

# EXPLORE!



**BEST SELLER**

## Heart of Cambodia

CAMBODIA - TRIP CODE CD  
DISCOVERY

DAYS	DEPOSIT FROM	PRICE FROM	FLIGHTS INCLUSIVE
<b>13</b>	<b>£190</b>	<b>£1899</b>	

## Why book this trip?

This two week overland tour is an exploratory trip that delves deep into Cambodia, a country rarely explored outside of the iconic temples of Angkor. On this journey we meet locals in our village homestay in the countryside, motor upriver through the steamy jungles of the Cardamom Mountains and relax on the deserted white-sand beaches of Koh Rong Island. In between exploring the ancient temples of Angkor, we also visit two charity projects in Siem Reap that take fascinating and innovative approaches in tackling some of Cambodia's modern-day challenges.



**INCLUDED MEALS**  
Breakfast: 12



**TRIP STAFF**  
Explore Tour Leader  
Boat Crew  
Driver(s)  
Local Guide(s)



**TRANSPORT**  
Bus  
Boat



**ACCOMMODATION**  
10 nights standard hotel  
1 nights simple hotel  
1 nights hotel



**TRIP PACE:**  
Moderate



**GROUP SIZE:**  
10 - 16

## Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

### DAY 1 - Join tour in Phnom Penh; afternoon sightseeing

Arrive in Phnom Penh and check-in at the hotel. Located on the Mekong River the city has been the capital since 1440s. It is now a lively city with many French colonial buildings, busy markets, art galleries, temples and museums. This afternoon we'll enjoy a guided visit to the National Museum, which houses some of the best works of art rescued from Angkor, along with an exciting cyclo rickshaw trip to Wat Phnom temple.



**ACCOMMODATION:**  
Silver River Hotel (or similar)

**Grade: Standard Hotel**



**SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE**



**MEALS PROVIDED: NONE**

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## DAY 2 - In Phnom Penh, journey by boat and bus to French colonial Kampot

This morning we head south from the capital and stop at the town of Takeo and board our speedboats. Phnom Da is spectacular in its remoteness, a small hilltop with the main shrine overlooking the flooded plains below. Sometimes during dry season (Mar- Apr), when the water levels are low, it may not be possible to visit Phnom Da. We pass through a pre Angkorian system of canals that spreads right up to the Vietnam border. Hundreds of kilometres of canals were dug out around the 8th century and provided water to the Funan Kingdom. Before reaching the sight, we stop at the small museum in the old capital Angkor Borei exhibiting a few of the uncovered finds from this pre-angkorian era. Returning by boat to Takeo we continue south by bus for about 2hrs to Kampot town.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Blue Buddha Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## DAY 3 - Travel by local transport through countryside to coastal Kep

In the morning we swap our bus for rural 'remorques'; a peculiar local form of transport based on a cart pulled by a motorbike. We spend the morning travelling through the fascinating countryside, observing typical Cambodian scenes on our journey, to Phnom Chnork Prassat. Our presence in this little visited area never fails to amuse the friendly locals! We then continue a short distance by bus to Kep in time to enjoy sunset in this small seaside town.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Reasmey Krong Kep Guesthouse (or similar)



Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE





MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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#### **DAY 4 - In Kep; day trip to explore Rabbit Island**

Today we head out by boat to the small island Ko Tonsay, or Rabbit Island as it is commonly known. Located just 3 miles off shore from Kep, it is a small and peaceful island with a fishing hamlet, a handful of low scale tourist developments and two sand beaches. The sea here is shallow and has a long slope, making it excellent for swimming. We spend our time exploring the island by foot, just 2km square, relaxing and swimming. Kep Crab with Kampot pepper is a local speciality and we recommend trying it at one of the local seafood restaurants. Rick Stein featured one of these shack restaurants and the marvellous food it produces on TV. We return to Kep by boat in the late afternoon.



ACCOMMODATION:

Reaksmey Krong Kep Guesthouse (or similar)



**Grade: Standard Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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#### **DAY 5 - Drive to Phnom Penh; visit Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and the 'Killing Fields'**

After an early departure we leave the coast behind and head back to Phnom Penh. En route to the city we stop at the 'Killing Fields' of Choeung Ek (the memorial stupa is a huge glass tower filled with human skulls - a sombre reminder of the scale of Pol Pot's atrocities). We'll also visit Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, also known as S-21 (a High School which became the Khmer Rouge's main torture and interrogation centre). You should be aware that many people find Tuol Sleng and the 'Killing Fields' quite an emotional place to visit. We arrive back to the capital in the late afternoon, where the remainder of our day is free at leisure.



