



**5 Days 'Discover Phnom Penh & Siem Reap by various Modes of Transport'
Valid for Travel: 1st November 2015 – 31st October 2016**

DESTINATION ASIA

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT FOR ASIA'S TRAVEL CONNOISSEURS

Itinerary – Cambodia

5 Days 'Discover Phnom Penh & Siem Reap by various Modes of Transport'



Cambodia offers many highlights, including the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh, stunning sunsets over the Mekong River, incredible as well as breathtaking temple complexes in Siem Reap – and of course the grandest of them all; the largest religious monument in the world, Angkor Wat.

But what if you would be able to not only see all of the above but at the same time discover Cambodia while travelling on up to 11 different modes of transport, and experience the country like not many have before.

We will welcome you to Phnom Penh with a luxury airport pick-up, followed by a tour of the city's main sights on a cyclo (comparable to a rickshaw). In the evening, transfer by car for dinner in one of the city's best restaurants. The next morning, depart your hotel by tuk tuk for a tour of the markets and a visit to Wat Phnom, considered to be the birthplace of Phnom Penh city. Before lunch at a charming training center and restaurant, visit the Toul Sleng Genocide Museum and the so-called 'Killing Fields', a profoundly moving but maybe also depressing experience for you. Enjoy your afternoon at leisure before departing by boat on a sunset Champagne cruise on the Mekong River and dinner at either the very unique 'Dine in the Dark' restaurant or at a high-end Western alternative.

The next morning, depart for Siem Reap by flight and get a feeling for the city during a short walking tour. After a fantastic Khmer lunch, begin your exploration of the Angkorian temples by visiting the most mysterious temple of Angkor, Beng Melea, in an old US Army Jeep. End an adventurous day in a cosy restaurant serving Western-Khmer options. Your next day starts with a sunrise tour of Angkor, followed by an elephant ride around Bayon temple and a tour by bicycle of Theam's House and more temples. Return to your hotel in the afternoon before we take you out for the musical and culinary highlights of your trip. Leave Siem Reap the next day, but not before exploring the Cambodian countryside by cow cart.

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Day 1

Phnom Penh



Upon arrival transfer to your selected hotel where you will enjoy a lunch.

This afternoon, our tour guide will pick you up from your hotel and you will ride on a cyclo (comparable to rickshaw) to the National Museum, a Khmer temple inspired building that houses the world's largest collection of Khmer art sculptures, ceramics and bronzes from different periods of Cambodian history. Over 5000 objects are on display including Angkorian era statues, lingas and other artefacts, most notably the legendary statue of the 'Leper King.' Though the emphasis is on Angkorian artefacts, there is also a good collection of pieces from later periods, including a special exhibition of post-Angkorian Buddha figures. You will return to the museum this evening for a special showcase of Khmer art.



Continue to visit the Royal Palace, built in 1866 by King Norodom. The Palace is made up from a number of structures within a pagoda-style compound of which one is the well-known 'Silver Pagoda'. The Silver Pagoda takes its name from the more than 5,000 silver tiles it was constructed with and the building itself holds a number of national treasures. The perhaps most impressive statues are a life-sized gold Maitreya Buddha decorated with 9584 diamonds and weighing a 90 kg, and the small 17th century Emerald Buddha made from baccarat crystal.

Later on, have an afternoon break on a rooftop terrace overlooking the Royal Palace and riverfront. Enjoy refreshing drink while your guide will give your more insight into the daily life of the Cambodian people. Return to your hotel to freshen up and relax before leaving for tonight's entertainment.

We will pamper you with dinner at Malis, home to the renowned Cambodian chef Luu Meng, whose skills made his restaurant a 'culinary must-see' in Phnom Penh.

Overnight at your selected hotel.

Meals included **Accommodation**

Lunch, dinner
At White Mansion Boutique Hotel, Junior suite room

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Day 2 Phnom Penh

Early morning, depart your hotel by Tuk Tuk.

