

## Cambodia

# Country of water and smiles

A country full of paradoxes, Cambodia remains as fascinating as it is unknown. A true "4x4" for our eyes and our hearts, this journey will not leave us indifferent. The exoticism and beauty of this country, not to mention its adventurous side, will touch us to the depths of our souls.

Emotion Planet's promise: there are few places in the world capable of offering such sensations.



Travelling through Cambodia is like visiting several countries in one. You will be surprised by the diversity, contrasts, and beauty of this former Indochinese empire.

It's no wonder so many travelers fall in love with it!

Torn by over thirty years of successive wars, this small country has been rebuilding itself since the mid-80s with remarkable dynamism.

Between the Mekong River and the great Tonlé Sap Lake, we invite you to discover the daily life of a population that has preserved many ancestral traditions... with the smile being a natural part of it.

### You will like

- 👤 The richness of encounters and smiles
- 🌿 The lush and sandy countryside dotted with rice fields
- 🏛️ The awe-inspiring power of the temples
- 🌿 The breathtaking beauty of nature
- 🚗 The variety of transport, accommodation, and landscapes
- 👤 The generosity of its people

### Barometer

#### Encounter



#### Spirituality



#### Culture



#### Walk



#### Driving time



#### Adventure



#### Comfort



#### Immersion



#### Nature





## Practical information

- 🕒 **Age & public** : For solo travellers, small groups and families with children
- 🕒 **Duration** : 14 days on site  
Extension from 1 additional day onward
- 🕒 **Dates & travel periods** : Available year-round, on your chosen dates (best period from October to April)
- 🕒 **Number of travellers** : 2 to 8 travellers (solo travellers and groups from 9+ travellers: on request)
- 🕒 **Travel package** : Discovery: people, nature, and culture
- 🕒 **Regions & landscapes** : Countrysides, beaches, temples, lakes, and rivers
- 🕒 **Accommodation** : Small hotel, homestay, bungalow
- 🕒 **Transport** : Private vehicle, train, motorised canoe
- 🕒 **Luggage handling** : By various means of transport

## Program

**Legend: B L D** = meals included in the price of the trip (**B**reakfast, **L**unch and **D**inner)

**Note** : the outline of this program (steps, activities, etc.) is given for information purposes only.

It may undergo modifications or adjustments depending on technical criteria, safety requirements, current climatic conditions and availability. Our guides always do everything possible to make the best possible decisions and options.

### little note :

Tout voyage qui sort des sentiers battus comporte parfois des événements imprévus (grève, route coupée, fête locale...) ; votre capacité d'adaptation aux conditions locales (transports, nourriture, hébergements, imprévus, aléas climatiques), comme à des événements inattendus sera aussi une clé à la réussite de votre voyage.

Nous comptons sur vous pour avoir un esprit délibérément « positif » et ne jamais oublier votre sens de l'humour.

Nous vous souhaitons un très beau et riche voyage .

### Day 1: Phnom Penh (Meals —; Transport 30')

Welcome at Phnom Penh airport and transfer to our hotel. The “Pearl of Southeast Asia” reveals itself to us in all its splendour. This acclimatisation day already holds surprises: let's stroll freely through the streets and alleys of this mythical city, try a Tuk Tuk ride if we feel like it, and soak up its unique vibrancy. With humility, let's mingle with merchants, local workers, artisans, and students... and discover the life of this capital with its tragic past!

Why not treat ourselves to a cocktail in one of the rooftop bars popular among backpackers? Let's immerse ourselves in the unique atmosphere of these emerging cities. If time allows, let's not miss the opportunity to experience the power of Khmer massages and relax by the hotel pool. One motto for this first day: let's indulge ourselves!

Overnight at the hotel.

### Day 2: Phnom Penh - Phat Sanday (Meals: BLD; Transport: 2h30)

Early in the morning, we set off towards the floating village of Phat Sanday. Aboard motorised canoes, we journey upstream, following the riverbanks teeming with life. (1h30-2h00 depending on stops).

