

Essential Essence of Asia: Japan to South East Asia



Tour Name: Essential Essence of Asia: Japan to South East Asia

Tour Code: JVTs

Days: 41

Day 1

Sun, 12 Oct

Tokyo (D)

Welcome to Tokyo, Japan's capital and the world's most populous metropolis. Check-into your hotel, your Special Stay for the next three nights. With direct access to four subway lines, the hotel was recently rated in the Forbes Travel Guide as Tokyo's exclusive Japanese decor 5-star luxury hotel. Rooms overlook the most picturesque sites in Tokyo, such as the Imperial Palace, the 500-year-old Hie Jinja Shrine and beautiful landscaped Japanese gardens. This evening meet for your welcome reception and dinner.

Day 2

Mon, 13 Oct

Tokyo (B,L,D)

Gather your bearings of Tokyo from above as you take in the view from Tokyo Sky Tree.

Enrich

Given by Taiko Masters, partake in an interactive, private group demonstration and lesson in playing the Taiko drums.

Afterwards visit the epicentre of Tokyo's teenage youth as you wander along Takeshita Street Harajuku, known for its colourful street art, youth fashion, quirky vintage clothing and cosplay stores and dessert shops and carts that specialise in sweet crêpes, donuts, and bubble tea.

Freechoice Dining:

Choose from dining at a ninja themed restaurant or culturally immerse yourself in the traditional Japanese evening izakaya bar scene serving Yaki-tori and Kushiyaki with your Tour Director as they show you their favourite places to go. Alternatively dine in at Nobu Tokyo restaurant.

Day 3

Tue, 14 Oct

Tokyo (B,L)

Visit the Asakusa district, known as the centre of Tokyo's shitamachi or 'low city' capsulizing the atmosphere of Tokyo's past, paying your respects at Sensoji temple, the city's oldest Buddhist temple.

Freechoice: Visit the Imperial Shinto Meiji Shrine, before walking across the often referred to as 'the world's busiest pedestrian crossing' and seeing the famous Hachiko dog statue in Shibuya. Alternatively, wander through picturesque Shinjuku-Gyoen Gardens before witnessing the Shinjuku entertainment district come alive at dusk where you can choose to stay into the night.

