



# WATERWAYS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

ABOARD THE *AQUA MEKONG*

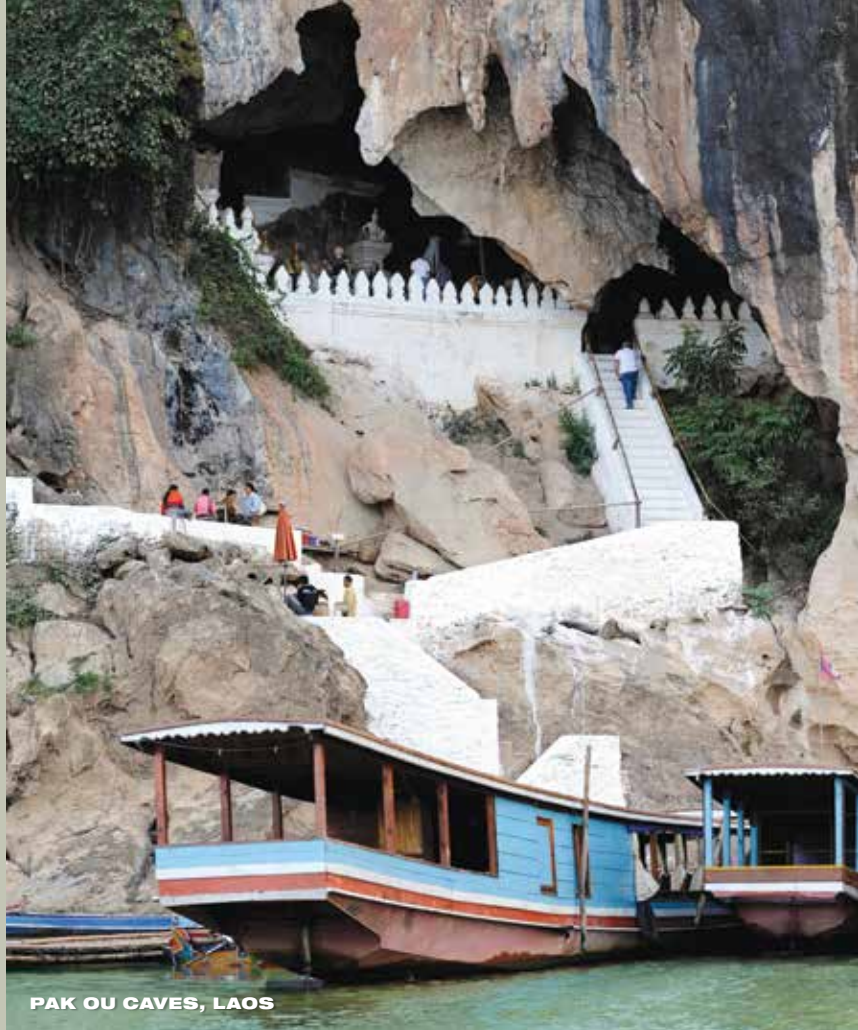
October 6 to 21, 2020

a program of the stanford alumni association

The 2,700-mile-long Mekong River is a vital resource for the countries through which it flows. It not only dictates a way of life for the people living directly along its shores, but also influences economies and ecosystems well beyond those in its immediate proximity. During our time in the charming and idyllic village of Luang Prabang, cruise up the Mekong River and visit the Pak Ou Caves—limestone caves that house thousands of Buddha images. Explore the ancient capital, and now archaeological site, of Angkor, which flourished for five centuries under the powerful Khmer kingdom. Comparatively, experience the bustle of modern Hanoi and marvel at its blend of contemporary and ancient architecture. Join us for an optional four-night post-trip extension aboard the *Aqua Mekong* from Phnom Penh to Ho Chi Minh City.

Borell

BRETT S. THOMPSON, '83, DIRECTOR, STANFORD TRAVEL/STUDY



PAK OU CAVES, LAOS

## Highlights

**ENJOY** two days in cosmopolitan Hanoi, Vietnam, exploring its museums, markets and institutions.

**EXPLORE** the UNESCO World Heritage site of Angkor in Cambodia, a vast complex of ancient temples and tombs.

**WATCH** as monks young and old collect alms at an early-morning procession in Luang Prabang, Laos, center of Laotian religious life.