ACCOMMODATION:

Silver River Hotel (or similar)



**Grade: Standard Hotel**





SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 6 - In Phnom Penh visit Royal Palace; drive via Skuon for deep fried tarantulas to Kampong Cham**

We spend the morning visiting the impressive Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda. After lunch we continue our adventure and drive to the town of Skoun, where we can try the local delicacy of fried spiders! Our journey then continues by bus to Kampong Cham where we make visit to Wat Nakor just before sunset. The temple houses a modern working wat inside the 11th century Khmer temple ruins. Originally constructed as a Mahayana Buddhist Shrine, it was rebuilt in the 15th century and converted to a Theravadan temple.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Reasmey Cheanich Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Simple Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 7 - In Kampong Cham, free morning; afternoon drive to Kratie for dolphin boat safari on Irrawaddy River**

This morning we have the option to hire a local tuk tuk to drive up to Phnom Pros and Phrom Srei; two hills which offer great views along the Mekong. This afternoon we head to Kratie which was quite well preserved during the wars and one can still see an array of older Khmer and French houses around the town. Here we will have a unique opportunity to spot the rare Irrawaddy dolphins. These are some of the last freshwater dolphins that live in the Mekong River and we take to small boats for a peaceful sighting session.



ACCOMMODATION:  
River Dolphin Hotel (or similar)



**Grade: Standard Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 8 - Drive to Kompong Thom via silk farm and stonemason's village**

This morning we travel to Kompong Thom, passing through Kampong Cham and across the Kizuna Bridge en route. We also get to visit Santuk Silk Farm to learn more about the silk production process and visit a specialty stone masons village.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Kampong Thom Village Hotel (or similar)



**Grade: Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 9 - Journey to Tonle Sap Lake for boat trip around floating villages; continue to Siem Reap**

This morning we drive to the beautiful pre- Angkorian temples at Sambor Prei Kuk. Sambor Prei Kuk was the capital of the Chenla kingdom around the 6th-7th century. Today over 100 temples are scattered around the forest giving one the sense of a 'lost city'. We continue our journey towards Siem Reap and visit one of the floating villages of the massive Tonle Sap inland lake at Kompong Khleang. We enjoy a boat trip to see how the water is so important in the lives of these predominately fisherfolk. We arrive at Siem Reap, where we base ourselves in the small town for the next three nights, a few kilometres south of the incredible temple complex of Angkor.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hima Boutique Hotel (or similar)



**Grade: Standard Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 10 - From Siem Reap, visit Angkor; explore Ta Prohm at dawn**

Over the next three days we will explore this fascinating ruined city (actually a series of cities), built between the 9th and the 13th centuries by the Khmer kings. Situated deep in the Cambodian jungle it is spread out over some 155 square kilometres, scattered with magnificent carved stone temples, elegant sculptures and highly detailed bas reliefs. We start today with a dawn visit to Ta Prohm - a temple half consumed by the Cambodian jungle and famous in the west as the spectacular film location for 'Tomb Raider'. Afterwards we make our way to Takeo, built in 975 this imposing sandstone temple was never finished due to a lightning strike being perceived as an unlucky omen. After a break from the midday sun we return to the temples to visit Preah Khan, a massive 12th century ruined temple complete with moss covered stonework, carvings and dark corridors. Nearby we visit Neak Pean located on an island in a 'baray' or pool, a small Hindu temple that was originally dedicated to Buddha.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hima Boutique Hotel (or similar)



**Grade: Standard Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 11 - From Siem Reap, visit Angkor; discover Banteay Srei; visit to Land Mine Museum in Siem Reap**

Today we drive a little way outside of Siem Reap to make a visit to Banteay Srei, also known as the 'ladies temple' - with the most stunning carved lintels at Angkor. We also stop at Banteay Samre, a fortified temple built by Suryavarman II and located far away from the normal temple crowds. We return to Siem Reap to visit the Cambodian Landmine Museum, where education and support are provided for dozens of children whose bodies, hearts and minds have been affected by landmines. This afternoon our sightseeing will take us to the 2nd Angkor capital which includes the temples of Prasat Kravan, Sra Srang, and Banteay Kdei.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hima Boutique Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 12 - From Siem Reap, visit Angkor; sunrise at Angkor Wat and visit The Bayon**

