Introduction

The focus of this trip is the ancient and colonial culture of Southeast Asia found in present day Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. It takes as its orientation and guiding principle the interrelationship of cultures across the region and through the span of time. As we explore many of the extraordinary monuments of these great ancient civilizations at places such as Saigon, Hoi An, Huế, Hanoi (Vietnam), Luang Prabang (Laos) and Angkor (Siem Reap, Cambodia) we will observe how these monuments are interrelated and how each great civilization influenced and was influenced by the others. So too today, these three countries are inextricably linked as their peoples migrate from one land to the next.

A version of this ambitious and richly layered itinerary was originally proposed by John Walsh, Director Emeritus of the Getty Museum, and an exploratory trip with a small group took place in 2012, and Stephen Harby has recast it all in the present itinerary, which as always, has been planned for optimum comfort, pleasure and enhancement of appreciation of the cultural uniqueness of each place.

Traveling through one of the major Asian gateways (Tokyo, Beijing, Hong Kong, Bangkok or Singapore) on our own, we will convene in Saigon, Vietnam (now Ho Chi Minh City —for the purpose of this text original historic place names will be used). Here we will begin our journey together, discovering three countries in two weeks (14 nights). Starting in Vietnam, whose recent history will resonate with so many of us, we will see great monuments of two epochs: the indigenous cultures of the Ly and Nguyen dynasties and the colonial regimes imposed from outside, most notably, the French. The architecture and culture of each will present a stark contrast. In Vietnam we will stay in four cities, Saigon, Hoi An, Huế and Hanoi, traveling between them by air and by road. We will next fly to Luang Prabang on the Mekong River in northern Laos, which may strike us as one of the places least changed by the global march of increasing sameness. Luang Prabang, once the capital of the Kingdom of the Million Elephants, is full of Buddhist temples and French colonial architecture. We will fly on to Cambodia, recently emerged with a bang from its post...
Pol Pot hibernation. We will spend two full days to see the great Khmer Temples, of which the famed Angkor Wat is but one of many. We will travel home independently from Siem Reap, where the core trip will end, however an option is offered for an additional night spent in Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh at the grand Hotel le Royal. Visits to the fabled National Museum and twentieth century buildings of the architect Van Molyvann have been arranged. Throughout, we will be accompanied by local scholars and experts on architecture, urbanism and the past cultures of these places.

**Detailed Itinerary**

The tour will begin upon arrival in Saigon or Ho Chi Minh City on Sunday, December 3, 2017. This will most likely entail departing the US on Friday, December 1. While the arrangements to reach there will be made on your own, we will be happy to provide assistance with these bookings through our expert agent, Tom Vise at Vista Travel: 617-588-4233.

*Friday, December 1, 2017 Depart Home for Asian gateway (Beijing, Bangkok, Tokyo, Osaka, Seoul, Hong Kong, Singapore, or others)*

**Saturday, December 2**  In flight, date line (but you will get it back on the trip home!)

**Day 1  Sunday, December 3 Arrive major Asian gateway, connect for Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam)**

**Start of Services**

Arrive and meet local agent; transfer to hotel (Majestic) for our stay of two nights. Balance of day at leisure with an evening welcome get-together, so do try to arrive no later than 5 pm.

**Vietnam**

Historically and culturally, the region of Southeast Asia has always found itself balanced between the two opposing poles of India and China. The major religions, Hinduism and Buddhism found their way initially from the sub-continent, but later forms of the latter faith, in the form of Confucianism found their way from China. While Cambodia (as well as Burma) have always seemed to be more strongly influenced by India, it can be said that Vietnam, both throughout its history and today is more strongly in the orbit of China. There may be no city names in the world that create as visceral a reaction from Americans of a certain age as Saigon and Hanoi, respectively the vibrant and cosmopolitan commercial hub and capital of Vietnam. Against all odds, many sections of both cities have survived in good condition. Saigon offers everything from an iron and glass post office, a gothic cathedral, to a town hall that could be an Empire style prefecture in many a provincial French town. Even the sidewalk cafe at the Hotel Continental where war correspondents hung out is still there! One of the more bizarre but architecturally significant buildings is the government palace built by President Diem in 1962 (after the former French Governor’s Palace was partially destroyed in an aerial bombardment during a coup attempt, and no doubt paid for with US taxpayer dollars). It was designed by Ngo Viet
Thu a Prix de Rome winner at the Ecole de Beaux Arts. The basement communications center still features the electronics equipment for US spying, including pink and baby blue Bell desk dial telephones! Next, a visit to the small and peaceful coastal town of Hoi An will give us a flavor of 15th to 19th century mercantile culture and offer some relaxation in a beach-side hotel. In Hué we will focus on the monuments constructed in the 19th century by the Nguyen Dynasty, including a citadel/palace modeled on Beijing’s Forbidden City and a sequence of grandiose imperial tombs set in gardens. Hanoi is an imperial capital dating back 1000 years where we will be able to wander the chaotic old Vietnamese quarter of the 36 Streets, each devoted to a particular craft or guild in the past, and see the well preserved structures left by the French, many of which have now been carefully restored. There are also monuments of more contemporary Vietnam, including the imposing mausoleum of Ho Chi Minh, and his modest house adjacent to his tomb. We will see the Temple of Literature, almost 1000 years old and the most important temple in the city. Hoi An, Hué and the Citadel in Hanoi are all listed UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and in each city we will be the beneficiaries of local scholars and heritage experts.