Day 4 Wed, 15 Oct	Tokyo > Five Lakes (B,L,D) Begin the day with Team Lab Borderless at the Digital Art Museum and wander freely amongst the mesmerizing light displays. Then dress up in your chefs' clothes to make your own sushi lunch with the help of a local chef. Venture into the countryside on your drive to the Fuji Five Lakes district, known locally as Fujigoko. Later, discover the craftsmanship involved in creating kimonos during the Muromachi Period (1333-1573) at the Itchiku Kubota Art Museum. Soak in the views of Mt Fuji from your hotel where you will stay overnight.
Day 5 Thu, 16 Oct	Five Lakes > Hakone (B,L,D) Drive to Hakone and cruise on Lake Ashinoko on the First-class deck of your pirate ship with Mt Fuji as a backdrop. Admire the stunning scenery during your cable car ride up to the hot springs of the Owakudani geothermal area before moving to study the art works and sculptures at the Hakone Open Air Museum, Japan's first open air museum. Relax during your evening at your hotel overlooking Lake Ashinoko.
Day 6 Fri, 17 Oct	Hakone > Nagoya > Inuyama (B,L,D) Via Shinkansen, in your Green (Business) Class seats, travel to Nagoya and visit Shinkansen Train Museum at the SCMaglev and Railway Park. Continue to the historic castle town of Inuyama and check into your boutique hotel in Inuyama for a two-night Special Stay.
Day 7 Sat, 18 Oct	Inuyama (B,L,D) Learn about the ancient history of the area with a visit to the Shiro-to-Machi Museum before enjoying a rickshaw ride through the old town's streets to Inuyama Castle, the oldest of just five castles nationwide designated as national treasures. Afterwards visit the Meiji Mura, a massive outdoor museum for reconstructed buildings.
Day 8 Sun, 19 Oct	Inuyama > Tsumago Juku > Takayama (B,L,D) Head north to Takayama via Tsumago Juku, a fully restored and preserved Edo Period (1600-1868) post town in the Kiso Valley. Upon arrival in Takayama, enjoy a sake tasting and museum experience at Funasaka Shuzo Sake brewery. Enjoy a two-night stay at your hotel overlooking Takayama. Freechoice Dining: Choose between Le Midi, a restaurant located in town known for its Hida Beef, or Sakanaya, a fine Japanese restaurant set in a renovated sake brewery. Alternatively enjoy local regional Japanese at Susaki.
Day 9 Mon, 20 Oct	Takayama – Gokayama (B,L) View the impressive Yatai festival floats, then drive to the historical farmhouses of the less visited mountain villages in Gokayama, a World Heritage listed site, including Ainokura and Shirakawago villages. Whilst here, try your hand at a Washi paper making workshop. Back in Takayama explore the shops and backstreets of Takayama's old quarter, leaving the evening free to enjoy this old quarter at your leisure.
Day 10 Tue, 21 Oct	Takayama > Takaoka > Kanazawa (B,L,D) Head further north to Takaoka via a cruise through Shogawa Gorge and its stunning scenery. Takaoka is known for its copper and tinware so you will have the opportunity to create your own souvenir at one of the local workshops. Later visit Zuiryuji Temple, a Soto Zen Buddhist temple and a national treasure completed circa 1659. Continue to Kanazawa and relax at your hotel in Kanazawa for the next two nights, located just seconds from the Kanazawa train station. Ryokan Upgrade: For a unique insight into Japanese culture, choose to stay tonight in a Ryokan (at additional cost, must be pre-booked before departure). This traditional Japanese Inn has tatami mat flooring with futon beds, sliding shoji paper doors, Tatami flooring, private facilities, and includes dinner and breakfast.
Day 11 Wed, 22 Oct	Kanazawa (B,L) Wander around Kenroku-en Garden, one of Japan's three great gardens located across from Kanazawa Castle Park. Move to the Higashi-Chaya District tea house district and try your hand at the Kanazawa Gold Leaf craft shop. Later, catch a glimpse of life in Feudal Japan with a visit to former Kaga Clan Samurai houses in the Nagamachi district.
Day 12 Thu, 23 Oct	Kanazawa > Kyoto (B,L,D) Travel by train to the culturally rich city of Kyoto, home to many World Heritage-listed sites. Upon arrival, glide through the surreal Arashiyama Bamboo Grove by traditional rickshaw before exploring and enjoying a vegetarian meal at the World Heritage listed Tenryu-ji Temple. Afterwards visit the famous Kinkaku-ji or Golden Pavilion, because it is completely covered in gold leaf, before settling into your hotel. Tonight, gather for a Teppanyaki feast.