**CRUISE** from Tonle Sap Lake down to Phnom Penh, Cambodia aboard the intimate *Aqua Mekong*.

COVER: ANGKOR WAT, CAMBODIA



HA LONG BAY



# Faculty Leader

**BARTON "BUZZ" THOMPSON, '73, MBA '76, JD '76** is an expert on rivers, their histories and their critical role in shaping the countries and regions through which they flow. Thompson teaches courses on rivers, water policy and environmental conservation at Stanford, and he has consulted on these topics for governments and nonprofit groups on six continents. He founded and directed Stanford's Woods Institute for the Environment, which brings together over 200 faculty from throughout the university to solve global resource challenges. The winner of multiple teaching awards, he is a popular and innovative lecturer. On this trip, he looks forward to talking with us about everything from how the Mekong River has influenced the area's political and economic history to the threats that dams are posing to the River's future to some of the more interesting and threatened denizens of the Mekong, such as the Mekong giant catfish and the Irrawaddy dolphin.

"He is a fantastic lecturer with so much knowledge to share. Plus he has a great talent for getting the audience to participate, and he links together their various points of view. Exceptionally enjoyable."

**SARAH ALLEN, '72, MA '75, ALONG THE MEKONG, 2018**

- At Stanford Law School: Robert E. Paradise Professor of Natural Resources Law since 1995; vice dean, 1999–2004; founding director, environmental and natural resources program
- Senior fellow and founding Perry L. McCarty Director, Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment
- Former senior fellow, Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies
- Former special master, United States Supreme Court
- Chairman of the board, Resources Legacy Fund; California trustee, The Nature Conservancy
- BA, economics and political science, 1972, Stanford University
- MBA, 1976, Stanford Business School
- JD, 1976, Stanford Law School

**S T A N F O R D T R A V E L / S T U D Y**

SIGN UP ONLINE: [alumni.stanford.edu/trip?waterways2020](http://alumni.stanford.edu/trip?waterways2020)  
OR BY PHONE: (650) 725-1093





## Itinerary

TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY,  
OCTOBER 6 & 7

### DEPART U.S. / HANOI, VIETNAM

Depart the U.S. on overnight flights to Hanoi, crossing the international date line en route. Arrive in Hanoi on Wednesday and transfer to our hotel for an afternoon, dinner and evening at leisure.

HOTEL SOFTEL LEGEND METROPOLE  
HANOI

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8  
**HANOI**

Today visit Hanoi's fascinating Ethnology Museum that focuses on the lifestyle, traditions and culture of Vietnam's minority peoples. Following an afternoon tour of the Guild District, attend a traditional water puppet performance. This evening gather with fellow travelers for a welcome dinner. HOTEL SOFTEL LEGEND METROPOLE HANOI (B,L,D)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9  
**HANOI**

This morning we explore Vietnam's capital with a visit to Ba Dinh Square, the locale

of Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum and, nearby, his spartan wartime residence. Continue to the Confucian Academy, known as the Temple of Literature and considered Vietnam's first university. This evening dine at one of the many fine restaurants in Hanoi independently. HOTEL

SOFTEL LEGEND METROPOLE  
HANOI (B,L)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10  
**HANOI / HA LONG BAY**

This morning, we board a private coach and drive to beautiful Ha Long Bay. Board our cruising vessel and, throughout the afternoon and into the evening, enjoy drifting amid the dramatic limestone islets of the bay, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Stay overnight aboard our ship, floating on the peaceful waters of Ha Long Bay. PARADISE CRUISES (B,L,D)

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11  
**HA LONG BAY / LUANG PRABANG, LAOS**

Spend the morning seeking local wildlife, hidden in river grottoes. After brunch, disembark our vessel and return to Hanoi where we

board a late afternoon flight to Luang Prabang, the ancient capital of the Lanexang kingdom, the center of religious life in Laos today and a UNESCO World Heritage city. Enjoy dinner at our hotel upon arrival. LE BEL AIR RESORT (B,L,D)

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12  
**LUANG PRABANG**

Following breakfast, take an excursion upstream on the Mekong River to visit the Pak Ou Caves located in a limestone cliff opposite the confluence of the Mekong and Ou Rivers. The two large caves are repositories for thousands of Buddha images, which range from a half-inch to six and a half feet in height. As we travel along the river, view typical local villages tucked amid the lush greenery and canoes bobbing by the shore. Stop at the village of Ban Muang Keo, well-known for traditional Lao rice whisky. At our hotel this evening before dinner, experience a traditional Baci ritual blessing. LE BEL AIR RESORT (B,L,D)

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13  
**LUANG PRABANG**

Observe the early-morning processions through the streets of Luang Prabang of monks collecting alms. Visit the Wat Xieng Thong, the 16th-century temple that epitomizes the grace elegance of Luang Prabang-style architecture. Also visit the Royal Palace featuring rooms decorated in traditional Lao style and housing historic relics of the ancient Lao kingdom, including the historic Prabang figure, a pure gold Buddha image after which the town is named. This afternoon, take an excursion to a nearby handicraft village and later enjoy dinner at our hotel.