This morning we visit the iconic Angkor Wat for sunrise - the best known and most breathtaking of all the sights and a highlight of any visit to Angkor. Originally built as a funerary temple for Suryavarman II in honour of Vishnu, the temple is unique as it faces west - symbolically the direction of death. It is a very grand and imposing structure but its most stunning features are the extensive and intricately carved bas reliefs that stretch throughout the galleries and inner temples. Here we have the chance to enjoy a monk blessing - a moving experience for some. This afternoon we continue our exploration with a visit to the temples of King Jayavarman VII, reputedly Angkor's greatest king. The fortified city of Angkor Thom which he had built at the end of the 12th Century is enclosed by a square wall 8 metres high with five 20 metre high monumental gates decorated with stone elephant trunks. Originally the moat was said to be inhabited by crocodiles and each gate was protected by huge statues of 54 different gods. The city contains another of Angkor's true gems - The Bayon. Not nearly as impressive as Angkor Wat from a



distance, The Bayon is nevertheless incredible for its maze of corridors, gothic style towers and magical central temples with 1200 metres of the finest bas reliefs depicting scenes of everyday life in 12th Century Cambodia. From Angkor Thom we will walk to Phimeanakas, located in the middle of the old Royal Palace area, and to the Terrace of the Elephants and the Leper King.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hima Boutique Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### DAY 13 - Tour ends in Siem Reap

Tour ends after breakfast. If you have time you may choose to browse the Old Market for some last minute bargains.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## Trip information

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### Country information

Cambodia

## Climate

Cambodia is a hot and tropical country, being hottest in April and coolest in January (still high 20s). Although rainfall is at its maximum in October, Phnom Penh and Siem Reap receive very little rain compared to the coastal areas, and when it does rain it tends to be in the form of sporadic mid afternoon downpours. There is normally very little rain between December and March.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
+7	2 Pin Round	Buddhism	Khmer

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## Budgeting and packing

### Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Phnom Penh - Sunset cruise US\$ 10

Siem Reap - Scenic helicopter flight over Angkor temples from US\$ 135-260; Apsara traditional khmer dance and dinner US\$ 22, Tonle Sap boat optional US\$ 14; cookery class US\$ 12; National Museum Culture Show US\$ 12 (limited availability during low season May - September)

Chi Phat - Khmer massage US \$ 10, bicycle rental US \$5

Koh Rong - Boat and fishing trip US\$ 10, Trek to waterfall (including lunch) US\$ 7.50

### Clothing

Shorts and bare arms are not permitted in certain temples. A waterproof jacket is a must.

### Footwear

Comfy shoes or trainers with a good grip. Trekking sandals are a good compromise.

### Luggage

20kg

### Luggage: On tour

Should consist of a main piece of baggage and a daypack. You may have to carry your baggage on and off boats so don't overload yourself. We recommend a soft bag or rucksack as there are some journeys where hard cases are impractical.

### Equipment

Bring a torch, towel, binoculars, sunglasses and a good quality mosquito repellent (50% Deet is ideal). An umbrella can be useful in tropical conditions for both rain and to protect from the sun.

## Tipping

### Explore leader

Tour Leader: At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### Local crew

Local Crew: Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly please allow about US\$50.

### International Departure Taxes

Airport taxes in Phnom Penh/UK are US\$25.

## Cambodia

### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£6	£10.00 - 12.00	£1.3	£0.6

### Foreign Exchange

#### Local currency

Riel.

#### Recommended Currency For Exchange

In Cambodia, US\$ is the most commonly used currency (small denomination notes are easier to use).

#### Where To Exchange

Large towns.

#### ATM Availability

There are ATMs in most towns and cities.

#### Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are accepted in some large shops and restaurants in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap.

#### Travellers Cheques

They can be hard to change outside of Siem Reap and Phnom Penh; we recommend them for emergencies only.

## Transport Information

Bus, Boat

## Accommodation notes

We stay in a variety of accommodation on this trip, ranging from city-centre hotels to beach-front bungalows and village homestays. In the cities, hotels are of a good standard with en-suite facilities and are well-located for exploring on foot. The homestay in Sambor Prei Kuk is simple, with a number of twin rooms with access to a western-toilet and all bedding and mosquito nets are provided. The lodge in Chi Phat comprises of a number of simple en-suite thatched bungalows, and on Koh Rong island, the accommodation is again en-suite bungalows set-back just a few metres from the white sandy beach.

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## Essential Information

### FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

### Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

### Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

## Visa and Passport Information

Cambodia: A single visa is required by UK, New Zealand, Australian, USA & Canadian citizens and can be obtained on arrival. A passport sized photograph for immigration will also be required. Alternatively you can now obtain an e-visa prior to departure from [www.mfaic.gov.kh](http://www.mfaic.gov.kh)

All visa information should be confirmed with the relevant consulate.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity

for your chosen destination.

## Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

## Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

## Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them [here](#).

## Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

## Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport. On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## Cambodia

### Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, infectious hepatitis, tetanus, typhoid, diphtheria and polio. Consult your GP regarding tablets advised for malaria. Though not compulsory, travellers may wish to immunise themselves against Japanese encephalitis. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

 <p><b>AWARD WINNING EXPLORE LEADERS</b></p>	 <p><b>PRICE GUARANTEE PROMISE</b></p>	 <p><b>AIRPORT TRANSFERS</b></p>
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