The surrounding landscapes make this setting a true wonder!

Upon arriving at our host's floating house, we share a meal featuring local specialties.

In the afternoon, we navigate through the river branches before reaching the magnificent lake, where we discover a flooded forest with a mystical, almost ghostly atmosphere.

Depending on the season, we have the opportunity to learn various local fishing techniques: setting up a muong, a long line with hooks, using a thnong, a long pole with a square net at the end, practicing cast net fishing, or setting up trap baskets...

Meal and night at a homestay in a floating house.

*Info: large communal room, mattress on the floor with mosquito net, European-style toilet and Khmer shower... unless you'd prefer to wash in the river ☺).*

### **Day 3: Phat Sanday - Battambang** (Meals: BL-; Transport: 1h00)

The scene of this entire community, immersed in its aquatic environment, leaves a lasting impression on us as we discover it early in the morning. We are privileged, and we are fully aware of it. Let's gather the courage to rise at dawn to witness the sunrise, with the spectacle of fishermen hauling their nets with both strength and gentleness as the backdrop. Let's fully immerse ourselves in these floating villages, where dozens of Vietnamese, Khmer, and Cham fishing families have settled.

Next, we head towards the train station to reach the country's second-largest city, Battambang, by train!!! (10:40 AM - 1:00 PM). Upon arrival, a well-deserved lunch awaits us at a small local restaurant.

We then make our way to a small sacred mountain dotted with pagodas and stupas.

This place is also known as the Cave of Death, in reference to the atrocities carried out by the Khmer Rouge regime in the 1970s. We set off on foot to discover the site and learn about its history and Buddhist cult, while enjoying exceptional views over the countryside. We have the opportunity to meet many different types of people: monks, monkeys... In any case, we end the day with a spectacle as incredible as it is grandiose: the flight of millions of bats.

Overnight at the hotel.

### **Day 4: Battambang** (Meals: B-; Transport: /)

We begin the day with a stroll that awakens all our senses. We wander through the bustling stalls of food, clothing, and more in the old central market.

We continue with an orientation walk, tracing the footsteps of the French colonial era. We discover the history and architecture of the old buildings: colonist houses, the train station, the bridge, and the former governor's house, as well as a few pagodas... and mystical places.

After this morning visit, we can easily find our way and try some "self-discovery," letting ourselves be guided by encounters and our desires. This city, very pleasant and peaceful, is ideal for wandering around in complete tranquility and serenity... Unless we prefer some rest by the hotel pool (with or without a massage) to recover from these first intense discoveries.

*(Free option +/- \$10 / + tuk tuk \$5: "Bamboo train," a "bypass" system used to transport people and goods on abandoned train tracks.)*

In the evening, depending on the performance schedule, we have the opportunity to enjoy an incredible "human" circus show organised by an NGO, whose profits help fund, among other things, an art school.

Overnight at the hotel.

### **Day 5: Battambang - Siem Reap** (Meals: BLD; Transport: 3h30)

In the morning, we depart for the village of Kok Srok, located south of the Roulos temples, which are among the earliest of the Angkorian civilisation.

Upon our arrival, meeting our host family fills us with joy. With curiosity and enthusiasm, we discover their way of life, largely focused on agriculture and livestock farming (pigs, chickens...). These spontaneous interactions reveal a lot about their daily reality.

Let's settle into the dormitory of a stilt house and share a meal of local specialties with the family.

Not far from there, the impressive Bakong Temple, whose architectural style later became the signature of the great Khmer rulers, stands majestically. It is a massive pyramid, with each of its four cardinal points on each level serving as a base for gigantic elephants. A true architectural gem, following the restoration beautifully described by Maurice Glaize.

The Preah Ko Temple (Temple of the Sacred Bull), named in honour of Shiva's mount, Nandin, is equally impressive. Originally adorned with stucco and wall paintings, this monument is still covered with ancient plaster, especially on the rear towers.

