties this varied journey together. Later next year (26 October – 10 November) we will travel with Pandaw on another great river – the Irrawaddy – from Yangon to Mandalay in Myanmar.



COSTA RICA'S RICHNESS

COSTA RICA AND PANAMA BY SMALL SHIP

23 April – 08 May 2018 | 15 nights

Early Spanish explorers called it the rich coast, and centuries later Costa Rica still shows how it deserves that name many times over – not only because of the gold found by the conquistadors, but a richness in environment, in landscape and in culture. The country boasts incredible rainforests and cloud forests, stunning beaches, charming small towns nestling beneath majestic volcanoes, and a fusion of indigenous and Hispanic cultures.

This country has a fascinating ecological story, with a quarter of its land area protected in national parks and reserves. It's no wonder Costa Rica is home to 5% of the world's biodiversity – all this in a country that's not much bigger than Canterbury. Because it straddles a narrow part of Central America between the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, Costa Rica packs a huge ecological variety into a small space. The natural world is what brings most visitors to the country, who take home memories of towering rainforests or compact mangrove swamps, encountering unusual animals, and seeing some of the hundreds of tropical bird species, from brightly coloured toucan to tiny flitting hummingbirds.

A unique blending of cultures gives Costa Rica its special character, with Ticos (as they are called) being mixed descendants of Spanish settlers and indigenous people, with a dash of Afro-Caribbean, Chinese and others. In recent decades the country has attracted immigrants, mainly workers from neighbouring countries but also many US retirees. Costa Rica is one of the oldest democracies in Latin America, and for decades has been an island of stability in a turbulent region. It even abolished its military almost 70 years ago.

Visitors to this gem of Central America will find that Costa Rica lives up to its name and delivers a richness of experiences. *Our Costa Rica and Panamá by small ship* tour next April will explore remote parts of the Pacific coast that can't be reached by land. But before boarding your floating home there will be opportunity to explore the country's interior – the rainforests and volcanoes of the north, and the vibrant capital city of San José.



2018 TOUR UPDATE

- Most of our 2018 tour itineraries are now on our website www.calderandlawsonstours.co.nz. Two tour itineraries are still to be finalised.
- The **Bike and barge in five countries** tour is full so we are now repeating our popular **Bike and barge in Venice and Provence**, 14 August – 05 September 2018. There is space available on this tour.
- Last chance for **Cruising the Lesser Sunda Islands in Indonesia**. We can't hold cabins much longer, so please let us know as soon as possible if you would like a place on this tour from 14-30 May 2018.

TOURS WHICH INCLUDE CRUISES

Single traveller contemplating a cruise and would like a cabin of your own? It's important to register early. Many of our small ship cruises, have a restriction on single cabins and sole use occupancy of a double/twin cabin.

- We have one twin cabin left on our **Slovenia and Croatia by land and sea** tour led by Gerald Bailey. A confirmed departure, we can take two more people sharing the last cabin. We have a number of single travellers registered for this tour, so unfortunately cannot take any more.
- The same applies to our **Costa Rica and Panama by small ship tour** – one twin cabin left in our allocation.
- On the other hand, there is no single supplement charged and no restriction on single cabins on the Mekong cruise with Pandaw so the tour to **Vietnam and Cambodia by land and a Mekong cruise** is a good option for single travellers.

FACEBOOK PAGE

We use our Calder & Lawson Tours Facebook page regularly to post photos and stories from our tours. If you would like to know more about our tours, 'like' us on Facebook and you will be notified when a new posting goes up.

2019 TOURS

Our 2018 brochure has just hit your mailboxes, but already we're working on tours for 2019. Where would you like to travel? What types of experience do you enjoy? Which tours would you like us to repeat? Phone or email us with your ideas.

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