

Mekong Pearl Cruise Downstream 11 days: Chiang Rai - Vientiane

This unique trip from Thailand's Golden Triangle to Luang Prabang and Vientiane takes in the Mekong River's stunning landscape. Southeast Asia's most fascinating river is now accessible via the Mekong Pearl Cruise. This 11-day excursion will be your once-in-a-lifetime experience to browse through colorful markets and learn about Lao culture.

- **Durations:** 11 days
- **Trip outline:** Golden Triangle - Huay Xai - Pakbeng - Luang Prabang - Vientiane
- **Price from:** US \$3268/person
- **Tour inquiry:** <https://bestratetours.com/mekong-river-cruises/mekong-sun-cruise-11-days-vientiane-golden-triangle>

Trip outline

day	Activities	Accommodations	Meals
Day 1	Golden Triangle - Boarding	Mekong Pearl Cruise	Dinner
Day 2	Golden Triangle - Huay Xay - Pak Tha	Mekong Pearl Cruise	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Day 3	Astonishing Landscapes - Remote Villages	Mekong Pearl Cruise	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Day 4	Pak Ou Caves	Mekong Pearl Cruise	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Day 5	Luang Prabang - Wat Xieng Thong - Mount Phousi	Mekong Pearl Cruise	Breakfast, Lunch
Day 6	Almsgiving - National Museum - Baci Ceremony	Mekong Pearl Cruise	Breakfast, Dinner
Day 7	Luang Prabang - Kuang Si Waterfalls	Mekong Pearl Cruise	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Day 8	Ban Don Saingam - BBQ Dinner	Mekong Pearl Cruise	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Day 9	Powerful Rapids - Salakham Town	Mekong Pearl Cruise	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Day 10	Vientiane - Pha That Luang - Farewell Dinner	Mekong Pearl Cruise	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Day 11	Vientiane - Disembarkation	NA	Breakfast

Itinerary

Day 1: Golden Triangle - Boarding

Morning & Afternoon

You will be brought to the Golden Triangle region after being picked up from the Chiang Rai Airport or your hotel around **8:00 - 9:00**.

Get started with a city tour to the **Hall of Opium Museum** and the **Golden Buddha of Sop Ruak**. Supported by the royal family of Thailand, the intriguing museum gives visitors an in-depth look at the history and politics of the opium trade, as well as the health influence of opium usage.

Afterward, you will be back aboard. Unpack your belongings and make yourself at home in your cozy cabin as you embark on an 11-day trip.

Night

As the evening approaches, unwind on the spacious decks, relax in the cozy onboard lounge, and enjoy a delightful welcome reception dinner, setting the tone for the unforgettable journey ahead.

Meals: Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Pearl Cruise

Day 2: Golden Triangle - Huay Xay - Pak Tha

Morning & Afternoon

This morning begins with your final breakfast on Thai soil, signaling the beginning of your adventure as you cross the **Lao/Thai Friendship Bridge** into Laos.

Your journey continues with a stop in the bustling border town of **Huay Xay**, a thriving trade hub in Bokeo province, where "Bokeo" means "sapphire," reflecting the area's rich history.

Following this visit, your grand journey along the mighty Mekong River begins. Northern Laos' stunning landscapes will captivate you—lush greenery, misty mountains, and peaceful riverside villages.

We will travel to **Pak Tha**, an important Mekong estuary, where we will anchor for the night, surrounded by the tranquility of this beautiful region.

Evening

Proceed downstream on your cruise ship until you reach a sandbar or riverbank where you can anchor.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Pearl Cruise

Day 3: Astonishing Landscapes - Remote Villages

Morning

Cruise through a densely populated area that can only be reached by water, and you will find some of the most spectacular vistas, from tropical vegetation to impressive rock formations; interestingly, an intriguing mix of fast rivulets and slow currents.

Afternoon & Evening

Your voyage down the Mekong River will feel more like a true expedition because of the river's power. Take in the seclusion of these breathtaking vistas while you unwind on the deck, in your stateroom, or in the lounge area.