Depending on the day and season, we will try to visit a monks' school.

Return to the host family and assist in preparing some local dishes.

Meal and overnight stay at a homestay in a local house.

#### **Day 6: Siem Reap** (Meals: BL-; Transport: 1h00)

We experience a morning of immersion, filled with genuine exchanges and insights into the daily lives of the villagers and their reality.

Depending on the season and the activities of the day with our hosts, we participate in daily tasks such as cultivating various vegetables (especially cassava), preparing farmland, sowing, harvesting, or even grinding rice.

In the mid-morning, we ride bicycles through the Khmer countryside to reach the village of Chao Srei Vibol. Surrounded by rice fields, sugar palms, and dusty paths with scarlet hues, we enjoy this moving dive into the authentic rural world.

Upon arrival, we visit the area and enjoy interactions with the locals. The time is perfect for observing some local crafts, such as weaving palm leaves or basket making. Afterward, a short journey takes us to the Chao Srei Vibol temple, nestled deep in the countryside. These places resonate with a mysterious, abandoned atmosphere that we feel intensely.

*Info: This excursion can be done on an electric bicycle, which incurs an additional fee.*

We have our meal at a local restaurant before heading by road to the Banteay Srei temple. This name means "The Citadel of Women." This pink sandstone jewel contains remarkable lintels, intricately carved and in incredible condition.

We then head to one of the most splendid pagodas in the city: Preah Prom Rath. This peaceful place, adorned with colorful wall paintings and golden Buddhist statues, is frequently visited by monks who come to perform their prayers and rituals to honor Buddha.

We take part in a blessing ceremony led by a master in the practice. This ritual purifies the body and allows us to express wishes for longevity and good health.

Transfer to our hotel. Evening and dinner at leisure.

*Info: This charitable establishment is supported by the French NGO Agir pour le Cambodge (APLC), founded in 1985. This organisation launched the Sala Bai programme in 2002 to combat poverty and human trafficking in Cambodia by providing training and professional integration for underprivileged youth.*

- Siem Reap is the second-largest city in Cambodia. It is a collection of small villages along the Siem Reap River. These villages originally developed around Buddhist pagodas (wats), which are almost evenly distributed along the river—from Wat Preah En Kau Sei in the north to Wat Phnom Krom in the south, where the Siem Reap River meets the vast Tonlé Sap Lake.

Once the seat of power of the great Khmer Empire, this place is home to the most intricately decorated temples, which were "rescued" from the jungle and restored in the early 20th century by the École française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO). Today, Siem Reap serves as the gateway to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Angkor Wat.

#### **Day 7: Siem Reap** (Meals: B- ; Transport: 0h45)

Early in the morning, our excursion by tuk-tuk or bicycle, depending on our mood and preference, takes us to Ta Prohm. This temple, overtaken by the jungle, was discovered in 1860 by the French explorer Henri Mouhot.

We then set off to explore the Royal City, built by Jayavarman VII, the Buddhist king of the Khmer Empire in the early 13th century, following the conquest and destruction of Angkor by the Chams.

The visit to the Royal City includes:

Angkor Thom, the great temple-city,

The ancient Royal Palace,

The Terrace of the Leper King, a platform adorned with beautifully sculpted apsaras,

The Terrace of the Elephants, where grand royal audiences and public ceremonies took place,

The Bayon Temple, enchanting with its fifty-four gigantic towers decorated with 216 faces of Avalokiteshvara, the Buddha of compassion,

The Baphuon, an impressive pyramid-shaped temple.

*Info:*

*If you choose to explore the temples by bike, the distance is approximately 10 km on flat terrain, requiring 1 to 1.5 hours of effort in total (excluding visits). Electric bikes are available upon request, with an additional fee.*

In the afternoon, we visit a national symbol: the largest and best-preserved of the Angkor temples, Angkor Wat (early 12th century). It is also the archetype of Khmer architecture: the “mountain temple” representing Mount Meru. It is one of the few temples that has remained in continuous use until today, first as a Hindu temple and later as a Buddhist one. With its towering spires and unique bas-reliefs, it is one of the most extraordinary monuments ever conceived by the human mind. We stroll along magnificent bas-reliefs depicting the legendary feats of the great kings of Angkor. We wander through long, enigmatic corridors where apsaras, garudas, and other celestial creatures stand guard.