Day 13 Fri, 24 Oct	Kyoto (B,D) Freechoice: Revel in the atmosphere of the ancient preservation districts or visit the Silver Pavilion before strolling along part of the famous Philosopher's Walk, an approximately two kilometre long, beautiful stone path walk along a canal through the northern part of Kyoto's Higashiyama district. Enrich Partake in a Japanese tea ceremony while dressed in a traditional Japanese kimono, a great photo opportunity. This afternoon, enjoy some free time in Nishiki Market, a market renown as Kyoto's kitchen with over 100 stalls and shops. Later this evening stroll through the Gion area, Kyoto's famous Geisha District before dinner. Enrich Tonight's dinner will allow you to interact with a Geiko and Maiko who'll host your meal presentation. It's an excellent opportunity to learn about what is involved in becoming a Geisha and the art of Japanese hospitality.
Day 14 Sat, 25 Oct	Kyoto - Nara (B,L) Begin your day with an early visit to the Fushimi Inari Shrine, famous for its thousands of vermilion torii gates and its appearance in the film 'Memoirs of a Geisha'. Continue to Nara, Japan's first permanent capital established in the year 710 as Heijo, the city now known as Nara. Here you'll visit Todaiji Temple, constructed in 752 as the head temple of all provincial Buddhist temples of Japan. The Temple grew so powerful that the capital was moved from Nara to Nagaoka in 784 in order to lower the temple's influence on government affairs. Also see deer in Nara Park before returning to Kyoto and visiting Nijo castle, built in 1603 as the Kyoto residence of Tokugawa Ieyasu, the first shogun of the Edo Period. The remainder of the day is at your leisure.
Day 15 Sun, 26 Oct	Kyoto > Himeji > Hiroshima (B,L,D) This morning travel by Shinkansen to marvel at Himeji Castle, an original and Japan's most spectacular castle and one of the few remaining original feudal castles. Continue to Hiroshima via Shinkansen and check into your hotel for two nights. Tonight, sample Okonomiyaki, a delicious savoury Japanese-style pancake and specialty of the region.
Day 16 Mon, 27 Oct	Hiroshima > Miyajima Island (B,L) Sail by ferry to Miyajima Island to visit Daisho-in Temple and its famous floating Torii Gate at the Itsukushima Shrine, also built over the water. Enrich Experience an emotional visit to the Peace Park and Museum, dedicated to the legacy of Hiroshima as the first city in the world to suffer a nuclear attack. Move to Orizuru Tower to learn how to create your own special origami crane offering for the Orizuru Wall. This evening is yours at leisure in Hiroshima.
Day 17 Tue, 28 Oct	Hiroshima > Kobe > Osaka (B,L) Travel by Shinkansen to Kobe and continue to the Kirin Beer Factory for lunch, tasting and a tour of the factory. Drive to Osaka to enjoy a three-night Special Stay. This evening ride the Osaka Metro to wander around the lively entertainment area of Dotonbori and Hozenji Yokocho food alley.
Day 18 Wed, 29 Oct	Osaka - Tondabayashi - Kehayaza (B,L,D) Drive to Tondabayashi to visit a restored Edo era Merchant House before continuing onto a Sumo Museum in Kehayaza, the area where Sumo originated. Enrich Learn about the history, life and training routine of a sumo wrestler during your private visit with sumo wrestlers. After the welcome ceremony, see a demonstration of Jinku and the wrestlers in action in the dohyo. Enjoy your Club Floor benefits before transferring to the Umeda Sky Building for night-time views of the skyline of Osaka, before settling into your dinner with a view.
Day 19 Thu, 30 Oct	Osaka (B,D) Freechoice: Wander through Shinsaibashi-suji shopping avenue, followed by Kuromon Ichiba Market, known as Osaka's kitchen or visit the Museum of History and the rebuilt Osaka Castle. The afternoon is free at leisure for last minute shopping before gathering for your farewell Japanese feast.
Day 20 Fri, 31 Oct	Osaka > Hanoi (B,D) Bid a fond farewell to the 'land of the rising sun' and transfer to the airport for your flight to Hanoi Vietnam. Upon arrival you will be met and transferred to your two-night Special Stay. This colonial 'grand old lady' of Hanoi boasts luxury rooms and amenities with an exceptional staff to cater your needs and comforts. Tonight meet your Vietnamese Tour Director and fellow passengers.

Day 21
Sat, 01 Nov

Hanoi > Halong Bay Cruise (B,L,D)

After breakfast, checkout of your luxury accommodation and begin your four-hour journey to Halong Bay. Along the way you will drive through the prosperous farmlands of the Red River Delta before joining a two-night cruise onboard the new luxury Bhaya Soul for an awe-inspiring trip through the picturesque waters of this spectacular World Heritage-listed icon. This stunning vessel provides a first-class experience from beginning to end. The luxurious features and suites allow a comfortable and exquisite way to explore Halong Bay reaching areas of the bay far beyond the day trippers and overnight cruises.

Day 22
Sun, 02 Nov

Halong Bay Cruise (B,L,D)

After breakfast, enjoy a Tai Chi lesson on the Sun Deck as the ship sails deeper into the National Park. Take control and jump into a kayak to paddle your way through a limestone cave system, and later take a bike ride on Cat Ba Island. Cat Ba Island has to be one of the hidden beauties of the region. Twined with jungle and wildlife, the island remains mainly untouched from large development. After your adventure ashore head back to the ship to enjoy an exclusive to Scenic guests Sundowners activity whilst at anchor. Soak up the aromas in a wine tasting set against the backdrop of the karst Islands at sunset. Later, after enjoying the fine local cuisine in the onboard restaurant, try your hand at some squid fishing from the boat.

Day 23
Mon, 03 Nov

Halong Bay Cruise > Hanoi (B,L,D)

Relax during your morning cruise back to the harbour. After stopping for lunch and shopping en-route back to Hanoi, arrive back for an overnight stay. Later join a historical bunker tour at the hotel to learn about its place in the history of this capital city, a history that spans over 1000 years.