Day 2 Monday, December 4, Saigon

Full day tour of downtown Saigon and the port area, where the focus will be the many and well preserved monuments of both the French Colonial era and the architecture of mid-century modernism which succeeded it both during the war and the period which followed it. We will be benefiting from the expertise of Tim Doling, author of Exploring Ho Chi Minh City and consultant to the Cultural Ministry and the Ford Foundation, who will introduce the day with an illustrated lecture. Tracing the city’s development from a Khmer fishing village to a modern economic powerhouse, our excursion will point out the locations of the two citadels of 1790 and 1837, the canals which once criss-crossed the central business district and the railways and tramways which once ran along its streets.

It introduces the development of the naval, river and maritime port areas, the history of the wealthy banking district and the locations of the city’s opium refinery, the first and second city markets and the first wooden cathedral and earliest French governor’s “palace.” The tour takes in the French colonial “Triangle of Power” and provides new insight into more familiar vestiges like the Unification Palace, the Cathedral and the Post Office, as well as pointing out some locations used by Graham Greene in The Quiet American and several intriguing vestiges of the American era.

We will conclude the day with a lecture by Mel Shenk, expert on modernism, who will focus on Vietnamese modernism as practiced from 1940 to 1975, as well as contemporary Vietnamese modernist houses since 1975. We will find that the vernacular housing of southern Vietnam is overwhelmingly modernist, unlike almost anywhere else in the world.

Day 3 Tuesday, December 5
Saigon to Hoi An (fly via Danang)

Today we will depart on a late morning flight to Da Nang, so early risers might
have the chance for some independent exploration. From Da Nang, we will drive for about an hour to reach the town of Hoi An, and the rest of the afternoon is free for relaxation in our beach side Victoria Hotel. Before dinner we will have a lecture by Tim Doling orienting us to the history and urbanism that we will discover the next day.

Day 4 Wednesday, December 6  
Hoi An

Hoi An is a well preserved example of a trading port dating from the 15th to the 19th centuries. Our visit in town will include a selection of temples, festival halls, and commercial houses. We will look specifically at this ancient Cham port’s 17th century transformation into a busy international merchant trading hub, initially by Japanese and subsequently by Chinese settlers, looking in detail at the history and cultures of its “Minh Huong” and five other distinct Chinese communities and their assembly halls. We will also trace how it declined in the 19th century as access waterways became silted up, and was gradually replaced by Danang. We will be introduced to the main styles of shophouse architecture and the significance of some of the town’s temples and pagodas.

Day 5 Thursday, December 7 Hoi An to Hué

It is a three-hour drive to Hué, passing through Da Nang, where we may stop to see the Museum of Cham Sculpture, housed in old French Colonial Buildings.

Hué is Vietnam’s ancient imperial capital of the Nguyen Dynasty, which established an elaborate citadel and palace on the banks of the Perfume River in emulation...
of Beijing’s Forbidden City. It was badly damaged by American bombing in 1968, however attempts at reconstruction have been ongoing, there remain numerous fascinating structures in various states of decay or restoration, and today the site and city are listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The other collection of fascinating monuments are the Nguyen Dynasty Imperial Tombs built around the periphery of the city. The architectural settings of tombs themselves and the surrounding structures are integrated into the surrounding landscapes, often modified as part of the design. The architecture of the tombs, while influenced by China, is distinctly Vietnamese and shows an interesting progression from that of Gia Long (1814–20) to that of Tu Duc (1864–67), then in the early 20th century Khai Dinh (1920–31) threw the rule book out the window for his extraordinary tomb design. The last of these was completed in 1931, and the dynasty continued until the 1950s.