Return to our hotel, free time and dinner at leisure.

#### **Day 8: Siem Reap** (Meals: B-D; Transport: /)

In the morning, we have a series of visits, each more fascinating than the last.

- The APOPO Center, a Belgian NGO that trains “hero rats.” These rodents are trained to detect the scent of landmines. This is followed by a visit to the organisation’s small museum: an opportunity to trace the history of the Khmer Rouge genocide and its ongoing impact on the Cambodian population today.

- The Satcha Artisan Center is the first talent incubator that supports 500 Cambodian artisans. It trains them in a variety of crafts, including stone carving, wood carving, bamboo and leather work. It also offers training in basket weaving, silk and cotton weaving, painting, lacquerware, jewelry making, and silver plating.

In the afternoon, we discover more monumental wonders:

- The temple of Banteay Kdei, located south of the Eastern Baray. Its name literally means “the citadel of the monastic cells.” This Buddhist-inspired site was built by Jayavarman VII around 1185.

- The majestic temple of Preah Khan, or the temple of the “Sacred Sword,” built by King Jayavarman VII towards the end of the 12th century.

- Neak Pean, or “Entangled Nâgas,” a small Buddhist temple.

After the stunning sunset, we head towards Phnom Krom. During the journey, we enjoy a breathtaking view of Tonle Sap and the Cambodian plains. We begin the ascent to the top of the hill, where the remains of a small temple complex are bordered by a monastery. From this viewpoint, Tonle Sap appears to stretch beneath the houses of Chong Kneas all the way to the horizon.

In the evening, at a restaurant run by Chef Mengly, we indulge in a fun and sophisticated culinary experience, blending familiar flavours with creative twists, delighting both our eyes and our taste buds.

Overnight at the hotel.

#### **Day 9: Chiro Village** (Meals BLD; Transport 5h30)

We head towards Kampong Cham in the morning, stopping for lunch at a local restaurant overlooking the Mekong. Along the way, we visit: “the hill of women,” then “the hill of men,” and the “Wat Nokor Buddhist temple,” among

other places...

We continue our journey to the village of Chiro, supported by OBT, an NGO dedicated to the education and empowerment of Cambodian youth. We meet the locals and settle into the family-run guesthouse.

*Tip: Experience the sunset from the bamboo terrace overlooking the fields and river.*

Dinner and overnight stay at the family guesthouse.

*Info:*

*Dormitory with mattresses and mosquito nets, shared toilets and showers – simple comfort.*

*Info:*

*OTB was created in 2007 by Sophal Pot and officially registered as a local NGO in 2009 by the Cambodian Ministry of the Interior. Access to knowledge through education is the organisation's main focus, as they believe it is the best way to fight poverty and corruption. This education is provided for free in a safe environment to any underprivileged child, regardless of their background or financial means. Most of the children supported come from farming families who live on an annual income of \$300 (less than a dollar per day).*

#### **Day 10: Chiro Village** (meals BLD; transport /)

Experience a full and complete immersion in the village and the NGO.

The program includes, depending on the season and the activities of the villagers: a tour of the village by bike; participation in agricultural work with a farming family (harvesting corn, tomatoes, cucumbers); Khmer cooking class...

After a short rest, let's take a boat trip to explore fishing techniques and relax for a while on "a beach." Why not dare to take a swim in the vastness of the Mekong?

Dinner and overnight stay at the family guesthouse.

*Info: Dormitory with mattresses and mosquito nets, shared toilets and showers – simple comfort.*

#### **Day 11: Chiro Village - Kampot** (meals BL- ; transport 5h)

Early in the morning, we head towards Kampot, the former capital of the Kampot Residential District during the colonial era. This city boasts an architecture blending colonial styles with a touch of contemporary Khmer influence.

