

**HUMANITARIAN TRIP TO VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA
FOR ROTARIANS AND FRIENDS
OCTOBER 31 THROUGH NOVEMBER 14, 2009**

Join a small, select group of 15 people for a two week trip to SE Asia. The trip will include cultural sightseeing, visiting non-profit organizations doing a variety of humanitarian work in the region, sampling the delicious cuisine, and enjoying the interesting shopping and handcrafts of the region. An added bonus of the trip is our briefing from HALO Trust about the landmine situation in western Cambodia and a trip to view a minefield. More than 6 million landmines were placed along the border with Thailand in the 1980s and today at least ½ of them remain, maiming and killing local villagers who now need the land for their livelihood. Many Rotary clubs have been funding demining in this area for the past five years and trip participants are encouraged to work with their clubs to help with this humanitarian endeavor. Rotarians will end the trip will ideas for many new humanitarian projects their clubs can sponsor.

ARRIVAL IN THE CAPITAL OF CAMBODIA, PHNOM PENH – two nights

Our first day finds us in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, capital of the country and a dynamic, bustling city with wide boulevards, a picturesque riverfront with interesting shops and an array of wonderful restaurants. In the city we will visit a school for poor girls from the countryside, spend a sobering hour or two at the infamous S-21 prison from the Khmer Rouge days, visit an orphanage with children rescued from the dump, and, if time, tour a free clinic for the poor. Cultural activities include the Royal Palace and the National Museum. Time permitting, we will meet with US Embassy personnel for a briefing about the country's history and its current economic and political situation. One doesn't leave Phnom Penh without taking in the unique Russian and Central Markets, home to everything you can image and great fun for wandering, looking, or buying. Our hotel is the 4- star Cambodiana along the River. To get a real flavor of the city, we will travel via TukTuks, open air accommodations seating four, inexpensive and great fun!

SIEM REAP AND THE TEMPLES OF ANGKOR WAT – three nights

Next we fly to Siem Reap, a must see cultural city, home to the World Heritage Site of the Temples at Angkor Wat. We will spend a full day at the temples as there is much to see and the temples are spread over miles of the countryside. Our second day, we travel through the countryside, seeing the real Cambodia the small villages and fields of rice and soybeans. We end at the border with Thailand, where we will have an exclusive tour of a minefield with HALO Trust, an NGO doing extensive mine clearance in Cambodia. We are one of only two groups for whom HALO Trust provides this tour. We will spend the night in the country at a small, basic hotel, and eat at a local restaurant. The next morning we drive back to Siem Reap where the rest of the day can be spent at the local market enjoying the handicrafts and other beautiful items for sale or relaxing at the large pool and courtyard garden of the Soma Devi, our 4 star hotel in Siem Reap. You also have an opportunity of visiting the two humanitarian projects run by Rotarians in the city. That night, we will have dinner with some local Rotarians.

HO CHI MINH CITY (SAIGON) – three nights

Next we fly to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) for three days, the business center for all of Vietnam. A frenetic city of several million, Saigon has really come of age in the past several years, making it a sophisticated stop for us. For Americans, the Reunification Palace is a must-see, as is the War Remnants Museum, both carryovers from our time here in the 60s and 70s. We will also travel outside the city to the Cu Chi Tunnels, another remnant from the 1960's and, time permitting, to the Cao Dai Temple, a fascinating cultural and religious site. Our final day in Ho Chi Minh City is at your leisure and most will want to do some shopping: Must see places include Khai Silk store for beautiful fashions and Ben Thanh market, both favorites of past groups. We will dine one night in a wonderful old colonial home that has been turned into a fabulous French Restaurant, and enjoy world renowned Vietnamese cuisine another night.

HUE – THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL – three nights

Our next flight is to Hue, on the Perfume River. Our first afternoon we will take a cyclo tour of the former Royal City, a huge walled city with acres of gardens inside and housing the imperial residence from the

days of the Vietnamese Emperors. Our hotel for the next three nights is La Residence Hue, the newest five star hotel in the city.