Freechoice Dining:

Tonight, you have a choice of venues for your dinner through Scenic's Freechoice. Inspired by Parisian cafés, enjoy a taste of France right in the heart of Hanoi's bustling street life at the La Terrace at your hotel.

Or indulge in Vietnamese dishes with a refined Indochine style at Ha Thanh Mansion Restaurant, housed within a century-old villa that stands as a testament to the rich history of Tonkin.

For the more adventurous, ride tandem on the back on a Vespa with a guide for a foodie tour of Hanoi's Old Quarter, stopping at local food haunts for authentic Hanoi Street food with free flow drinks enabling you get a feel of the nightlife and vibe of the local Hanoi culture.

Day 24
Tue, 04 Nov

Hanoi (B,D)

Rise and shine to a day of exploration in this nostalgic city with your first Scenic Freechoice.

Freechoice:

Choose to visit the History Museum and Hoa Lo Prison. The National Museum of Vietnamese History displays monumental components stretching across every period. Housed in a colonial French building completed in 1932, the design incorporated French colonial and traditional Vietnamese architecture. Continue to Hoa Lo Prison, which was used by the French for political prisoners, and later by North Vietnam for prisoners during the Vietnam War.

Alternatively, visit Ho Chi Minh Quarter and his Mausoleum, the resting place of Ho Chi Minh himself before visiting the Temple of Literature, originally built in 1070 as a university dedicated to Confucius, scholars and sages. Then discover the charm of the Old Quarter with its narrow alleys and stop at a local coffee shop to savour one of the local favourites, an egg coffee.

Thirdly, visit the ancient village of Bat Trang, a traditional porcelain and pottery community. Interactively learn the intricate steps involved in making these ceramic works of art. Afterwards at a house where locals worship their ancestors, a local elder explains the unique aspects of Vietnamese culture and its spiritual beliefs. Conclude the trip by learning all about Bánh Cuon or rice pancakes, a dish of northern Vietnam that you'll enjoy as part of a tasty self-made lunch of local specialties.

Enjoy a "green" electric car tour through Hanoi's old quarter to tonight's Enrich activity.

Enrich

For your Enrich Activity, attend a customary performance of Hanoi's famous water puppets. As a VIP ticket holder, you will have premium seating as well as the opportunity to learn the secrets behind this illusionary show thanks to your special backstage pass.

Day 25
Wed, 05 Nov

Hanoi > Hoi An (B,D)

After breakfast, check-out and transfer to Hanoi Airport for your flight to Danang. Upon arrival continue south past Marble mountains to the ancient trading port town of Hoi An. Here enjoy a three-night stay at your resort, which includes a daily spa journey as part of your stay.

Freechoice Dining:

After you have settled into your little slice of heaven, take the opportunity to enjoy a range of carefully selected dining venues for your Scenic Freechoice dining.

Dine on Vietnamese street food style dishes at Morning Glory Signature Restaurant or choose Mango Mango Restaurant nestled in the heart of Hoi An's Ancient Town.

Alternatively, nestled amongst the surrounding farmland, dine in the middle of rice paddies in a cosy and romantic setting whilst enjoying traditional Vietnamese and fusion cuisine at The Field Hoi An Restaurant and Bar.

Day 26
Thu, 06 Nov

Hoi An (B,L)

Step back in time as you take a walking tour of Hoi An's World Heritage-listed Old Quarter, visiting the Japanese Bridge and central market where you can experience its incredible sights and aromas. Afterwards try some local street food specialties of Hoi An such as Com Gà, Cao Lau and Bánh Mì at a local restaurant. The afternoon is at your leisure, perhaps to get a massage using your included spa treatment, swim in the hotel's large resort style pool or continuing shopping in the old town, visiting the many tailors the town is known for.

Sunset Drinks

Enjoy your Scenic Sundowners, a time to relax at a reception in the Blue Bar with included beer and wine.

Day 27
Fri, 07 Nov

Hoi An (B)

Start the day refreshed and ready to join your Scenic Freechoice activity.