LE BEL AIR RESORT (B,L,D)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14  
**LUANG PRABANG / SIEM REAP, CAMBODIA**

This morning, board our flight bound for Cambodia. Upon arrival in Siem Reap, transfer to our hotel, then visit the Angkor National Museum. This evening, enjoy dinner in our historic hotel. RAFFLES GRAND HOTEL D'ANGKOR (B,L,D)



**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15  
SIEM REAP / ANGKOR  
WAT / ANGKOR THOM**

This morning visit the crumbling ancient capital of the powerful Khmer kingdom, Angkor, which flourished from the 10th to the 15th century and comprises some 400 sandstone, brick and laterite temples, walls, tombs and other structures surrounded and invaded by jungle. Begin exploring this vast archaeological UNESCO World Heritage site, starting with Angkor Wat, the symbol of the Cambodian state. The complex is a “temple mountain,” an elaborate three dimensional model of the Hindu-Buddhist world. Continue our investigation of the area with a visit to Angkor Thom, royal city of the 12th-century god-king, Jayavarman VII, which includes the Bayon with its 54 intricately carved symmetric towers topped by giant stone faces and the Terrace of the Leper King. RAFFLES GRAND HOTEL D'ANGKOR (B,L,D)

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16  
SIEM REAP / BANTEAY  
SREI / EMBARK AQUA  
MEKONG**

This morning explore one of Angkor’s earliest and most prized sites, Banteay Srei. This temple, situated in a small, out-of-the-way location, displays the most beautifully preserved carvings remaining at Angkor. Also visit the temple ruins of Ta Prohm. Depart our hotel after lunch for the port at Tonle Sap Lake and embark our luxury river vessel, the *Aqua Mekong*. It features superb cuisine, well-appointed rooms and small skiffs that let us explore the less-traveled parts of the Mekong. After settling in to our cabins, enjoy dinner aboard ship. *AQUA MEKONG (B,L,D)*

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17  
TONLE SAP LAKE / PREK  
TOAL / MOAT KHLA**

Set off by skiff for the Prek Toal Core Bird Reserve, a 54,000-acre, seasonally inundated swamp forest and last refuge in Southeast Asia for large water birds such as the spot-billed pelican, milky stork, black-headed ibis and the elusive masked

finfoot. After lunch, visit the floating village of Moat Khla, accessible only by water, and attend a Buddhist blessing ceremony in this isolated community. *AQUA MEKONG (B,L,D)*

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18  
TONLE SAP LAKE /  
CHHNOK TRU /  
KAMPONG CHHNANG**

Explore remote villages around Tonle Sap Lake, designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1997. In Chhnok Tru, “slide” into an ice factory and learn from locals what it’s like to live in a town where schools, churches, pagodas, and even the karaoke bar and police station are all afloat. Learn all about Khmer riverside life in Kampong Chhnang, the “Clay Pot Port” famous for its skilled potters who sell their wares throughout Cambodia. *AQUA MEKONG (B,L,D)*

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 19  
KOH CHEN**

Visit Udong, the royal capital from the 17th to the 19th centuries, and learn about a uniquely challenging Buddhist practice at the Vipassana Dhura Mandala, a meditation

center. In the afternoon, set off for the Mekong’s “silk islands” where renowned weavers allow us to wander freely to admire their intricate craftsmanship. Biking is optional for those who wish to explore more of the islands. *AQUA MEKONG (B,L,D)*

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20  
PHNOM PENH /  
DISEMBARK AQUA  
MEKONG**

Disembark our ship and experience the Cambodian capital by motorized tuk-tuk, viewing the Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda and stopping at the National Museum of Cambodia, home to the world’s largest collection of Khmer art. Later visit the moving Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide, and Phnom Penh’s Central Market. This evening, check in to our hotel and enjoy a festive farewell reception and dinner. RAFFLES HOTEL LE ROYAL (B,L,D)

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21  
PHNOM PENH / U.S.**  
Depart on flights bound for the U.S., arriving home the same day. (B)