The next day we will take a small minibus north to Dong Ha, near the former DMZ to the site of PeaceTrees Vietnam, a 12-year old NGO founder by two Americans. PeaceTrees has demined hundreds of acres while also building a village for poor families in the area. It also has a Landmine Education Center that brings in children from throughout the province to learn about the dangers of cluster bombs, landmines and other unexplored ordnance.

The next morning, time permitting before our flight, we will visit the ancient tombs of the emperors where our guide will explain the tombs and answer questions.

HA NOI – three nights

This afternoon we fly to Hanoi, capital of Vietnam and its governmental center. Hanoi is a beautiful city with many French colonial building still intact. We will be staying at the Intercontinental Hotel, a 5 star hotel built over a beautiful, serene lake. Here, we will enjoy two cultural sightseeing days that include the Temple of Literature, the Ho Chi Minh Complex (his home and mausoleum) and the Ethnology Museum. Another stop is the main shopping street, a last chance to find some treasures to bring home. We will also visit a shop where we can watch street children and orphans make the beautiful silk pictures found here.

On Sunday, November 14, those returning home leave, and because of the international dateline, arrive home that same day about 5.

TRIP ADD ONS

HA LONG BAY, VIET NAM

There is a possibility for those who would like to extend the trip to spend one day at Ha Long Bay (a World Heritage site), about 3 hours outside of Hanoi. Because this extra tour will fill up, it must be requested early to ensure space. Cost for the trip will be about \$150 per day, which includes transportation to and from Ha Long Bay. (with travel, the trip is actually two days.)

LUANG PRABANG, LAOS

Others may want to travel to the small colonial town of Luang Prabang in Laos. An hour flight from Hanoi but 100 years back in time, Luang Prabang may be your most favorite place of all. Nestled between the Mekong and Nan Rivers, the town features a much slower pace than Hanoi, and brims with the ambience of old colonial buildings, small boutique hotels, and excellent French restaurants. A minimum of 4 days is suggested as you can then take the two-day EcoTour adventure consisting of a day-long elephant trek through the jungle, and, on the second day, a 3-hour hike to a native Hmong village plus kayaking on the Mekong River. Accommodations for the night are in a new, eco-friendly lodge overlooking the Mekong River. Back in town, you will not want to miss the former Royal Palace, the myriad of temples scattered throughout the city, and the night market where local women bring their hand woven silk to sell at very affordable prices. Your last morning in town, early risers can join the townspeople as they line up to give offerings to the Buddhist Monks who leave their residence with begging bowls in hand, taking small gifts of food from locals and tourists for their daily needs.

The Luang Prabang trip does not have some of the amenities of the rest of the trip and the EcoTour part will be difficult for anyone with limited mobility or health problems. Some of you will not want to do this part of the trip. However, the portion of the trip in town will not present a problem for most people.

Those wanting to include Laos will need to coordinate with Sally on your departure date back home. Cost for this portion of the trip will be about \$175 per day and includes airfare to and from Laos (from Hanoi), your hotel with breakfast in town, and the overnight during the Eco Tour. Meals in town (other than breakfast) are not included. A firm price will be available once Sally knows how many people are interested in this trip.

Except for the night in western Cambodia and in Laos, we will be staying at 4 and 5 star hotels, most with swimming pools and fitness centers. The trip price includes hotels with a full breakfast buffet, all airfares within Asia, all hotel transfers, entrance fees, minibuses to and from the cultural sites, and two group dinners. Tuk Tuk transportation in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, taxis, and the Temples at Angkor Wat are not included, nor is the cyclo tour price included. Also not included are your incidentals.

Trip cost, excluding the two add-ons, is \$2,270 per person, double occupancy, add \$900 for single occupancy. Airfares to and from Asia vary by airline, but expect to pay between \$1,000 for economy and \$1,400 for economy deluxe, round trip.

Your tour leader and resident guide is Sally Mackle, Rotarian in the Seattle 4 Club. This will be the fifth tour Sally has led, and it will be her eighth visit to SE Asia (Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia). For three years, she spent January and February in Phnom Penh, volunteering at a girls' school. Her extensive knowledge of the area will be a plus for you. Expect a few geography and history lessons from Sally along the way!

