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# Cambodia Tour

## 10-day itinerary

Between the 9th and 15th centuries, Cambodia's northern province of Siem Reap was the centre of the Khmer civilisation. Today the remains of the ancient Angkor Kingdom are UNESCO World Heritage listed. Their architectural, archaeological and artistic significance are sure to capture your imagination. Exploranges' fully guided tour of Siem Reap, and its surrounds, provides a fascinating insight into the magnificence of this ancient world. Experience the history and culture through the lives of the local Cambodian people today. Come on a voyage of discovery and you are sure to leave with an appreciation of this beautiful land and its people.

#### Included:

- 9 nights accommodation in 4 Star Siem Reap Hotel
- 9 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 1 dinner, as indicated in the itinerary
- All transportation, daily tours and entrance fees for itinerary days 2-12
- Experienced Australian Tour Director
- Licensed Cambodian tour guides
- Donation to support the Siem Reap Sunrise Children's Village

#### Not Included:

- Airfares to and from Siem Reap
- Cambodian entry Visa and departure tax
- Arrival and departure transfers
- Evening meals (except where indicated in the itinerary)
- Personal expenditure such as drinks, laundry service and souvenirs
- Personal travel insurance

#### Please Note:

Our guide may need to change the itinerary depending on local daily conditions

# Exploranges Cambodia 10-day Itinerary

## Day One - Travel to Siem Reap, Cambodia

Check into your Siem Reap hotel after your private flight connections to Cambodia.

## Day Two - An Introduction to Siem Reap

After a leisurely breakfast you will meet your Exploranges Tour Director and start orientating yourself with the local streets of Siem Reap. You will explore the traditional "Old Market" before finding lunch at one of the many restaurants in the Old French Quarter. Spend the afternoon in the world class Angkor National Museum where the Golden Era of the Khmer Kingdom is revealed.

Meals included (B,L)



## Day Three - Early Angkorian Cities (10<sup>th</sup> Century)

On a day trip into the Cambodian countryside you will drive through farming villages to get to some of the more remote Angkor temple sites. In the morning you will visit Koh Ker - once the capital of the Khmer Kingdom (928-944 AD). Tucked away in the forests of Preah Vihear province Koh Ker has long been one of the most inaccessible of the Angkor-era cities. Here Prasat Thom, built in dedication to Tribhuvaneshvara (the lord of the triple world), includes an impressive 35m high sandstone pyramid or sacred mountain temple. In the afternoon you will explore the complex of Beng Mealea (the lotus reservoir). Beng Mealea is one of the Khmer empire's larger temples. Overgrown by jungle, and uncrowded by tourists, it has a beautiful and intriguing charm that offers an excitement of discovery.

Meals included (B,L)



## Day Four - Cambodian Life

Decades of war and internal conflict have left Cambodia one of the world's poorest countries. 80% of the country's 15 million people live in rural villages, work family farms and live a very basic life. The staple food for most is rice. Rice cultivation, and agriculture in general, accounts for 90% of Cambodia's GDP. Today you will experience rural village life first-hand as you ride a quad bike through local rice farming areas. You will see families at work in their fields, planting rice, and be greeted by local children smiling and waving as you pass by. In the evening you will venture out to the local food markets to find out where Siem Reap locals buy their food and what "delicacies" they eat.

Meals included (B,L)



## Day Five - Discover Angkor (12<sup>th</sup> Century)

Angkor Wat is the most famous monument in Angkor and the largest religious monument in the world. It was built by King Suryavarman II in the early 12th century as his state temple and eventual mausoleum. Angkor Wat is a miniature replica of the universe with its central tower symbolising the mythical mountain, Meru, situated at the centre of the universe, the outer wall corresponds to the mountains at the edge of the world, and the surrounding moat the oceans beyond. Here your local Cambodian guide will provide a narrative of the 12,000 square meters of bas-reliefs depicting scenes from the ancient Indian literary epic "The Mahabharata". In the afternoon you will visit Preah Khan and Ta Prohm which remain largely unrestored: the photogenic trees growing out of the ruins and the surrounding jungle surroundings make these some of Angkor's most popular sites.