We will stay in the restored Moderne style, Hotel La Residence on the other side of the river from the Citadel. Again, we will have a preview of the things to be seen the next day, thanks to the third of Tim Doling’s talks.

Day 6  Friday, December 8 Hué

This full day of sightseeing will be devoted to the Imperial Citadel, the Nguyen tombs, and a boat journey along the Perfume River via which we will reach some of the tombs.

Day 7  Saturday, December 9, Hué to Hanoi

Our flight to Hanoi late this morning will leave us time to enjoy a leisurely breakfast or an early morning walk.

We will arrive in Hanoi in the afternoon and will be taken to the historic Hotel Metropole, a holdover from the colonial era, where we will stay for two nights in the original wing. Time is yours for some initial exploratory walks about the city and then a brief lecture by local scholar Linda Mazur about the history of Hanoi focusing on the built heritage. Following that we will walk from the Metropole through the northern French Quarter next to Hoan Kiem Lake, and part of the Old Quarter for dinner in a local restaurant. The streets around the Lake are pedestrian areas at the weekends and have become a wonderful social center for all ages.
Day 8  Sunday, December 10, Hanoi

We will begin the day early with a bus journey past Ba Dinh Square which was the place where Ho Chi Minh read the declaration of independence in 1945 and where his mausoleum is today. The mausoleum was built with expert assistance from the Soviets. Opposite the mausoleum is the new National Assembly building. While excavating the site, the archeological remains of 1300 years of Ha Noi’s history was discovered. It is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We will tour the archeological dig, and the Citadel, once home to Vietnamese royalty, French military commanders and after 1954, the Vietnamese army.

From the Citadel we go to the Temple of Literature- the oldest university in Vietnam. The bus will take us past the charming Art Deco Police hospital and the train station-built by the French and repaired by the Russians. From there we will go to Madame Hien’s for lunch in the house where the architect of the Opera House, François Lagusquet, once lived, and which is now in the hands of a Michelin starred chef, Didier Courlou.

We continue our journey on foot through the Old Quarter, past a rice market, the city gate ‘O Quang Truong’ built in the 1700s and and into a hidden temple and a reconstructed ‘tube house’. Then we take cyclos to the southern part of the French quarter, past the Art Deco Bank (1930) along Trang Tien Street – once known as the Champs Elysée of Asia – to the Opera House and The History Museum (Finot Museum) We walk through the grounds of the Museum – again built in the Indochine style and then past the oldest remaining French structure (although heavily renovated) MOD Palace (Ministry of Defence area). This building used to house the French soldiers from 1874. We continue south to the Indochine University built in the Indochine style. The most southern point of the French Quarter was the home of the Pasteur Institute which was dedicated to the discovery of new medicines and vaccines. We continue our journey through the Vietnamese VIP section of town. Built in the 1930s and 1940s it was home to mandarins, titans of industry and wealthy Vietnamese traders. The buildings were designed in the very modern art deco inspired International Modern style. We finally relax for dinner at Quan An Ngon, a restaurant that has collected the best of Vietnamese street food under one, French colonial roof.

Day 9  Monday, December 11, Hanoi to Luang Prabang

Transfer to the airport for our short flight to Luang Prabang. We will fly southwest to the relatively simple and provincial riverside hamlet of Luang Prabang. We will transfer to Satri House, our hotel for a stay of three nights.

Laos

Our stay in Laos of three nights will be based in Luang Prabang, a picturesque and bucolic town on the banks of the Mekong. Its cultural links include those with Thailand as well as to the Khmers in present day Cambodia. The town, really a village, is sited on a peninsula.
formed by the Mekong and a small tributary, and the whole is set in a picturesque valley ringed by mountains. We will stay on the edge of town (a short walk or bike ride to the center) in the Satri House, a French designed and managed series of small pavilions amid picturesque courts and gardens expanded from the original family villa occupied by a princess of the royal family.

A late lunch awaits us at the hotel, and the rest of the afternoon is yours for relaxing, exploring the hotel grounds or nearby town.