# Aqua Mekong

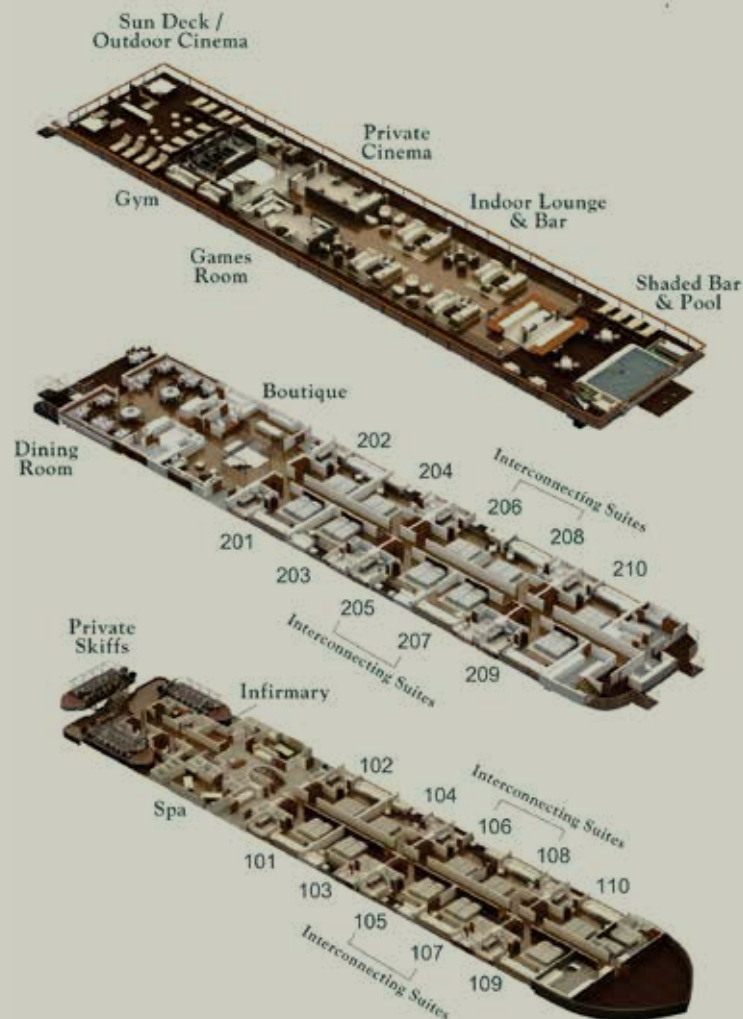
Spacious and indulgent, yet intimate enough to feel entirely exclusive, the *Aqua Mekong* incorporates relaxed yet refined lounging and dining areas and can accommodate a maximum of 40 guests plus crew. Local sustainable materials and artisanal touches of the Mekong's multifaceted cultures are incorporated into the ship's interior spaces where guests can relax between shore excursions. Meals aboard ship are crafted using fresh local ingredients and flavors. Roomy public areas include two bars, an outdoor cinema, shaded day lounges, a gym, a spa and an outdoor plunge pool with cabanas. Our ship also has skiffs that allow us to explore the hidden villages along the Mekong.

## Optional Post-trip Extension Aboard the *Aqua Mekong*

### PHNOM PENH TO HO CHI MINH CITY

- October 20 — Phnom Penh, Cambodia / Embark *Aqua Mekong*
- October 21 — Tan Chau, Vietnam / My An Hung
- October 22 — Binh Thanh or Sa Dec / Cai Be
- October 23 — Disembark *Aqua Mekong* / Ho Chi Minh City
- October 24 — Ho Chi Minh City / Depart for U.S.

A full post-trip extension itinerary, including cost, will be sent to confirmed participants.





## **DATES**

October 6 to 21, 2020 (16 days)

## **SIZE**

This program can accommodate 30 participants. Single accommodations are extremely limited; please call for availability.

## **INCLUDED**

\$13,295 per person, double occupancy

\$14,995 per person, single occupancy

\*Stanford Alumni Association nonmembers add \$300 per person

## **INCLUDED**

9 nights of luxury hotel accommodations ▪ 4 nights aboard the *Aqua Mekong*; 1 night aboard a Paradise Cruises Ha Long Bay vessel ▪ 14 breakfasts, 13 lunches and 12 dinners ▪ Welcome and farewell receptions ▪ Visa fees for Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia ▪ International flights within Southeast Asia per the itinerary ▪ Gratuities to porters, guides, housekeeping, drivers and ship crew for all group activities ▪ All tours as described in the itinerary ▪ Transfers and baggage handling on program arrival and departure days ▪ Minimal medical, accident and evacuation insurance ▪ Educational program with lecture series and pre-departure materials, including recommended reading list, a selected book, map and travel information ▪ Services of our professional tour manager to assist you throughout the program