Freechoice:

The option of a half day drip to My Son provides a glimpse into the area's ancient history and a truly cultural highlight of Central Vietnam. The remaining structures of the Tower Temples provide an atmospheric image of the majesty of the Champa Kingdom. Stroll through the ruins and visit the small museum at the entrance to My Son before a local lunch.

The second option is to ride a bicycle to a local village to learn about the local lives of Hoi An's fishermen. Climb into a small, round bamboo fishing basket and learn to cast a fishing net in the traditional way. Then continue to an area filled with water palms and coconut trees and learn about the history of this part of Hoi An. Round off the adventure with a scenic boat trip back to Hoi An, savouring lunch on board.

Thirdly meet with the representative of Reaching Out, an NGO established in 2000 and gain an insight into their efforts in providing opportunities for people with disability to learn skills and gain meaningful employment. Undertake a Lantern Making Class at their workshop located at an old merchant house and get a glimpse into how this NGO helps the disabled to integrate fully with their communities and lead independent and fulfilling lives.

Alternatively, you have the choice of participating in a bicycle ride to a local farm in Tra Que Village. Soak in the beauties of the vegetable gardens and participate in the preparation of the land and fertilizing it with seaweed with the local farmers. You will learn how to prepare 'Tam Hu'u', a local delicacy before sitting down for a home cooked meal including 'Banh Xeo' a specialty savory pancake wrapped in rice paper. After your morning of adventures, arrive back at the Almanity Resort where you are then free to head back into town to explore on your own.

Day 28
Sat, 08 Nov

Hoi An > Hue (B,L,D)

This morning travel via the breath-taking Hai Van Pass to Hue, the former imperial capital. During an inspiring visit to Duc Son Pagoda, talk with the nuns and learn how they are supporting their orphanage through different initiatives, including the proceeds from your Vegetarian lunch at Tinh Tam Restaurant. In the afternoon, wander through the grandeur of Hue's Imperial Citadel ruins before enjoying a cyclo ride back to the hotel. Afterwards check into your hotel in Hue, your home for the night.

Enrich

Traditional Vietnamese cuisine is served family style at the private Garden House accompanied by Royal Hue court music and a glass of wine.

Day 29
Sun, 09 Nov

Hue > Ho Chi Minh City (B,L,D)

Your final day in the centre of Vietnam starts with breakfast before checking out and setting off on a morning excursion to the Mausoleum of Emperor Tu Duc, the last independent emperor of Imperial Vietnam before French colonisation. After exploring the grounds, head to the airport for your flight to Ho Chi Minh City. After your flight to Ho Chi Minh City, transfer to your hotel for the next two nights. Before dinner take a leisurely walk around Notre Dame Cathedral, the Opera House, and the Central Post Office.

Day 30
Mon, 10 Nov

Ho Chi Minh City (B,L,D)

After breakfast, travel to the Cu Chi Tunnels and spend the morning learning about the development and establishment of this hidden covered tunnel network that the Viet Cong soldiers hid in for months on end. Return to the city for a Pho lunch with the remainder of the afternoon at leisure.

Freechoice Dining:

Tonight, choose your Scenic Free Choice dining option from an exhilarating Vespa ride at night as your experienced driver winds in and out the hectic traffic of the streets, stopping at all the best local spots for the most scrumptious Vietnamese cuisines. Sample the best authentic street food and an unlimited supply of drinks and eating however much your stomach desires.

Alternatively, dine at Mandarin Restaurant, designed in the style of the Hue imperial court serving individual Vietnamese dishes.

Or for something totally different dine at Noir Dining in the Dark, a restaurant dedicated to helping the blind and visually impaired community.

Other choices include experiencing the street food and bars of Saigon on a Vintage Jeep or enjoying the offerings at Buffet 19 at your hotel.

Day 31
Tue, 11 Nov

Ho Chi Minh City > Mekong Cruise (B,L,D)

After breakfast and checkout, visit the War Museum and Reunification Palace. The former Presidential House of South Vietnam become famous in 1975 with images of tanks crashing through its gates leading to the South's surrender and end of the War of Independence.

After lunch, a coach will transfer you to My Tho where the breathtaking Scenic Spirit awaits. Start with a cocktail reception hosted by your Cruise Director. Take a stroll around the decks to orientate yourself as to where all the amenities are. After your welcome dinner, settling into your private suite does not mean you settle for service. At any time, your dedicated personal butler is free to swing by with a nightcap and delivery of your preferred pillows. A calm 4-hour sail brings you to halt off Cai Be where the ship will anchor overnight.