**Day 10 Tuesday, December 12, Luang Prabang**

After breakfast, we begin our tour, taking in the city’s beautiful architecture and hidden secrets, walking down the quiet back lanes leading to Royal Palace Museum, Wat Xieng Thong, the city’s most magnificent temple by the Mekong. Wat Visoun, known as the “water melon stupa” due to its shape. Then we visit the Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre which gives us a further insight into the ethnic mix and culture of Laos. Late this afternoon stretching your legs climb 328 steps up the secret Mount Phousi, to catch the spectacular sunset and a panoramic view over Luang Prabang and the Mekong River. Afterwards, strolling through the night market (open between 5pm-10pm) setting in downtown selling...
Flying from Luang Prabang non-stop, we will arrive in Siem Reap, where we will spend three nights. We will have ample time to see the many major temple sites as well as the less often seen outlying places. Those who opt to, will conclude their trip in Phnom Penh, Cambodia’s capital. It has recently undergone a significant transformation from the grim decades following the war as the Khmer Rouge lingered on in parts of the country and the country remained isolated and mired in poverty, shunned by all but the most intrepid (your leader visited in 1995 and had it to himself). All of that has changed, as we will discover: It has become a bustling tourist destination, as befits the importance and wonder-of-the-world status of the great temples dating from the Khmer empire in the 9th to 14th centuries AD.

Arrival Siem Reap; Hotel: Belmond Residence d’Angkor, 3 nights.
Day 13 Friday, December 15, Siem Reap
Touring Angkor Sites to include: Angkor Wat; Angkor Thom monuments (Terraces of Elephants and Leper King), Bayon Temple; Baphuon Temple (world’s largest jigsaw puzzle); Preah Khan; and if there is time, an excursion to Beng Mealea. Ta Prohm, Banteay Srei (10th century), gates of Angkor Thom.

Day 14, Saturday, December 16, Siem Reap
Continued Touring Angkor Sites

Day 15 Sunday, December 17 Depart Siem Reap for home (or extension)
Individual or group transfers will be arranged to the airport from where direct flights are possible to Bangkok, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, and Saigon.

Conclusion of Services
Optional Extension

Day 15 Sunday, December 17 Siem Reap to Phnom Penh
DEPART THIS MORNING ON A NON-STOP FLIGHT TO PHNOM PENH; TRANSFER TO THE HISTORIC GRAND HOTEL, LE ROYAL, NOW A RAFFLES PROPERTY, FOR LUNCH/CHECK IN ONE NIGHT. TOUR TO MUSEUM AND OTHER CITY SITES

Day 17 Monday, December 18 Phnom Penh to onward destinations home

Individual or group transfers will be arranged to the airport from where direct flights are possible to Bangkok, Hong Kong, Taipei, Seoul, and Doha.

End of Optional Extension
Conclusion of Services
REGISTRATION FORM

Monuments and Culture of the Mekong: Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia
December 3 to 17, 2017—Core Trip; December 17-18, 2017—Extension (dates exclusive of travel from/to US)

☐ Yes, I/we would like to attend this journey! Tour price is $7,400 per person double occupancy, $8,000† single occupancy. (costs based on a group of 10 or more participants.)

☐ Please provide upgraded hotel accommodations (larger rooms, preferred exposures when available) for $1,200 pp add'l.

☐ I/we would also like to attend the one-night extension in Phnom Penh. Tour Price is $700 per person double occupancy $830 single occupancy † Note: Single supplement has been kept as low as possible by using on occasion rooms of lesser category. Upgrade for single will be to same category as doubles.

Costs have fluctuated unpredictably this past year due to changes in fuel costs and exchange rates. The above costs are based on market conditions as of May, 2017. They are subject to increase should market conditions change.

To register please complete this registration form and send it with a deposit of $2,000 (per person) by check to Stephen Harby, 718 Cedar Street, Santa Monica, CA 90405-3810. Only written registrations, including appropriate payment will be accepted.

Final payment of balance will be due by September 1, 2017. (Also, please send a photocopy of the picture page of your passport.)

