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Departure

A U S T R A L I A N  
**GOURMET**  
TRAVELLER

GOURMET TRAVELLER BY A&K  
SIEM REAP TO SAIGON WITH  
CHRISTINE MANFIELD  
12 - 20 OCTOBER 2017





Angkor Wat, Cambodia



## GOURMET TRAVELLER BY A&K

### Siem Reap to Saigon with Christine Manfield

An A&K Hosted Journey 12 – 20 October 2017

9 Days | Siem Reap - Mekong River Cruise - Saigon

Join us on this unique journey through two of southeast Asia's most welcoming and intriguing countries. Following the Mekong River through the heart of Cambodia into Vietnam you'll see how this great waterway sustains the lives of the people and their villages along the route. Join acclaimed chef and author Christine Manfield when you board the intimate luxury vessel, Aqua Mekong, for a week long cruise. Special meals on board will highlight the many influences and traditions which have made the region's food so bountiful and flavoursome. Contrasting with the peaceful canals of the Mekong Delta, the tour finishes in cosmopolitan Saigon.



#### Guest Host

Christine Manfield is one of Australia's most celebrated chefs - a curious cook, a perfectionist inspired by the culinary melting pot of evocative flavours and textures, and a writer whose, award winning books have spiced up the lives of keen cooks everywhere. She is one of Australia's leading culinary ambassadors and restaurateurs with award winning restaurants in Sydney and London. An inveterate traveller, Christine works alongside respected chefs both here and overseas. She joins you on board Aqua Mekong with specially tailored culinary experiences and menus reflecting her favourite flavours and cooking techniques.

#### Journey Highlights

- An intimate group size of no more than 28 guests
- Welcome dinner at the colonial Foreign Correspondence Club to meet your Guest Host
- Seven-night luxury cruise from Siem Reap to Saigon on board Aqua Mekong in the company of Christine Manfield
- Specially designed Christine Manfield menus during cruise
- Market visits
- Exploring villages in the Mekong Delta by bike, on foot and aboard a sampan

## Your Itinerary

### Thursday 12 October 2017: Arrive Siem Reap

**Reap.** Arrive into Siem Reap airport where you are met and transferred by private vehicle to the hotel. This rest of the day is at leisure before dining at the colonial Foreign Correspondent's Club where you will meet your host Christine Manfield (D). *Park Hyatt (Park Room)*

### Friday 13 October 2017: Siem Reap – Tonle Sap River.

This morning transfer to Siem Reap pier to board Aqua Mekong, your 3-storey, five star Mekong abode and base for the coming week. This afternoon join Christine for an entertaining talk about her extensive travels and culinary escapades (B,D). *Aqua Mekong (Suite)*

### Saturday 14 October 2017: Tonle Sap River.

Set off by skiff into the 22,000-hectare Prek Toal Core Bird Reserve, one of the largest freshwater bodies in Asia and the last refuge in Southeast Asia for large waterbirds like the spot-billed pelicans, 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. Dinner tonight is specially designed by Christine (B,L,D). *Aqua Mekong (Suite)*

### Sunday 15 October 2017: Tonle Sap River.

Explore remote villages around the 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 floating town.

Continue your observations of Khmer riverside life in Kampong Chhnang, the 'Port of Pottery' where archaeological findings date to the 6th century (B,L,D). *Aqua Mekong (Suite)*

### Monday 16 October 2017: Tonle Sap River.

This morning, visit Koh Chen, a silversmith village known for its fine craftsmanship.



Vietnamese mussel soup



Tonle Sap Lake, Cambodia



Aqua Mekong

Keep an eye out for the famous silver bowls, regularly chosen by Cambodia's king as gifts for visiting dignitaries. In the afternoon, set off for the Mekong's 'silk islands' where you have the opportunity to wander among the weavers admiring their intricate craftsmanship. Biking is optional for those who wish to explore further. Dinner tonight is specially designed by Christine (B,L,D). *Aqua Mekong (Suite)*

**Tuesday 17 October 2017: Tonle Sap River - Phnom Penh.** Disembark in the Cambodian capital and head off by motorised tuk tuk to the Royal Palace, Silver Pagoda and the National Museum of Cambodia, home to the world's largest collection of Khmer art. For those who wish, a visit to the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide and the Killing Fields is possible or time to shop at the Russian Market. Tonight a Khmer Apsara performance is in store (B,L,D). *Aqua Mekong (Suite)*

### Wednesday 18 October 2017: Mekong River.

Border formalities take place early this morning as the ship crosses into Vietnam. Arriving into the riverside town of Tan Chau, take local rickshaws to the market where Christine will point out the array of fresh produce. In the afternoon, a cooking demonstration by Christine using the produce bought at the morning market. Later, (time permitting) a visit to a village home to sample local tropical fruits, hear a traditional folk song performance and watch a dance performed by the village boys. (B,L,D). *Aqua Mekong (Suite)*

### Thursday 19 October 2017: Mekong River.

A morning visit to a traditional mat weaving village by sampan. Alternatively, visit Sa Dec and its market as well as the famous house of Marguerite Duras' legendary lover, Mr. Huynh Thuy Le.

Continue downstream to Cai Be for a walk or bike ride among high-roofed open courtyard houses, some dating back more than 100 years. Tonight a farewell dinner, specially created by Christine (B,L,D). *Aqua Mekong (Suite)*

### Friday 20 October 2017: Depart Saigon.

This morning a farewell to Christine before disembarkation and transfer to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). Stop en route at Vinh Trang Pagoda, one of the largest in the region. Lunch is at Ly Club, a colonial style courtyard restaurant before being picked up by cyclo for a tour of the city. Visit the Reunification Hall, where the official handover of power took place during the Fall of Saigon in 1975. The building is preserved almost as it was under the old regime with elegant interiors decorated with fine Vietnamese arts and crafts. Make a brief photo stop at the Notre Dame Cathedral and the classic 19th century French colonial Post Office. The final stop will be the airport for your departure flight (B,L).

B: Breakfast L: Lunch D: Dinner



Suite, Aqua Mekong

### Price

Twin share per person: \$14,295  
Single supplement: \$9,925

### Tour Dates

12 - 20 October 2017

### Tour inclusions

All accommodation as detailed on a double/twin share basis with private facilities; meals as specified; Aqua Mekong cruise includes, all meals, house wine, beer and non-alcoholic beverages, bottled water during transfers and touring; airport welcome; assistance with luggage and group transportation by private air-conditioned vehicle; services of English speaking local guide & Guest Host; all entrance fees, planning, handling, operational and communication charges, all tipping.

### Tour exclusions

International flights, visas, insurance coverage of personal loss, injury, illness or damages incurred during your trip; items of a purely personal nature such as drinks unless specified, laundry, dry cleaning, internet, fax or phone charges; transfers/ sightseeing or meals not specified in itinerary; excess baggage charges. Tipping is not expected or required for Guest Host.



Indoor Lounge, Aqua Mekong



Vietnamese street vendor