## **NOT INCLUDED**

International and domestic airfare ▪ Passport fees ▪ Immunization costs ▪ Meals and beverages other than those specified as included ▪ Independent and private transfers ▪ Trip-cancellation/interruption and baggage insurance ▪ Excess-baggage charges ▪ Personal items such as internet access, telephone and fax calls, laundry and gratuities for nongroup services

## **AIR ARRANGEMENTS**

You are responsible for booking and purchasing airfare to the start location and from the end location of the program. These air purchases are NOT included in the program cost. To assist you in making these independent arrangements, we will send you details with your confirmation materials on when to arrive and depart.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT**

All participants must be physically fit, active and in good health. We consider this to be a moderately strenuous program. Daily programs involve one to three miles of walking, often on uneven terrain, and standing for long periods at times. In some instances, such as at ruins, stairs are uneven or do not have handrails. Average temperatures in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia range from the high 70s (°F) to the low 90s, and humidity can be more than 70%. Although all of the hotels, ships and motor coaches included in this program are air-conditioned, other traditional means of transportation and most of the museums, temples, pagodas and ruins we visit are not. We welcome travelers 15 years of age and older on this program.

## **Deposit & Final Payment**

A \$1,000-per-person deposit is required to reserve space for this program. A \$200-per-person deposit is required to reserve space for the optional post-trip extension. Sign up online at [alumni.stanford.edu/trip?waterways2020](http://alumni.stanford.edu/trip?waterways2020) or call the Travel/Study office at (650) 725-1093. Final payment is due April 9, 2020. As a condition of participation, all confirmed participants are required to sign a Release of Liability.

## **Cancellations & Refunds**

Deposits and any payments are refundable, less a \$500-per-person cancellation fee, until April 9, 2020. After that date, refunds can be made only if the program is sold out and your place(s) can be resold, in which case a \$1,000-per-person cancellation fee will apply.

## **Insurance**

Stanford Travel/Study provides all travelers who are U.S. or Canadian citizens with minimal medical, accident and evacuation coverage under our group-travel insurance policy. Our group policy is intended to provide minimal levels of protection while you are traveling on this program. You may choose to subscribe to optional trip-cancellation and baggage insurance. Information will be provided to travelers with their welcome materials. The product offered includes special benefits if you purchase your policy within 14 days of written confirmation of your participation on the trip.

## **Eligibility**

We encourage membership in the Stanford Alumni Association as the program cost for nonmembers is \$300 more than the members' price. A person traveling as a paid guest of a current member will not be charged the nonmember fee. To purchase a membership, visit [alumni.stanford.edu/goto/membership](http://alumni.stanford.edu/goto/membership) or call (650) 725-0692.

## **Responsibility**

The Stanford Alumni Association, Stanford University and our operators act only as agents for the passenger with respect

to transportation and ship arrangements and exercise every care possible in doing so. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity in connection with the service of any automobile, motor coach, launch or any other conveyance used in carrying out this program or for the acts or defaults of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the program. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, force majeure or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger as tour rates provide arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to make such alterations to this published itinerary as may be deemed necessary. We reserve the right to cancel any program prior to departure, in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. We also reserve the right to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the program. No refund will be made for an unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. Baggage is carried at the owner's risk entirely. It is understood that the ship's ticket, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the cruise company. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time that passengers are not on board their plane or conveyance. Neither the Stanford Alumni Association, nor Stanford University, nor our operators accept liability for any carrier's cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket in connection with the tour. Program price is based on rates in effect in September 2019 and is subject to change without notice to reflect fluctuations in exchange rates, tariffs or fuel charges.

TELEPHONE (650) 725-1093

EMAIL [travelstudy@alumni.stanford.edu](mailto:travelstudy@alumni.stanford.edu)

California Seller of Travel Program Registration #2048 523-50



# WATERWAYS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

ABOARD THE AQUA MEKONG

October 6 to 21, 2020

[alumni.stanford.edu/goto/travelstudy](http://alumni.stanford.edu/goto/travelstudy)



Stanford Travel/Study  
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Stanford, CA 94305-6105  
(650) 725-1093

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Association

"The Stanford Travel/Study Mekong program grants travelers access to people, places and learning opportunities that would not be possible on one's own."

**KERSTIN ADAMS, '10, ALONG THE MEKONG, 2015**

**S T A N F O R D T R A V E L / S T U D Y**



**LUANG PRABANG, LAOS**