

Essence of Cambodia

6 days – 5 nights

Siem Reap, Angkor Wat complex, Kulen Mountain, Banteay Srey, Tonle Sap Lake, Roluos Temples, Phnom Penh

Discovery, Art, Architecture, Culture, History

Day 1: Siem Reap

Upon arrival you'll be met by our representative and driven to the pagoda to receive a monk's blessing. Transfer to hotel in Siem Reap for dinner and overnight. [D]

Siem Reap is located in northwest Cambodia and is the closest city to the world famous, must see, temples of Angkor. The provincial capital is also called Siem Reap and is located in the South of the province on the shores of the Tonle Sap Lake, the greatest sweet water reserve in whole Southeast Asia. It's a laid-back, lovely place to stay while touring the temples and offers the best of both worlds between observing Cambodian life and enjoying the amenities of modern services and entertainment. Although the Temples are the main 'draw' in this area there is much more to experience by travelling a little further in this region.

Note: Revealing clothes such as shorts and skirts above the knees and bare shoulders are prohibited in sacred places and temples. On religious Buddhist dates the Top Tower (Level 3) of Angkor Wat temple is closed.

Day 2: Siem Reap (Angkor Wat complex)

Breakfast at the hotel. Today, starting around 8:00 am, visit the city of Angkor Thom, which houses more than 100 temples of which we'll visit the most important: the temple of Bayon, Terrace of the Leper King, Baphuon, Terrace of the Elephant, The Phimeanakas and 12 Prasat Suor Prat identical towers. Lunch at a local restaurant. In the afternoon, we visit Ta Phrom, known as Tomb Raider, Banteay Kdei, Ta Keo, Chau Thommanon and Svay Thevoda, all of great architectural beauty. We keep for the end a visit to the architectural wonder of Angkor Wat - a UNESCO World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Enjoy the magnificent sunset if the weather permits. Return to hotel for overnight. [B/L]

Option [1]: Helicopter ride

Board an helicopter ride for an unforgettable aerial view of Angkor Wat.

Day 3 Siem Reap (Kulen Mountain, Banteay Srey)

Breakfast at the hotel. In the morning, we go by road towards the Sacred Mountain of Kulen, to enjoy a morning of gentle hiking. Phnom Kulen is 25 miles from Krong Siem Reap, and it takes about 1.5 hours to get there. This place, sacred to locals, is an important place of pilgrimage. Here we can visit the great Sleeping Buddha and the Kulen waterfall, to take some unforgettable photos. Upon returning, we will visit the river of 1,000 Lingas and then we will serve you the lunch. In the afternoon visit the Banteay Srei temple (known as the "Citadel of Women") dating from the tenth century and built in red sandstone; the temple is dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva and is said to be the most beautiful of all. Back to hotel and rest of day at leisure. [B/L]

Day 4: Siem Reap (Tonle Sap Lake, Roluos temples)

This morning, we drive about 14 miles from Siem Reap, to visit the commune of Kampong Phluk, a floating village built on pillars of up to 72-foot high, on the shores of Tonle Sap Lake, considered in turn the largest fresh water lake in all of Southeast Asia and whose flow varies depending on the rainy or dry season. Another short drive will lead us to the Roluos, group of temples, a small collection of monuments known as Hariharalya, that once was the center of Khmer civilization, and served as a capital city to four successive kings over a period of more than 70 years. Lolei the island temple was built in the middle of a reservoir and consists of four brick towers and a few lintel carvings that remain in good condition. Preah Ko, or the sacred bull temple, is named after the statues of bulls in front of the central towers and Bakong is the largest and most impressive in the group, dedicated to the

Hindu god Shiva. Back to hotel with the rest of day at leisure. At night, transfer to Raffles Hotel, enjoying the traditional Apsara Dinner*. Accommodation in Siem Reap. [B/D]

** The Apsara Show is between 19:30-20:30. From April through September runs on Mon-Wed-Thu-Sun. From October through March runs weekly*

Day 5: Siem Reap, Phnom Penh

This morning, we visit to Artisans D'Angkor, a good option for purchasing authentic Khmer souvenirs as well as getting a deep insight into the skilled workmanship of traditional handicrafts in Cambodia. Located along Stung Thmey Street, this training center was established in 1998 to provide free vocational training in traditional Angkorian art forms to impoverished youths between the ages of 18 and 25. Transfer to the airport for your flight to Phnom Penh. There, you'll be met by your guide who will drive you to the hotel for check-in. Set off from your hotel into the country's capital, starting with a visit to the Royal Palace, a stone's throw from the Tonle Sap River. Built in 1813 the palace contains several buildings, which have been used for the coronation of kings and other ceremonies. Within the grounds is the Silver Pagoda, aptly named because of the 5000 silver tiles weighing 1kg each which cover the entire floor. Head on from here to the National Museum built during 1917-1920 and housed in an elegant terracotta building, in keeping with traditional design. After wandering around the museum, continue to Wat Phnom, the city's main temple situated on top of a hill along with throngs of worshippers. Return to your hotel for overnight. [B/L]

Day 6: Phnom Penh (Toul Sleng), Departure

Breakfast at the hotel before a visit to Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum. The site is a former high school which was used as the notorious Security Prison 21 (S-21) by the Khmer Rouge regime from its rise to power in 1975 until the end of the war in 1979. Later, enjoy some time at the Russian market (Toul Tom Pong market) before being driven to the airport for your departure flight. [B]

[B] = Breakfast | [B/L] = Breakfast and Lunch | [B/D] = Breakfast and Dinner

Tour includes:

- Meet and assist at airports
- Private transfers as listed
- 5 nights' accommodation:
 - Siem Reap – 4 nights
 - Phnom Penh - 1 night
- Meals
 - Breakfast daily
 - 3 lunches
 - Arrival dinner
 - Apsara dinner and Show
- Visits of:
 - Angkor Wat Complex
 - Surrounding Angkor temples
 - Artisans d'Angkor
 - Tonle Sap Lake
 - Roulos temples
 - Phnom Penh
 - Toul Sleng Museum
 - Time at the Russian Market
- All entrance fees for included sightseeing
- Land transportation as described
- English speaking local station guides

- Bottle of water and cool towel provided during transfers
- Vietnam Government tax and services charges.

Tour does not include:

- International or Domestic airfares
- Any taxes and surcharges relating to airfares
- Travel insurance
- Entry Visa and visa fees
- Wi-Fi at hotels except as indicated
- All alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks except as indicated
- Other meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Extras and gratuities
- Early check-in, late check-out (Most hotels begin check-in around 2:00pm).
- Expenses of personal nature
- Porterage at airport and hotels
- Optional tours and activities
- Any service not specifically listed under "included"