Day 32
Wed, 12 Nov

Cai Be > Sa Dec (B,L,D)

Start the day with a full gourmet breakfast – complete with champagne – before heading out to explore Cai Be.

Freechoice:

Choose to travel via sampan to Tan Phong, a small island located near Cai Be town that is rich in alluvial soil suitable for tropical fruit orchards all year round. With a total area of more than 1,000 hectares, surrounded by silted sandbanks, canals and a mild temperature, Tan Phong has long been a friendly destination for eco-tourism. On arrival, try a hands-on experience at a workshop specialised in weaving water hyacinth into artistic crafts. Board a motorised buggy for a ride through endless fruit orchards, stopping to enjoy the tropical fruits and interact with a farm owner. Reboard the sampan and cruise to Cai Bè town to discover the local cottage industry where families make rice-paper and sweets from pop-corn, pop-rice and coconut.

Alternatively take a sampan from the Scenic Spirit to savour a delicious afternoon tea at the Le Longanier, a French colonial house restaurant, where staff will welcome you with tea, coffee and a range of local fruit and snacks for your tasting. You can dive into a local experience with a band playing music and performing traditional Vietnamese songs.

If you would prefer to enjoy the comforts of your ship, our highly skilled bar team is ready to welcome you to a hands-on cocktail/mocktail making class featuring fresh local ingredients.

After your morning activity, head back to the ship for lunch whilst sailing to Sa Dec. Relax and soak in the beauty of the scenery, visit the on-board library to read up on future ports, or head to the Scenic Spirit lounge to unwind with fellow guests over a glass of wine.

Later, upon arrival in Sa Dec, board your sampan once again to explore the lively wet market where you can meet the sellers and marvel at their wares, including live fish, frogs and even snakes. This two-hour exploration will take you deep into the local lifestyle. You can also see the grand home of Mr. Huynh Thuy Le, a Chinese merchant who inspired Marguerite Duras' novel L'Amant. Your expert guide will reveal the secrets behind this passionate tale of tragic love.

After returning to the ship, and before dinner, marvel at a lion dance performed by locals on the expansive Sundeck. The ship will then set sail for the 6-hour journey to Tan Chau.

Day 33
Thu, 13 Nov

Tan Chau – Border Crossing (B,L,D)

You may want to start with some exercise in the on-board gym, try stretching at the early morning yoga class or relax in the sauna. Then set off to discover the areas surrounding Tan Chau.

Freechoice:

You could leave the city life behind at Tra Su Bird Sanctuary in Tra Su Forest. Travel by sampan through endless tranquil waterways, flanked by mangroves and lush greenery. This eco reserve spans 850 hectares and is an ecological haven for fauna and flora, home to more than 100 species of waterbirds.

Or experience a traditional way of life on Evergreen Island, joining local farmers for a morning of discovery. Back in Tan Chau, ride in a xe loi, a three-wheeled bicycle rickshaw that was introduced by the French in the 19th century and is a common form of transportation in rural Vietnam. Visit the recently renovated, brightly coloured Cao Dai temple. Caodaism is a new religion, established in 1926 in the southern Vietnamese city of Tây Ninh, and brings together beliefs and practices from Buddhism, Christianity, Taoism and Confucianism. Here, you will learn more about the mix of ideas that form the basis of this fascinating religion.

For your third choice, board a speedboat to visit Chau Doc, a major city in the Mekong Delta, and Tay An temple. Set at the foot of Sam Mountain, this elaborate temple is a mixture of Indian and Islamic architecture. Afterwards, board another sampan to visit Vinh Te canal and view life along the riverfront of Chau Doc, before stopping at a family-operated fish farm on your way back to Scenic Spirit.

After lunch upon your arrival back on board, enjoy sailing to the Vietnamese and Cambodian border. Some down time is a great way to relax and what better way to do that than heading to the Wellness Centre or Beauty Salon for a bit of pampering. After the ship clears immigration into Cambodia at the border, settle in for an overnight sail towards Phnom Penh, bidding farewell to Vietnam.