First stop will be at the Independence Monument where you will have the opportunity to take a stroll through the gardens and watch the locals during their morning exercise routine. How many local people are out and about doing their morning gymnastics and aerobics might surprise you, but please feel free to join them if you would like to. Afterwards, continue on to Wat Ounalom, which was founded in 1443 as one of the first pagodas in Phnom Penh. The head of Cambodia's Buddhist brotherhood resides at this Wat, along with an ever-increasing number of monks. At the Wat, you will be able to offer food donations before being thanked for with a personal blessing ceremony by one of the monks. It is believed that this traditional Khmer blessing ceremony cleanses the bad spirits of the past and brings good luck for the coming year.

You will then head to Phsar Kandal. This market is very interesting in the early morning with many farmers selling their fresh fruits and vegetables to local buyers. Take a stroll along the Riverfront and stop to enjoy a typical Khmer noodle soup for breakfast.

Stop for a short visit at Wat Phnom, which is the only hill in the city. Legend relates that Daun Penh, a wealthy widow, found a large koki tree in the river and inside the tree she found four bronze Buddha. Lady Penh constructed a small shrine on an artificial hill made by the people living in the village to protect the sacred statues. Eventually this became a sacred site and sanctuary where people would make blessings and pray, and is nowadays considered to be the birthplace of Phnom Penh City. Continue by vehicle to the Toul Sleng Genocide Museum, which actually is a former high school. During the Pol Pot Regime, they took over this school and used it as a prison for detentions and torture of prisoners. A place which is worth visiting to understand more about the recent History of Cambodia and the atrocity of the Pol Pot Regime during that period. Then continue your visit to the Killing Fields (Cheung Ek), a profoundly moving but maybe also depressing experience for you. During the Khmer Rouge period, thousands of Cambodians were tortured and imprisoned in Toul Sleng. They were then moved to the extermination camps at Cheung Ek where they were bludgeoned to death. They were buried in mass graves and today over 8,000 skulls are displayed behind the glass of a memorial Stupa, erected in 1988 to honor those who died.

Return to Phnom Penh city and visit 'Romdeng'; a training restaurant and our lunch recommendation for today. Romdeng is run by Mith Samlanh, which has worked to build the futures of former street children and marginalized young people in Phnom Penh since 1994. The restaurant offers a true taste of Cambodia in cuisine and décor, and serves Cambodian food that ranges from almost forgotten recipes from the provinces to contemporary creative Cambodian cuisine. Return to your hotel for an afternoon rest and time at leisure.



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In the late afternoon, leave your hotel and transfer to the Mekong river where you will enjoy a private sunset cruise. You will be served a bottle of chilled wine (or champagne) and canapés while watching the sun set over the mighty Mekong.

After your sunset cruise, continue for dinner at the very unique 'Dine in the Dark' Restaurant.

Following the lead of restaurants around the world that have capitalized on the trend for dining in darkness, Dine in the Dark restaurant is opening its doors inside Botanic Café, allowing customers to enjoy a meal with only their senses of taste and smell.

Guests will be told to leave any possessions that produce light with the staff, and will not be told what they are eating. Three three-course options are available: Western, Khmer and vegetarian, and any dietary requirements will have to be communicated in advance.

Wait staff are all visually impaired students from Krousar Thmey, a school for the blind and deaf in Phnom Penh.

Meals included

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation

At White Mansion Boutique Hotel, Junior suite room



Day 3

Phnom Penh

Siem Reap

Morning flight to Siem Reap.

Upon arrival at the airport, transfer to the Royal Independence Gardens by car and visit a Pagoda before passing the Royal Residence. Continue on foot to the elegant McDermott Gallery where impressive fine art photographs of Angkor are on display. Enjoy a refreshing drink at the Foreign Correspondence Club (FCC) – the former French Ambassador's Residence – before continuing on foot through the Old French Quarter and past the Post Office and the Red Cross Building. Arrive at Psar Chas (the 'Old Market') and explore the labyrinth of market stalls that overflow with a vast array of good for locals and tourists, including a variety of souvenirs. Stroll around the Old Quarter with its colonial buildings and boutique shops, and afterwards arrival at the hotel to freshen up before lunch at the Sugar Palm Restaurant.



Sugar Palm stands for authentic Khmer cooking and is the brainchild of Miss Kethana who lamented the loss of traditional Khmer cooking skills during the troubled times of the 1970s. Kethana wanted to bring back authentic cooking, as her mother and grandmother had taught her and this she has achieved in "The Sugar Palm" restaurant.