In addition to Sally, we will have professional tour guides in Hanoi, Hue and Ho Chi Minh Cities. Their excellent English and in-depth knowledge will allow you to get every question you have answered in detail!

As we will be traveling at the peak season in SE Asia (and also the coolest part of the year, an important reason to travel then) you are encouraged to register for the trip as early as possible. Flights cannot be booked without a name and once a flight is sold out, those registering late will be delayed in a city while the rest of the group goes ahead.

Deadline for registration is June 1. A \$500 refundable deposit (up until June 15) is required and is due by May 15 to hold hotel and airline space. All money is due by August 1, 2009. There are no refunds after September 1. As soon as you book, you should get your travel insurance, including both trip cancellation and medical evacuation insurance (medical evacuation in the amount of \$100,000 minimum is required. Trip insurance is available online.)

You are encouraged to contact Sally Mackle with questions. She can also give you names of Rotarians on the earlier tours if you would like to talk with them.

Sally's email is sjmackle@msn.com. Phone is 206-465-0029, west coast USA time.

Some comments from people on earlier trips:

"I want to thank Sally for her need to over plan! All went very well. The flexibility in the schedule was remarkable. Not only were the sights, sounds, smells and spirit of the Vietnamese and Cambodian culture amazing, the members of our group were equally interesting and diverse. I love going on trips with a humanitarian purpose."

Don M.

"Sally – you are a fabulous person and a wonderful tour leader! You kept us going at a fast pace, but there was an incredible experience waiting around every corner. I often felt like I was in history class with the ability to see and touch the places of interest. Most importantly and most memorable were the faces of all the people we encountered – the children, the young people at school, the elders on the streets. Everyone has a smile even in the face of adversity. And in our group – everyone lent something special that added together to create a remarkable experience." Laurie L.

"Thank you for giving us this wonderful opportunity and for all your hard work in making everything go so smoothly." Danner G.

"This was the most interesting vacation I've ever had. I knew we'd learn somethings, but the scope and variety exceeded my wildest expectations. And we had fun....lots of laughs, lots of good times. Thank you again, Sally, and to all my new traveling friends. And to Rotary, without which none of us would ever had had this adventure." Edie H.

About Sally Mackle, your Tour Leader

A resident of Kirkland, WA, Sally career includes management and administration at the University of Washington, at a major regional health care facility, for several state and international NGOs, for a high tech company, and for an international trade organization.

Sally has been a Rotarian for the past 18 years. As a member of the Seattle #4 Club she served as Chair of the International Services Committee for 3 years and also as a Board Member. In 2003, she led her District's GSE Team to Thailand and Vietnam where the members visited health care facilities, met with doctors, nurses and other professionals, had the opportunity for home stays with local people, and visited cultural and scenic attractions.

Sally has been involved with international service within Rotary for more than 15 years. From 2007 through 2009 she served as a Rotary volunteer in Cambodia, spending three months each year in Phnom Penh, the capital city, teaching young adult women job skills training.

Sally's current international interest in Rotary centers around mine action: helping fund the removal of landmines around the world. In 2002, she took the lead in organizing a Rotary Conference on mine action, sponsored by the U.S. Dept of State, the first collaboration between Rotary and the State Department. More than 150 Rotarians from around the world attended the two day event, which raised awareness of the devastation landmines cause for civilian populations and provided participants the opportunity to talk with representatives of NGOs that are dedicated to ridding the world of these remnants of war. One result of the conference was more than \$350,000 raised by Rotary clubs for mine action projects.

Sally currently serves as Vice President, North America West for Rotarians for Mine Action, an officially recognized action group within Rotary. In this capacity, she has spoken to more than 50 Rotary clubs in several states. She also was an invited speaker to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals Conference in 2004.

Sally has been taking Rotarians and friends to SE Asia for three years, and in 2009 she took a group to the Balkans to visit the minefields there to learn more about the deadly conflict in this region during the 1990s. Her trips provide Rotarians the ability to learn personally about international service. They give Sally an opportunity to visit parts of the world she delights in and the opportunity to meet many wonderful people and enjoy two weeks traveling with them.

For questions and/or more information, please contact Sally at sjmackle@msn.com or 206-465-0029.