Day 34
Fri, 14 Nov

Phnom Penh (B,L,D)

Welcome to Cambodia, arriving into the capital of Phnom Penh early this morning. After breakfast, it will be time to head out and explore the city.

Freechoice:

You can choose to journey to the infamous Killing Fields and take a tour of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, housed inside a former prison. These sites are a sobering reminder of the terrors unleashed by the Khmer Rouge regime in the 1970s. This moving tour will give you a deeper insight into the tumultuous history of Cambodia and the resilience of its people.

Passionate foodies may like to choose a hands-on cooking class. Take a trip to the bustling market with a local chef to purchase your ingredients, then head back to the kitchen to cook your own lunch, testing out the styles and flavours of Cambodian cuisine.

Alternatively, travel by remok, a local style of tuk tuk, to explore the French architecture and history of Phnom Penh. Finish the tour with shopping at the Central Market, famed for its unique Art Deco design and bright yellow façade.

At the conclusion of your tour, return to Scenic Spirit for lunch. The remainder of the afternoon is at leisure.

Sunset Drinks

Later this evening, revel in our Phnom Penh by City Lights tour. You'll get to witness the nightlife of the capital before stopping at a local rum distillery for your exclusive Scenic Sundowners experience, including a private tour and tasting.

Day 35
Sat, 15 Nov

Phnom Penh > Oudong (B,L,D)

Board a bus this morning for the short drive to the ancient capital of Cambodia, Oudong. Here, experience the life of the monks and nuns who reside at the peaceful monastery. If you are lucky, you may be able to partake in one of the many festivals and traditional rituals often held here.

After you return to the city, discover the opulence of Phnom Penh's Royal Palace and the famous Silver Pagoda within. Set on the riverfront, this dazzling palace was built in the 1860s and still serves as the official residence of the King of Cambodia. After returning to the ship and before setting sail, enjoy a cultural performance by the Cambodian Student and Children's Organisation.

Sunset Drinks

Get an outfit ready for an evening of style with a Sundowner cocktail reception on the sundeck against the backdrop of Phnom Penh's lights and stunning scenery as the ships sets sail towards Oknha Tey, commonly known as Silk Island.

Day 36
Sun, 16 Nov

Silk Island > Angkor Ban (B,L,D)

This morning, you will explore the island of Oknha Tey, dedicated to the art of silk weaving. Travel by traditional tuk tuk to the farm, meet the workers and learn about silk production. Return to Scenic Spirit for lunch and some free time. This could be the perfect opportunity to escape the heat of a South East Asian afternoon with a swim in the pool and a refreshing cocktail.

After lunch, you will call at Angkor Ban, a small settlement where time stands still. Explore its historic wooden houses, which date back over 100 years and survived the destruction of the Khmer Rouge. You can also visit a local school that teaches English to the students alongside their regular lessons. Back on board, learn the many ways to wear a krama, the traditional Cambodian scarf, as the ship sails towards Kampong Cham.

Day 37
Mon, 17 Nov

Wat Hanchey > Kampong Cham (B,L,D)

Meet the novice monks at Wat Hanchey, an ancient hilltop pagoda and monastery. Walk (or drive) to the top and soak in some of the best elevated views of the cruise.

Enrich

Receive a traditional blessing from a monk and learn how to pray in a Buddhist pagoda before partaking in an alms ceremony, which contributes to the daily meal of the resident monks.

Sail back to Kampong Cham.

Freechoice:

This afternoon, explore Kampong Cham and its surrounds. Choose to learn about local folklore at Phnom Pros, a mountaintop pagoda that has long been part of a traditional legend. Tragically, in more modern times, the site was used as a Killing Field by the Khmer Rouge. The temple now features a Buddha Garden and is home to a local troop of monkeys. Afterwards, visit Wat Nokor Bachey, a unique architectural experiment that blends an Angkorian era temple with a new temple built inside it.

Alternatively, explore Kampong Cham's history and industry with a drive past shop houses, remnants of the French colonial era, and the large Central market. Visit a local rubber plantation established by the French before stopping at a village known for growing betel nut, an important part of Cambodian culture.

Your third option today is a visit to Kho Penh Village. Located on Pen (Bamboo) Island, it's only accessible by local remork after crossing by bamboo bridge or ferry from Kampong Cham. This remote village gives you a fascinating insight into the simple, rural lifestyle of farmers in Cambodia.