__________________________________________________________________________________________________
Name

__________________________________________________________________________________________________
Name

Address      City      State  Zip/Postal Code
__________________________________________________________________________________________________

Home phone     Alt. phone   Email

Please select one of the following:
☐ double occupancy with 2 beds
☐ double occupancy with one bed
☐ single occupancy

☐ I would like to have assistance booking my flights

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

WHAT IS INCLUDED
Hotels as indicated on the itinerary based on double occupancy. A limited number of single rooms are available at an additional supplement. We reserve the right to substitute other hotels of a similar quality.
Breakfast, lunch and dinner throughout the trip (all meals are included, accompanied by local wine or beer when readily and affordably available; at other times local beer should be generally available).
Admission to all sites as described in the itinerary.
The handling of no more than two medium size suitcases per person.
Private Coach transportation throughout.
Use of personal headset to facilitate hearing of on-site lectures and commentary.

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED
International air transportation to Ho Chi Minh City and from Siem Reap or Phonm Penh. Incidental expenses such as for telephone calls, fax communications, a la carte orders or items not on the set menus, alcoholic drinks over and above those provided at evening meals, laundry, and any other items not specifically mentioned as included. Visas for entry to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.
TRIP INSURANCE
In the event participants cancel their trip, all non-refundable payments will be forfeited. Trip cancellation insurance is recommended for this purpose.

REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS
A passport with validity for at least six months beyond end of stay. Visa for Travel to Vietnam secured by each participant. Visas for Laos and Cambodia to be secured on arrival at participant’s individual expense.

TOUR COSTS
Costs have been calculated on the basis of charges and exchange rates as of May, 2017. Should these change, Stephen Harby reserves the right to make appropriate adjustments to the tour cost.

ALTERATIONS TO ITINERARY
Stephen Harby reserves the right to alter, modify or withdraw the itinerary if air schedules and/or events beyond his control deem it necessary. Itinerary changes made by local travel providers are beyond the control of Stephen Harby and should such changes be made the participant will be bound accordingly.

ITINERARY DEVIATIONS
Stephen Harby assumes no liability or responsibility for any participant deviating from the group tour. Participants arriving and departing prior to the start of or after the conclusion of the tour are responsible for their own transfers.

CANCELLATION
Should cancellation by the participant occur prior to 90 days before departure, a partial refund will be granted less a $1,000 service charge (see note below); within the following days prior to departure, the specified percentage of tour costs is non-refundable: 60-89 days - 20%; 45-59 days - 30%; 30-44 days - 50%; 29 days or fewer - 100%. Cancellations must be submitted in writing; trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. There will be no refund for any tour accommodation, service, or feature not taken, or if participant cancels for any reason while tour is in progress. Any additional costs due to leaving the tour are the responsibility of the departing passenger. In these times of uncertainty in the international realm, we also have to add that should cancellation or alteration of the program occur due to civil disturbances, acts of terrorism, war, natural disaster, and other events of force majeur or acts of God (including threat or fear of same), refunds will be made only to the extent that they are recoverable by Stephen Harby, and that such cancellation or alteration may result in the total loss of funds paid by participants. Such forfeiture may include funds paid by participants over and above the tour costs, such as international air travel, passport and visa fees. Note regarding cancellation prior to 90 days: Hotels in often are booked on the basis of full payment up-front. If you cancel, and we can find a replacement to fill your spot, the $1,000 service charge will be refunded less $200.

RESPONSIBILITY
Stephen Harby and /or agents assume no responsibility or liability in connection with the service of any train, carriage, aircraft, motor coach, or other conveyance or hotel which may be used wholly or in part, in the performance of the tour. Neither will they be responsible or liable for any injury, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may be occasioned by reason of any defect in any vehicle or through neglect or default of any company or person engaged in conveying or accommodating the passengers; nor for any delays, injuries, damages or losses resulting directly or indirectly from any acts of God, acts of governments, de jure or de facto, wars whether declared or not, hostilities, civil disturbances, terrorist activities, riots, thefts, pilferage, epidemics, quarantines, medical or customs regulations, or from any causes beyond the control of Stephen Harby, and /or agents. In the event it becomes necessary for the comfort or well being of the participants to alter or modify the itinerary or arrangements, such alterations may be made without penalty to the tour operator and are not grounds for cancellation with refund. Additional expenses, if any, shall be borne by the participant. The sole responsibility of the airline used is limited to that set out in the passenger contract evidenced by the tickets. This agreement becomes effective upon acceptance into the tour by Stephen Harby. These Terms and Conditions shall be governed by the State of California.

Enrollment in this journey confirms that you have read the Terms and Conditions and accompanying itinerary and agree to abide by its contents. (Each participant is requested to sign below)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Stephen Harby Invitational Journey: Monuments and Culture of the Mekong—Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia