



## Cambodia Express



### OverViews

*Cambodia is a country full of ancient and modern history, saturated with beautiful religious monuments, teeming with wildlife, and lush with rice fields, grasslands, and rivers. Let's discover with us on Cambodia Express 7days. The tour starts in the capital of Phnom Penh, where the former grandeur of French Indochina shines through in glimpses amongst the modern and continue to Battambang – a riverside town and home to some of the best-preserved Colonial architecture in all Cambodia and end tours at Siem Reap – land of temple.*

**Duration:** 7 days

**Link:** <https://www.atravelmate.com/cambodia-express/>

### Highlights

- Tread lightly upon the 5000 silver floor tiles at the Silver Pagoda, in the Royal Palace
- Step back in time at the National Museum, home to the world's finest collection of Angkorian sculpture
- Check out the Art Deco masterpiece that Psar Thmei, Phnom Penh's central market
- Wat Phnom – on a leafy hill, Wat Phnom affords a view that has changed little in a half century
- Soak up the city by night, with a happy hour cocktail, a fine meal and crawl through the city's bars
- Mekong Boat trips – Cruise the river as the sun sinks behind the spires of the Royal Palace
- Battambang – Laid-back town boasting character colonial architecture, a lazy riverside and fledgling Western bar scene

- Click and clack on the bamboo train, is one of the world's all-time classic rail journeys
- Wat Banon – Well-preserved ancient hilltop pagoda near Battambang, with superb views from summit
- Follow in the footsteps of pilgrims of old along the immense causeway of the temple that is a city, the holiest of holiest, the one and only Angkor Wat
- Angkor Thom means “the great city” in Khmer. The 12th-century royal Buddhist city is especially famed for its grand Bayon Temple, but has several other sights of interest as well.
- Succumb to the enigmatic smiles of the 216 giant faces of the Bayon, Angkor's strangest temple
- Experience nature running riot at the mysterious ruin of Ta Prohm, the original *Tomb Raider* temple
- Marvel at the exquisite carvings adorning the tiny temple of Banteay Srei, the finest seen at Angkor
- Discover the secrets of Bar street, Siem Reap's quaffing capital where the action goes on all night and Angkor Night Market
- Relax with a massage or spa, the perfect medicine for weary bodies
- Tonle Sap Lake – Get a glimpse of the distinctive way of life led in the floating villages on Southeast Asia's largest fresh water lake

## Full Itinerary

### Day 1. Phnom Penh – Arrival, Sour Sdey “Hello” CAMBODIA

Fly into **Phnom Penh**, the city that retains its traditional Khmer and colonial charm. French villas along tree-lined boulevards remind the visitor that the city was once considered the ‘pearl’ of Southeast Asia. Recent political changes have triggered an economic boom, with new hotels, restaurants, bars and nightclubs springing up across the city. We meet our representative and transfer to hotel for check in. The balance of the day free for your own times in capital. O/n in Phnom Penh.

### Day 2. Phnom Penh's Past & Present (B)

Visit to the **Royal Palace compound** build in 1866 by the Predecessors of King Norodom, is the most conspicuous feature and also one of impressive colorful Khmer-style Palaces. Nearside the Royal Palace is **Silver Pagoda** (The Emerald Buddha temple), display plenty of Buddha Statues that were decorated and made by diamond, emerald, gold and silver, continuing visit to **National Museum**, the distinctive red building with a beautiful Khmer architecture was build since 1917 and contains more than 5000 art objects made of sandstone, bronze, silver, copper, wood and others. Travelers will proceed to visit **Independence Monument**, which was constructed in 1954 after Cambodian took their country back from French colony. We will learn about the dark side of Cambodia – Its more recent turbulent and harrowing history. Initially you visit the **Toul Sleng Genocide Museum** (also known as S21), ironically a former school, located in a quiet Phnom Penh suburb, this was the infamous Khmer Rouge prison / torture center. We visit **Wat Phnom** is a Buddhist temple located in center of Phnom Penh City. It was built in 1373, and stands 27 meters above the ground. It is the tallest religious structure in the city. We will stop at **Central Market** is located in the heart of the Phnom Penh. The Khmer name of the market is **Phsar Thmei**, which translates to “**new market**”. The Central Market was built in 1937 during the French colonial period, in Art Deco style, and is painted bright ochre. We enjoy our **cyclo ride** along the riverside. This laid back tour gives us a different

perspective of the streets and sights of the city. We will enjoy a **cruise for view sunset** on the **Mekong and Tonle Sap River** (1 hour). Situated at the “**Four Arms**” where the Mekong meets the Tonle Sap River before splitting into two branches, Phnom Penh offers the ideal location to discover the mighty Mekong. O/n in Phnom Penh.

### **Day 3. Phnom Penh – Battambang (B)**

Morning departure in a north-west direction to **Battambang**, first stop at **Kompong Loung** to visit the village of goldsmiths along the Tonle Sap, manufacturing souvenir center stopping, and stop at **Phnom Udong**, the ancient Cambodian capital during the latter stages of the Khmer Empire and crowning site of many past kings. Consisting of a series of stupas atop a large hill, there are outstanding views across the surrounding plains below. Phnom Udong was bombed and desecrated by the Americans and then the Khmer Rouge, but still possesses a beauty that no war has been able to steal from it. Having had time to explore, continue to **Kompong Chhnang**, taking the time to stop at a pottery village before continuing further north to Pursat Province, famous for its marble stone carvings. Departure to **Phnom Sampeu Mountain**. Phnom Sampeu means ‘Ship Mountain’ because its peculiar shape reminds of a ship. Atop a 100-meter-high mountain stands a pagoda and three natural caves: Pkasia, Lakhaon and Aksopheak. We will be just in time to **catch the bats!** As darkness falls, we will begin to see thousands of nocturnal bats taking flight from the surrounding caves in a massive formation of dark, black clouds. Be sure to photograph this amazing and staggering sight! Overnight in Battambang.

### **Day 4. Battambang – Siem Reap (B )**

After breakfast, we discover the city of **Battambang**, a charming big city where you can watch the elegant houses in the French colonial style along the river. We pass through traditional villages along the route where you can attend the manufacture of family rice cakes and contacting people about their daily lives. We learn about the rice harvest, fruit farming and how the sugar palm is used. We drive to the **Bamboo Railway Station**. The Bamboo Train has been set up by the villagers to facilitate the transportation of goods and people. The train in itself is very basic – one platform on 4 wheels activated by a small motor. We travel further south you arrive at the well preserved 11th century mountaintop Angkorian temple of **Phnom Banan**. After climbing the 350+ steps you are treated to a wonderfully peaceful setting with superb views across the surrounding countryside, with small villages dotting the endless rice paddies, punctuated with the characteristic sugar palm trees a wonderful sunset location. We leave Battambang and drive towards **Siem Reap**. Stopping at **Puok District** to visit the National Silk Centre, a fascinating way to learn about Cambodian silk. Here we will spend some time and witness start-to-finish silk creation, growing and harvesting mulberry and the breeding process and the life cycle of the silk worm. O/n in Siem Reap.

### **Day 5. Preah Khan & Banteay Srei & CNN Hero ( B. L )**

After breakfast, we begin to visit **Preah Khan**: a temple built by King Jayavarman VII with towered enclosures and shoulder-hugging corridors in a jungle setting. Preah Khan covers a very large area but the temple itself is enclosed within a rectangular wall of around 700 by 800 meters. Next is **Neak Poan** was supposed to be a symbol of the Universe. We head further out through rural countryside to the small but beautiful temple of **Banteay Srei**. This temple is largely built of pink sandstone, a harder rock that can be more elaborately carved and better survives the rigors of time. Stop at a local village to visit families who

are producing **palm sugar**. We'll pay a visit to the **Landmine Museum** where Mr. Aki Ra, a former child soldier in the Khmer Rouge has dedicated his life to helping others in need. After having spent most of his child years fighting for the Khmer Rouge and later the Vietnamese army, Mr. Aki Ra was trained by the United Nations to detonate land-mines; his fantastic work earned him a nomination for CNN Hero of the year in 2010. Continue to **Banteay Samre**: Its rose-colored sandstone walls are decorated with carvings and bas-reliefs, which are among the most accomplished Angkor has to offer. For the later afternoon we head back into main Angkor Park and we finish by experiencing sunset over the rice fields from the royal crematorium of **Pre Rup**, a classic view of the Cambodian countryside. O/n in Siem Reap.

#### **Day 6. Angkor Thom & Ta Prohm & Angkor Wat ( B , L )**

After meeting our tour guide, then we drive to **Angkor Thom** that was the masterpiece of King Jayavarman VII. Following the occupation of Angkor by the Chams from 1177 to 1181, the new king decided to build an impregnable fortress at the heart of his empire. We visit **Bayon Temple**. At the exact center of Angkor Thom, this is an eccentric expression of the creative genius and inflated ego of Cambodia's most celebrated king. From there we walk to **Baphuon**, once of the most beautiful temples at Angkor, dating from the reign of Uditayavarman 1 in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. We continue to visit **Terrace of the Leper King**. This intricately carved platform was the royal crematorium and the statue that was originally thought to be the leper king is now believed to be Yama, the god of death. We continue along the **Terrace of Elephants**, originally used as a viewing gallery for the king to preside over parades, performances and traditional sports. We also visit **Ta Prohm "Tomb Raider"** fame. Ta Prohm has been abandoned to the elements, a reminder that while empires rise and fall, the riotous power of nature marches on, oblivious to the dramas of human history. We journey out to the Mother of all temples, **Angkor Wat**. Believed to be the world's largest religious building, this temple is the perfect fusion of symbolism and symmetry and a source of pride and strength to all Khmers. O/n in Siem Reap.

#### **Day 7. Siem Reap – Departure ( B )**

We depart for the **Tonlé Sap**. We will enjoy a boat ride on the **Tonle Sap Lake**. This is the largest permanent fresh-water lake in South East Asia and flows into Tonle Sap River, joining the Mekong in Phnom Penh. We will see a fishermen's "floating village" with floating schools, floating police station, etc. It is same as a big village floating on the lake, and the "village" move from place to place following water levels and current. Transfer to Siem Reap airport (no guide) for departure to next destination. It's time to say goodbye, we thank you for traveling with us and warmly welcome you to come again.

## **Inclusions**

- Accommodation with daily breakfast in double / twin shared room
- Meal: 2 Lunches at local restaurant (foods only) as mention in program (B: Breakfast, L: Lunch and D: Dinner)
- Airport transfers & Transport by air con. vehicles as per program
- Sightseeing and entrance fees as specified
- Local English speaking guide as per program
- All boat trip as mentioned in program
- Complementary local Sim Card
- 24hours supporting hotline
- Cold water and towel during tours

## Exclusions

- Cambodia Visa stamp fee: 30\$ (Passport valid more then 6 months, enough space for visa stamp (1 free space), 1 passport photo (4X6), cash 30\$)
- All International air ticket
- Other meal, drink, personal expenses, tip, Travel insurance
- Other thing not mentioned in included
- **Compulsory Gala Dinner on 24/12 &31/12 surcharges**

## Price with accommodation

Group Size	Hotel 3*	Hotel 4*	Hotel 5*
1	\$1380	\$ 1626	\$2119
2	\$783	\$905	\$1153
3-7	\$582	\$ 705	\$952
>=8	\$517	\$639	\$886
Single Supplement	\$150	\$272	\$519

*All prices are quoted per Person in US Dollars*

## Price with accommodation

Location	Hotel 3*	Hotel 4*	Hotel 5*
PHNOM PENH	Le Grand Palais Hotel	Frangipani Royal Palace	Palace Gate Hotel
BATTAMBANG	The Coconut Villas	Battambang Resort	Battambang Resort
SIEM REAP	GZ Urban Hotel	Hillocks Hotel	Victoria Angkor Hotel



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