You will soon arrive in Oudomxay Province and anchor overnight in this area.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Pearl Cruise

Day 4: Pak Ou Caves

Morning & Afternoon

Following a leisurely morning spent onboard, we stop at a quaint riverside community to explore the world-famous [Pak Ou Caves](#). These caves are home to hundreds of miniature Buddha images carved into the rock.

From this sacred site, you can choose to go on a **jungle trek** through lush greenery to the nearby village of Ban Muang Keo. If you prefer a slower pace, a short boat ride will transport you to the village.

Miss Somechan Khonpachith, who has dedicated her life to mastering this craft, will show you how to distill Lao-Lao, Laos' local rice whiskey. She will explain the intricacies of this traditional technique and invite you to a tasting.

Evening

As the day comes to a close, our ship remains anchored, surrounded by majestic limestone mountains that provide a beautiful backdrop for your evening.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Pearl Cruise

Day 5: Luang Prabang - Wat Xieng Thong - Mount Phousi

Morning and Afternoon

You will arrive at Luang Prabang today, the city that served as the royal capital of Laos for many years and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Start your day by strolling around the city to the well-known [Wat Xieng Thong](#). The temple's golden-tiled roofs are likely to leave you in amazement.

Continuing this full-day journey in Luang Prabang, you can explore more beauty spots of interest. Enjoy a climb to [Mount Phousi](#), which is worth a wonderful view over the Mekong and Khan Rivers.

Evening

Spend time visiting the lively night market of the indigenous Hmong community. Tonight, you can freely dine at any restaurant in town or along the Mekong River. Both of these are known for serving high-quality cuisine.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Mekong Pearl Cruise

Day 6: Almsgiving - National Museum - Baci Ceremony

Morning & Afternoon

In the early morning, you can visit or attend the **Tak Bat**, a traditional almsgiving ceremony in Luang Prabang's streets, where dozens of orange-robed monks and novices walk through the streets and alleys of the old town.

After that, your guide will take you through the bustling local morning market, where the air is filled with the fragrant aromas of exotic spices, locally grown teas, and freshly brewed Lao coffee.

Following breakfast on board, you'll begin the second half of your city tour. This time, you will learn about the fascinating history of the [National Museum](#) of Luang Prabang, which is housed in the stately former royal palace. Later, visit a charming local handicraft village to see Laos' vibrant artistry come to life.

Evening

As the day progresses, you will have the afternoon to enjoy at your leisure, with plenty of opportunities to explore the city. Before dinner, head to the sundeck for a traditional **Lao dance performance** and a heartfelt **Baci well-wishing ceremony**.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Pearl Cruise

Day 7: Luang Prabang - Kuang Si Waterfalls

Morning

While having breakfast on board, take in the breathtaking views of Luang Prabang.

By late morning, we'll arrive in Ban Muang Khai, where you'll board a tuk-tuk for a guided tour of the famous [Kuang Si Waterfall](#). These vibrant turquoise waterfalls cascade over multiple tiers, creating natural pools ideal for a refreshing dip.

Right next to the waterfalls is the heartwarming "**Free the Bears**" rescue center, which is dedicated to protecting and conserving Southeast Asia's endangered sun and moon bears (Malayan and Tibetan bears). We'll find out more about the incredible efforts being made to rehabilitate these gentle creatures.

Afternoon & Evening

Don't miss the impressive **Xayaburi Dam**, Laos' largest hydroelectric power plant—a technological marvel that provides much of the country's energy.

In the evening, your cruise ship will anchor at a peaceful sandy beach, where you will spend the night.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Pearl Cruise

Day 8: Ban Don Saingam - BBQ Dinner

Morning & Afternoon

Today's journey takes us to the charming village of **Ban Don Saingam**, nestled between the lush hills along the Mekong River. Upon arrival, we will take a scenic 30-minute walk—or, depending on the season, a local tractor ride—to a nearly forgotten cave. We'll use torches to explore the cave's hidden depths and unravel its mysteries before returning to the safety of our ship.

In the afternoon, we continue cruising downstream, admiring the breathtaking scenery and perhaps spotting local fishermen along the way.

Later, the Cruise Director will deliver fascinating presentations about Laos' rich history and vibrant culture.