Back on board you will have time to relax and overlook the gorgeous sunset of the Cambodian skyline before your engaging farewell dinner with the crew.

Day 38
Tue, 18 Nov

Mekong Cruise > Siem Reap (B,L)

Today we journey to Siem Reap via stops at Kampong Tom and the Angkorian bridge in Kampong Kdei. Siem Reap is a split in time with ancient and traditional architecture weaved between the modern developments. Step back in time at your hotel, Raffles Grand Hotel d'Angkor, a definition of luxury and your historical home for the next three nights in Siem Reap. This brilliantly appointed accommodation is styled with a mix of French inspired architecture, local interior furnishings, the attentive staff provide a service beyond expectations, and brilliant amenities fit for royalty.

This evening head to the colourful Cambodian Phare Circus where your VIP premium reserved seating awaits you. Beautifully dressed performers style a stunning show that is more than just a circus. The performers use theatre, music, dance and modern circus arts to tell uniquely Cambodian stories; historical, folk and modern.

Day 39
Wed, 19 Nov

Siem Reap (B,L)

The second day of your Siem Reap exploration starts with a delicious champagne buffet breakfast at the hotel.

Freechoice:

As part of Scenic's Freechoice you have multiple options to choose from. Explore the 10th-century Banteay Srei Temple, a temple commonly referred to as the Ladies Temple because of its pinkish sandstone and dedication to the Hindu god Shiva. Afterwards visit the Landmine Museum, founded in 1997 with the aim to make the country safe through the removal of mines.

On another option visit Senteurs d'Angkor workshop to try your hand at producing your own local souvenir. Through different hands-on workstations, discover how the artisans make by hand soap with coconut oil, natural cosmetics, subtly scented balms, aromatic candles and local spices in traditional ways.

Alternatively, if you have enjoyed being on the water, sail on Tonle Sap Lake (July to February), a picturesque UNESCO biosphere reserve and dive deep into discovery when visiting and experiencing the life of a floating village.

Or take flight in a tethered balloon to discover the aerial beauties of the combination between traditional and modern Siem Reap. Enjoy the fresh air and take some remarkable photographs of the skyline as you lift into the skies of Siem Reap overlooking Angkor Wat below before visiting a Lotus Flower workshop. (Not available July-October 2025).

Later this afternoon explore Angkor Wat itself, the largest religious monument in the world. Originally constructed as a Hindu temple dedicated to the god Vishnu for the Khmer Empire, it was gradually transformed into a Buddhist temple towards the end of the 12th century. An afternoon visit provides the perfect light for those idealic pictures of this colossal structure. After the day of adventure, tonight is free to shop away at the night markets of Siem Reap or venture to Pub Street, both in walking distance or a short tuk tuk ride from your hotel.

Day 40
Thu, 20 Nov

Siem Reap (B,D)

Enrich

Begin the day with an early morning Scenic Enrich, marvel at the sunrise over the magnificent Angkor Wat before moving to a special location near a temple for a scrumptious champagne breakfast with food prepared by a Scenic sponsored, NGO supported local bakery school.

After breakfast, visit the atmospheric, jungle covered Ta Prohm Temple, before stopping at Angkor Thom and the multi-faced Bayon Temple. Fortunately, you have the remainder of the afternoon to discover more of the Siem Reap markets or relax at your luxury hotel after your early morning start.

Enrich

The final Scenic Enrich is truly a special and exclusive one, one that is best experienced first-hand to fully appreciate it's scale. Your tour directors and Scenic team will leave you in awe as you enter a private magical gala themed dinner at Prasat Kravan, a small 10th-century temple consisting of five reddish brick towers on a common terrace. Including free flow drinks and a show featuring Apsara dancers in front of the candle lit temple ruins, this evening brings a most incredible end to what is a remarkable trip.

Day 41
Fri, 21 Nov

Depart Siem Reap (B)

It is time to bid farewell to your fellow travellers and Scenic team as you get ready to depart Cambodia for your homeland or extended travels. Transfer to the airport and leave with a full camera and stunning memories to treasure.

This itinerary is a guide only and may be amended for operational reasons such as high and low water. Disruptions to cruising and alteration to itinerary arrangements may occur. Hotels are indicative and are subject to change.