

Welcome to the Mekong Region

The Mekong – it's an exotic name guaranteed to fire up the imagination, with such iconic sights as Angkor Wat, Halong Bay and Luang Prabang.

A River Runs Through It

One of the world's great rivers, the Mekong winds its way down from the foothills of Tibet to the South China Sea, encompassing some of the most diverse backdrops in Asia. Its dramatic journey southward takes in remote national parks and immense waterfalls in Laos, traditional towns and 21st-century cities in Thailand, freshwater dolphins and forgotten temples in Cambodia and a patchwork of emerald greens in Vietnam's Mekong Delta. Take it all in by boat, or delve in with a community homestay on one of thousands of islands formed by the mighty river.

Adrenalin Buzz

You're never far from adventure in these parts. Go motorbike touring in Vietnam's highlands, then descend to the coast to kitesurf on the South China Sea. Trek deep into the rainforest to spot gibbons and other rare wildlife in Cambodia or northern Thailand. For something mellower, take a cycle around Angkor or walk with elephants at one of several elephant sanctuaries in the region. Rock climbing in central Laos, diving off the southern rim of Cambodia and Vietnam, ziplining through virgin jungle around Chang Mai or the Bolaven Plateau – you can pick your own adventure.

Old Asia, New Asia

Experience old Asia and new Asia jostling for space. One minute it's Bangkok, where you're riding the Skytrain to a state-of-the-art shopping mall, the next it's walking with an elephant in the jungle of Cambodia. In the cities, the pace of life runs at a dizzying speed, matched only by the endless rush of motorbikes and call of commerce. In the countryside, life seems timeless – the rural rhythms the same as they have been for centuries – with traditionally clothed farmers tending the fields and monks wandering the streets in search of alms.

The Spirit of the Mekong

Travelling in the Mekong region is as much about the journey as the destination. Whether you're venturing into a distant minority village or plunging into the backstreets of a seething megalopolis, your senses will be bombarded as never before. Delve deeper to discern the mosaic of ethnicities and learn about their cultures and lifestyles. The people are irrepressible, the experiences unforgettable and the stories impossible to re-create, but sometime during your journey, the Mekong and its people will enter your soul. Go with the flow and let the Mekong's spirit course through your veins.



Why I Love Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos & Northern Thailand

By Greg Bloom, Writer

My affair with the Mekong region began in 1997. An overnight bus from Bangkok and the next morning I'm in Vientiane. It's traffic- and tourist-free, and it's surely the most relaxed place on earth. The next month is a somnolent, seemingly interminable journey north along misty mountain roads and rivers coloured caramel by the monsoon. A decade later I returned, this time to live in Cambodia, where the icons of Mekong life – exuberant temples, radiant green rice fields, glistening water buffalo – became part of daily life.

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