On the way, we stop at the village of Skuon, also known as Spiderville, for a tasting of the local specialty: fried tarantula.

Depending on preferences, other edible insects are also available for tasting.

En route lunch at a local restaurant.

In the late afternoon, we arrive at our hotel and we settle into our rooms.

At the end of the day, enjoy an excursion by kayak or stand-up paddleboard (SUP) along the canals of the Preaek Tuek Chhu River, lined with water palms, to explore the so-called "Green Cathedral," with the Bokor Mountain looming in the distance.

With a bit of luck, observe a variety of wetland birds thriving nearby.

Dinner at leisure.

Overnight at the hotel.

*Note: The Bokor National Park, also known as Preah Monivong National Park, spans over 1,400 km² in southern Cambodia. It is home to the former Bokor Hill Station, a colonial-era retreat originally built as a leisure destination for French settlers and later for the Khmer elite.*

*Covered in lush evergreen forest, the park serves as a sanctuary for endangered wildlife, including Asian elephants, gibbons, sun bears, pangolins, and some of the last rare Indochinese leopards and tigers. It also shelters more than 300 bird species, including the distinctive great hornbill (Buceros bicornis).*

#### **Day 12: Kampot** (meals BLD ; transport /)

This morning, we explore and have lunch at Kampot local market. Overflowing with stalls selling local products (fruits, peppers, flowers, silk clothes, jewelry...), this bustling hub is truly vibrant. We then continue with an orientation walk through the city, discovering the colonial-style architecture.



By car, we head to the heart of pepper country to visit a plantation of this renowned spice. We meet one of the plantation's owners. The terroir of the Kampot region, the ecosystem undergoing restoration, and the meticulous care given to each plant by a small family team all contribute to the extraordinary palette of aromas and flavors of this cultivated pepper.

After the visit, let's enjoy a delicious meal in a small hut. Let's marvel at the typical features of a traditional Cambodian house. On the menu: chicken amok (vegetarian option available) with fresh pepper. A real treat!

We then head back to our hotel and enjoy some free time.

At the end of the day, a boat excursion on the Kampot River at sunset, and if the weather permits, the chance to witness a magical firefly light show.

Overnight at the hotel.

Infos : - The " Pepper " Project

*From a degraded land once at the heart of a dense forest, this Belgian couple has created a virtuous circle: reforestation, pepper cultivation, and subsistence farming. They have reforested half of the land to grow one of the world's most famous peppers, using an experimental and 100% organic agricultural method. Alongside the forest and pepper fields, a portion of the garden is dedicated to organic farming for the personal use of the owners. The traditional cultivation of pepper is part of a broader ecosystem restoration initiative. A pepper plant takes four years to bear fruit and can live between 50 and 100 years. During the peak of pepper cultivation before the Khmer Rouge period, production reached 8000 tons per year. These growers cultivate green pepper, a tender and spicy variety; black pepper, with delicate aromas reminiscent of mint; red pepper, rare, with a honey-like taste; and white pepper, with a fresh grass and lime flavour.*

*- The Bokor National Park, also known as Preah Monivong National Park, spans over 1400 km² in the south of Cambodia and houses the former mountain resort of Bokor. This colonial-era climate station was designed as a retreat for French colonists and later for the Khmer high society. Covered by lush evergreen forest, the park is a refuge for endangered species, including Asian elephants, gibbons, sun bears, pangolins, and the rare leopards and tigers of Indochina. It is also home to more than 300 bird species, including the unique hornbill (Buceros bicornis).*

### **Day 13: Kampot - Kep** (meal BL-); transport 1h00)

In the early morning, transfer to Kep, a small coastal town known for its tranquil ambience and seascapes. There, board the Nāga, for a guided boat tour of the Kep archipelago.

