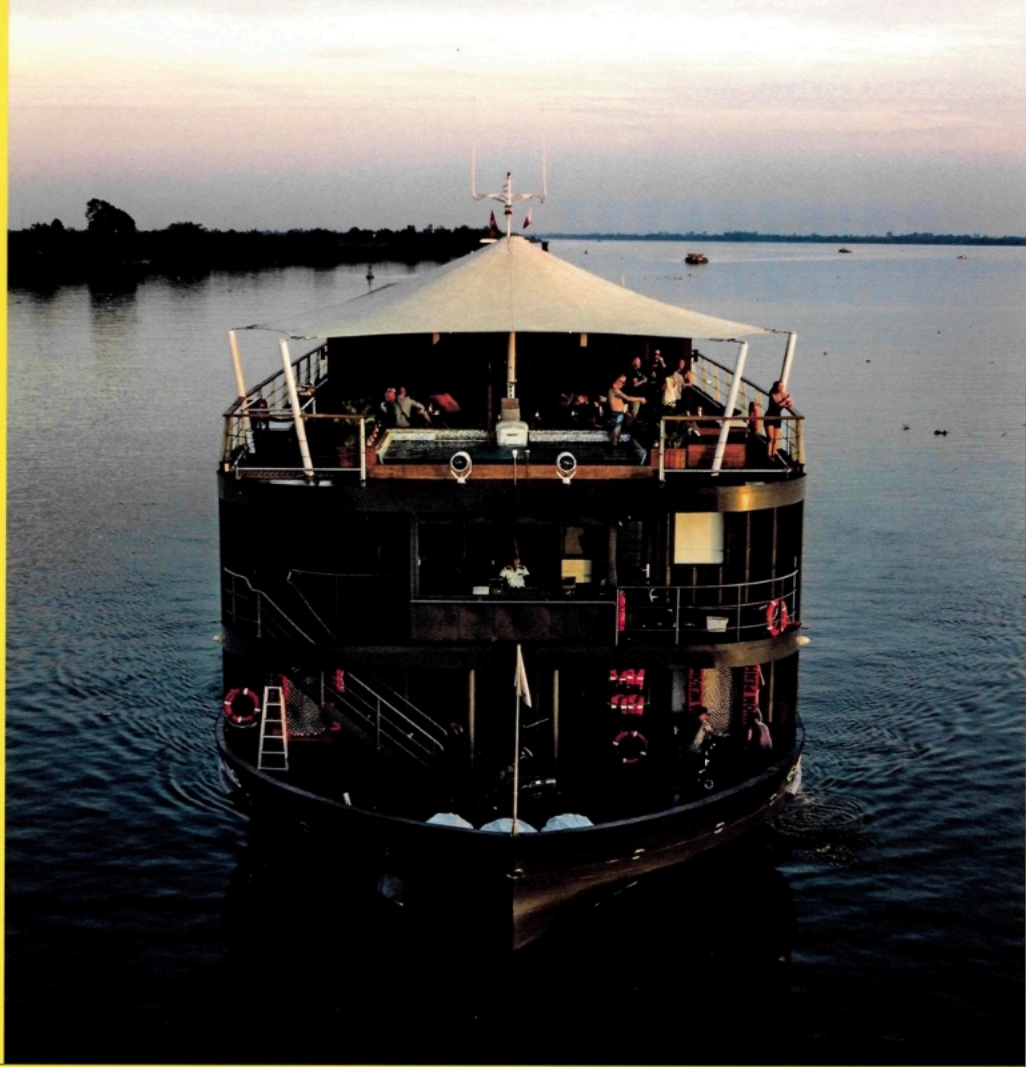


SAVEUR

Eat the World ISSUE N° 206 Spring/Summer 2026



BANGKOK • *Grilled Squid* • **KOLKATA**
Stone Fruit Fashion • **LONDON** • *Mexican Cheese*
CARTAGENA • *Lemon Rhubarb Cake* • **BARBADOS**
Garden Tomatoes • **HAWAI'I** • *Hybrid Wine*



UNCOMMON *C u r r e n t*

Gentle and unhurried, river cruises offer a rare shift in pace and a glimpse into regional foodways shaped by the water itself. From Indigenous delicacies in the world's largest rainforest to eight-legged appetizers along the Mekong River to chef-driven menus through Europe's wine countries and the American heartland, these five itineraries reward going with the flow.



MEKONG *Glam*

On an elegant voyage through the Delta, adventure lies around every bend.

MY FIRST TRIP TO VIETNAM was 33 years ago, and I was there as a backpacker on a budget. This time is decidedly different. My wife and I are on a seven-night voyage on the *Aqua Mekong*. Our new friends onboard include a group from the Hamptons, a billionaire and his second wife, and an A-list actress and her third husband.

The 20-suite ship, replete with a gym, library, screening room, and plunge pool, sets sail from Ho Chi Minh City and travels up the Mekong River, stopping at ten points of interest—including the bustling Cambodian trade city Sa Dec and floating village Phat Sanday—along the way to Siem Reap.

There's an emphasis on immersive shore excursions on this itinerary—think private tours of Buddhist temples and joining a local wedding celebration—plus a crew-to-guest ratio of 1-to-1. By day two, the staff is already calling me by my first name and knows that I like my Águila beer in a bottle. Warm croissants and coffee await us every morning in the main lounge. I later learn that a whiteboard in the kitchen lists each guest's name with cheat codes: *takes lemon with sparkling water; likes Negronis and dark chocolate; gluten-free.*

Nowhere is the exceptional service more evident than in the dining room with its white linen



tablecloths and wraparound windows. Each meal, designed by acclaimed Australian chef and cookbook author David Thompson, is a sumptuous affair where superlative house wines flow freely. Lunch highlights include lamb curry with Khmer spices and Vietnamese sugarcane prawns. Wagyu sirloin with a shiitake crust and market fish with coconut and lemongrass headline dinner.

When we arrive in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, crew members accompany guests to the sprawling Central Market, where we stock up on perishables—bean sprouts, local herbs, fresh rice noodles—and two pounds of fried tarantulas. At the 5 P.M. cocktail hour, we sample the eight-legged snacks—which, surprisingly, taste like fried cod—and toast to a successful voyage with zesty Mekong coladas. —James Heidenry



The Mighty MISSISSIPPI

Literary history and superb Southern cuisine await on the banks of the iconic American river.

ON OUR FIRST DAY aboard the *Serenade*, a server sets plates of buttery lobster scampi and grits in front of us while the banks of the Mississippi River slowly drift past. With the United States' 250th anniversary on the horizon, cruising the nation's most fabled