Meals included (B,L)



## Day Six - Rest and Recharge

Today is an opportunity to rest and recharge. You will be free to make your arrangements. Perhaps take in the Cambodian sunrise or have a massage and relax by the pool. In the evening you will combine dinner with culture and be entertained by a performance of classic Khmer music and dance.

Meals included (B,D)



## Day Seven - The Elephants of Bayon (13<sup>th</sup> Century)

Elephants hold particular cultural significance in Cambodia, most famously for the critical role their harnessed power provided in the building of the Angkor Kingdom. In the relative cool of the morning you will hand feed seasonal fruit to a friendly elephant before it carries you on a leisurely walk within the ruins of the 13th century city of Angkor Thom. You will then visit the last state temple to be built at Angkor - The Bayon. Built by King Jayavarman VII, the Bayon is adorned with 216 serene and massive stone faces. The similarity of these gigantic faces to other statues of the king has led many scholars to the conclusion that the faces are representations of Jayavarman VII himself. In the afternoon you will visit other Angkor Thom sites such as the restored temple of Baphuon, the Phimeanakas from where the king watched his concubine's bath, the Terrace of the Leper King and the Terrace of the Elephants, used by king Jayavarman VII as a platform from which to view his victorious returning army.

Meals included (B,L)



## Day Eight -Citadel of the Women

Banteay Srei is a 10th century Cambodian temple dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva. This miniature temple is the only temple at Angkor not built by a monarch; instead its construction is credited to a courtier who served as a counsellor to King Rajendravarmān II. It is built largely of red sandstone, a medium that lends itself to the elaborate decorative wall carvings. The temple's name - citadel of the women - is said to relate to the many sensual devatas carved into the temples walls. You will spend the morning exploring this unique site before heading to the Angkor silk farm where local women grow and weave silk using traditional methods. This is the perfect place to buy a very special hand crafted Cambodian souvenir.

Meals included (B,L)



## Day Nine - Tonle Sap

Tonle Sap is the largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia. It is one of the world's top freshwater fisheries, shelters the most important waterbird colonies of the region and supports the world's largest snake harvest -- mostly to be given as snacks to farm crocodiles. In view of its exceptional ecological, economic, social and cultural value UNESCO has registered the Tonle Sap as a Biosphere Reserve. Today you will visit the floating lake village of Prek Toal. You will travel by boat across the great lake and its flooded forest. On the way, your guide will tell you about the unique ecosystem of the lake and its flora and fauna. You will see the village from a traditional Khmer paddle boat and will discover how the local community has adapted to their floating environment: crocodile farms, fish farms, floating school, floating gardens. After a traditional Cambodian lunch you will get an opportunity to spend time with the women of Saray Tonle (the water hyacinth handicraft cooperative) learning how to weave your own souvenir. This unique Ecotour directly supports the Prek Toal community by income-generating activities and funding community support projects.

Meals included (B,L)



## Day Ten

All good things must come to an end and today it is time to return home. After a casual buffet breakfast you will say goodbye to your Exploranges Tour Director before checking out in preparation for your private flight connections. If your flight departs Siem Reap in the afternoon you can pack early and spend the day doing some last minute shopping or visiting some of the other local attractions.

Meals included (B)



## Supporting Cambodia's Children



After thirty years of war, foreign occupation, genocide and civil war Cambodia, like many other Third World countries, has more than its fair share of orphaned and abandoned children. Adelaide born Geraldine Cox has devoted much of her life to helping Cambodian children. In 1993 she founded The Australia Cambodia Foundation and established two orphanages in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh. Known as "The Sunrise Children's Villages", these orphanages care for hundreds of orphaned, abandoned and disadvantaged Cambodian children. When visiting Cambodia with Exploranges, part of your tour payment is donated to support the Siem Reap Sunrise Children's Village. Each client's contribution pays the annual medical expenses of one child. Your support of these children is an amazing gift that continues to give life, hope, education, health and a future to those who had nothing.

Visit the Sunrise Children's Village at <http://www.scv.org.au/>