On the agenda: snorkeling around the islands and exploring the coral reefs covered with sea urchins, starfish, and colorful fish. We'll enjoy a refreshing iced coffee while visiting a traditional fishing village, immersing ourselves in the atmosphere and witnessing the daily life scenes that shape the lives of the local families. Afterward, we'll take a swim in the stunning bay of Snake Island.

With a bit of luck, we may spot freshwater dolphins, also known as Irrawaddy dolphins. These unique creatures, threatened with extinction, are distinguished by their rounded appearance and lack of a beak.

We take our meal in a restaurant established on the "crab market". The seafood specialities, accompanied by the famous pepper sauce, are sure to catch our eye.

We then settle into our hotel with swimming pool and enjoy some free time to relax!

Meal at leisure and overnight at the hotel.

Info: *Head down to the beach in the late afternoon to watch the sunset surrounded by monkeys (between the pepper market and the small center).*

### **Day 14 : Kep - Airport** (Meals: B- ; Transport: 3h30)

We enjoy the sunrise from our hotel — whether from our bed, the pool, or the beach... Let's savor these final moments in the Land of Smiles.

Free time before the transfer to the airport (room available until midday).

### **3-day extension: on Koh Ta Kiev Island** (meal B- ; transport 3h30)

After a drive to the Sihanoukville pier, we take the boat towards Koh Ta Kiev Island. By midday, we arrive on this

paradise island and settle into beach side bungalows. With its white sandy beach and turquoise sea, this place is perfect for relaxation, rejuvenation, and complete disconnection.

## Prices and conditions

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### Overland journey, 14 days on site:

**Price per person** (*varies depending on the number of travellers, including adults and children*)

- 6 to 8 travellers: ~~2295 €~~ **Discount : 2195 €**
- 4 to 5 travellers: 2495 €
- 3 travellers: 2995 €
- 2 travellers: 3695 €
- Solo traveller: [on request](#)
- Child < (12 years old) based on 2 adults: -20%

### NEW: 12-day stay on site

**Price per person** ([on request](#), *detailed 12-day programme available*)

- From 6 to 8 travellers: 1795 €
- 4 to 5 travellers: 2195 €
- 3 travellers: 2595 €
- 2 travellers: 3295 €
- Solo traveller: [on request](#)
- Child < (12 years old) based on 2 adults: -20%

### Supplements

- Single room: + 295 € (14-day programme) & + 245 € (12-day programme)
- Transfer in case of arrival/departure at a different time than the first registered: + 50€/transfer
- Additional night in Phnom Penh depending on flight schedule: + 60 € per person (*based on double room*)

### Option

- Extension of 3 nights on the island with transfers (car, boat, etc.)  
Price: from 295 € per person for 4 travellers and 395 € per person for 2 travellers.
- Groups from 9+ travellers: [on request](#)

### Flights

- Price depending on the date of booking, the airline, and the travel dates.

### Included in the price

- Trip organisation – travel booklet and itinerary booklet
- Welcome and transfers from the airport, train station, or meeting point to your accommodation, round trip
- Transport throughout the journey
- English-speaking guide and/or local guides
- Full board except for meals not mentioned
- Complete “Emotion Planet” activity programme
- Invitation to take part in relationship-based activities, a journey to the heart of oneself
- Pharmacy (*first aid*)
- Hotel and tourist taxes

### Not Included

- Everything not included in the above paragraph and any change throughout the journey
- Transport to destination: domestic and/or international flight, round-trip train...



- Carbon offsetting of your flight and travel (*on a voluntary basis*)
- Travel insurance (*highly recommended*)
- Meals not included (*Budget approx. 2-5 € per person per meal*)
- Drinks not included with meals
- Visa (*Budget +/- 30\$*)
- Tips and personal expenses  
(*Budget from 250\$-300\$ per group for the guide and half for the driver*)

## Contact

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Discover these colorful countries, the heart & values that drive us and comments from former travelers.

**Contact person for your trip :**



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« **Emotion Planet**, the world is never far away when its men are not strangers to us. »