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After a fantastic Khmer lunch, begin your exploration of the Angkorian temples by visiting the most mysterious temple of Angkor, Beng Melea, by Army Jeep. Beng Melea is just as large as Angkor Wat and was built under the reign of Suryavarman II in the 12th century. Nowadays overgrown by the jungle, this really is a special place worth taking the time to explore.

In the evening, transfer for dinner to Chanrey Tree Restaurant. A modern but cozy restaurant offering unique dishes and interesting Western-Khmer combinations.

Meals included
Accommodation

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
At Shinta Mani Club, Superior room



Day 4 Siem Reap

Depart your hotel for a sunrise tour at pre-dawn to witness the breath-taking views of Angkor Wat temple, the best place for truly memorable photographs. Explore the central complex and bas-reliefs of Angkor Wat, one of travel's remaining great adventures before returning to your hotel for breakfast.

Leave your hotel by bicycle and before cycling back into the temple complex, stop for a private tour of 'Theam's House'.

Theam's House is the home cum-atelier-gallery of the Cambodian artist and designer Lim Muy Theam. This little oasis can be a little difficult to find, but is without question worth the effort. Theam is a restlessly creative individual, which can be seen in every aspect of his self-designed studio/home. His media include lacquers, painting, and sculpture, with pieces that are uniquely expressive of Theam while also maintaining a strong Khmer ethic.



After your visit, continue by bicycle to visit the monumental magnificence of Angkor Thom - last capital of the Khmers, with its Elephant Terrace, the Terrace of the Leper King and the stunning Bayon temple. This 12th century masterpiece lies at the very center of Angkor Thom and is an archaeological wonder of symmetry and grandeur. The exterior gallery walls have extensive bas-reliefs but the highlight is the "faces", more than 200 of them, silent but with the famous half-smile playing on their lips. PJ de Beerski wrote of them; "godliness in the majesty and the size, mystery in the expression."



By vehicle, continue on to lunch at the Khmer Wooden house. Enjoy a typical Khmer menu while seated in a traditional Khmer house made entirely out of wood.

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After lunch, you will continue to visit Ta Prohm, the temple that has been left largely in its natural state since its “re-discovery” by French explorers. Surrounded by jungle, its labyrinth of stone hallways is overgrown with the roots and limbs of massive banyan trees, which envelop the stone like tentacles. It is one of the largest temples at Angkor, dedicated in 1186.



After a day at the temples, return to your hotel for an afternoon at leisure.

In the late afternoon, leave your hotel for a rice wine tasting at the best and most recognized rice wine maker in Cambodia; Sombai. Sombai - pronounced as “Som Bai” – means “some rice, please” in Khmer. Rice is the main staple food in Cambodia, but is also the base of the distillation of alcohol hence the preparation of rice spirit, also called rice wine. Throughout history, the Khmer people have used infused rice spirit in traditional medicine to extract the benefits of fruits, spices and roots.

Learn more about the history of rice wine in Cambodia, taste different infused rice wines and take away a special gift, created just for you.



End this wonderful day with maybe the highlight of your culinary experience here in Cambodia; dinner at Cuisine Wat Damnak. Cuisine Wat Damnak was founded on the simple concept of using only local fresh seasonal produce with which to create exquisite Cambodian food. Their degustation menus change on a weekly basis to maximize the use of seasonal fruits, vegetables and fish, some of which are only available for a three-week period every year.

Meals included	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation	At Shinta Mani Club, Superior room

Day 5 Siem Reap

Enjoy Breakfast at hotel before leaving the bustling town of Siem Reap for a ‘country side experience’. First, stop at the ‘Golden Silk Farm’ for a private educational tour of the premises and their work. The Golden Silk Farm has become known for its unique design and impeccable quality.

After your visit to the Silk Farm, enjoy a truly ‘rural experience’ and discover the surrounding area on the back of a cow cart. Cow carts are the most common mode of not only transport but also farming equipment for rural families and your short tour on those ‘vehicles’ will support farmers with additional income.

Return to your hotel and later, transfer to the International Airport for your flight.



Meals included	Breakfast
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~ END OF SERVICE ~