Evening

We'll make an early stop to prepare for our renowned **barbecue dinner**, which will be held in a picturesque riverside setting.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Pearl Cruise

Day 9: Powerful Rapids - Salakham Town

Morning & Afternoon

As we travel downstream, the scenery changes from towering mountains to open plains, and the Mekong River widens, revealing fascinating rock formations. This stretch provides an excellent opportunity to observe our skilled captains expertly navigating the wild, untamed waters of the mighty Mekong.

By early afternoon, we've passed a **golden Buddha statue** perched on a hill, indicating the start of Thailand along the river.

A little further along, we arrive in **Salakham**, a bustling market town known for its thriving wood and spice trade. A walk through the bustling market immerses you in the sights, sounds, and aromas of local commerce, providing insight into the region's rich trading traditions.

Evening

In the evening, we anchor near a quiet village, preparing for a peaceful night on board.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Pearl Cruise

Day 10: Vientiane - Pha That Luang - Farewell Dinner

Morning & Afternoon

Today's journey takes you to the heart of Laos, the vibrant capital city of Vientiane, as you sail downstream along the majestic Mekong River, known locally as the "Mother of All Waters."

The iconic [Pha That Luang](#) stupa, a national treasure of Laotian architecture, will take your breath away, as will the tranquil grounds of the historic Ho Phra Keo temple.

The grand **Patuxai** monument, also known as Vientiane's Arc de Triomphe, towers over the city as a symbol of its distinct charm.

Evening

As evening falls, you'll join your fellow passengers on board for a special **farewell dinner**, commemorating the last night of your cruise. This is a heartfelt opportunity to say goodbye to the Laotian crew, cruise director, and captain, and marks the end of a memorable journey.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Pearl Cruise

Day 11: Vientiane - Disembarkation

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast on board, soaking up the last peaceful moments aboard your boutique river ship.

As you check out and disembark, the memories of your unforgettable journey and the Mighty Mekong will stick with you. Our shared adventure ends with your transfer to the airport or a hotel in Vientiane.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: NA

Booking Policy

Inclusion

- 10 overnights in selected cabin type aboard your boutique river cruise vessel
- Local English-speaking guides
- Entrance fees for sightseeing mentioned in the itinerary
- Excursions as mentioned in the itinerary
- Tours and transfers as mentioned
- Gratuities for local guides, drivers, performers and porters
- Water in the vehicles and on the ship
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, and D=Dinner)
- Coffee, tea, and table water is complementary onboard your boutique river cruise vessel
- Presentations and lectures onboard by the cruise director

- Transfers from/to Chiang Rai and Vientiane airports or hotels within city limits (only guaranteed if information was correctly provided 4 weeks prior to embarkation, at the latest)

Exclusion

- Flights
- Meals and services other than those noted in the itinerary
- Visas for Laos
- Laundry, telephone calls, and personal expenditures
- Gratuities for boat crew, and personal, non-itinerary services
- Alcoholic and soft drinks other than mentioned
- Personal Insurance

Cancellation Policy

- Cancellation before 120 days prior to the start of the cruise: 30 % of the total rate
- Between 120 and 61 days prior to the start of the cruise: 50 % of the total rate
- Between 60 and 30 days prior to the start of the cruise: 70 % of the total rate
- Less than 30 days prior to the start of the cruise: 90 % of the total rate
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Children Policy

- Free of charge for children below 5 years old, in parents' room and using existing bedding.
- Baby cots are available.
- Children above 5 years must occupy a separate bed and pay full rate (Single or double occupancy).

WHY BOOK WITH US?

Best Rate Guaranteed

Offering the BEST RATE package which is worthy of your payment.

Money Back Guaranteed

In case the service we provide is not qualified enough, except for out-of-control situations such as weather conditions. We will investigate your case and will offer the reimbursement once your complaint is rational.

Customizable by local experts

Local consultants with rich of knowledge will give you the most suitable itineraries for you.

BEST RATE TOURS., JSC

No 56, Hàng Đậu Street - Dong Xuan, Hoan Kiem District - Hanoi - Vietnam

Tel: +84 2439949194
+84 911646478

Email: sales@bestratetours.com **Website:** <https://bestratetours.com/>