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## Cambodia Experience 2014

Adventure



Relaxation



Culture



**Trip Name:** Cambodia Experience 2014    **Trip Code:** CATT    **Duration:**

### Trip Highlights

- Explore the rich history and culture of one of the most enchanting countries in the world
- Explore the world heritage site of Angkor Wat
- Work at a local childcare centre in Phnom Penh helping to look after some amazing children who have not had the best start in life.
- Visit the impressive Royal Palace in Phnom Penh
- Learn more about the Khmer Rouge by visiting the Tuol Sleng Museum and the Killing Fields and gain a clearer understanding of the terrible atrocities committed during this era.



### Overview

Discover Cambodia's troubled past as well as its bright future on this fascinating tour from the enthralling capital of Phnom Penh to the truly stunning temples of Angkor Wat.

As well as learning more about the tragic past of the Khmer Rouge period by visiting the Toul Sleng Museum and the Killing Fields you will also spend 4 days volunteering at a local orphanage in Phnom Penh helping to look after children who have not had the best start in life – you will get involved in a variety of activities but above all you will be giving the children some much needed love and attention.

**Please note that this package is for all bookings departing in 2014.** Looking to do the Cambodia Experience in 2015? To view our 2015 package, please [click here](#).

### Destination Info

With a population of over 14 million Cambodia is a small country bordered by Vietnam and Laos. It has long been a place of great interest for travellers from far and wide and for good reason with its incredible cultural diversity.

Cambodia is a deprived yet fascinating country with the rich history of the Khmer empire encompassing such world renowned sites as the temples of Angkor. Its turbulent past has witnessed the loss of nearly two million lives during the Khmer Rouge. In spite of this, the country remains an enthralling place to explore with friendly locals, tropical climate and beautiful wildlife.

## Itinerary



### Day 1: Arrive into Phnom Penh

Welcome to Cambodia! Today you will be met at the airport and taken directly to the accommodation where you will be staying during your time in Cambodia's capital city.

You will have the rest of the day to rest and recover from your journey. If you are feeling adventurous you can head out and start exploring your surroundings!

If you aren't able to arrange a flight to get you into Phnom Penh on the specified arrival date we'd recommend you fly in a day early. We can arrange an early airport pick-up for you including one night's accommodation, please call us for more information.

### Day 2: Exploring Phnom Penh

After breakfast you will visit the most beautiful and interesting spots that the capital city of Cambodia has to offer. You will visit the Royal Palace and the most important temple in Phnom Penh, Wat Phnom. Phnom Penh still has more to offer, especially when it comes to learning about the terrible history of the Khmer Rouge period. You will visit the Toul Sleng Museum and The Killing Fields to give you a clear understanding of the terrible cruelties committed during that era.

You and your fellow arrivals will receive an orientation which will cover important information such as what it's going to be like at your project and on the tour, dos and don'ts, fun things to do in Cambodia and how to stay safe on your trip. This is your prime opportunity to ask any burning questions that you haven't yet had answered.



### **Day 3: Introductions at your project**

This morning you'll be up bright and early for your first day volunteering! After breakfast you will be taken to your project for introductions with the staff and children. Today is all about settling in and getting to know your way around the project, and you'll spend the rest of your day learning the ropes and starting to get stuck into some work.

### **Day 4 to Day 7: Volunteering in Phnom Penh**

Now's your chance to really get involved with work at your project. Your time here is limited so get stuck in and make the most of it and you will be able to really make a difference to the lives of the children at your project.

You'll get involved with a variety of activities, which could include helping staff with the day to day running of the project - providing a safe shelter for the children by assisting with cooking, cleaning, washing and other general duties. You may also be playing games, singing songs and helping the children with their schoolwork. English lessons will also be a big part of your day, so come prepared with some ideas for lessons and get ready to be the centre of attention as your pupils will be eager to learn as much as possible from you!

You will be able to contact the in-country team at any time during your volunteering period, and will have access to a bicycle for travel to and from your project, should you wish to use one.

### **Day 8: Free Time!**

Today is the day that you can do what you want! Explore more of Phnom Penh or just relax and take a beer at the side of the river, the choice is yours! Remember though that this is your last day in Phnom Penh so make the most of it!



## Day 9: Phnom Penh to Siem Reap

After breakfast you'll be taken to Phnom Penh bus station in time to catch the early morning bus to Siem Reap. The journey takes approximately 6 hours. You won't be accompanied on the bus but don't worry – a guide will be waiting to meet you when you arrive in Siem Reap.

Once you've settled into your accommodation there will be a short orientation before you'll be whisked off for a city tour by tuk tuk – hold on to your hats!

## Day 10: Temple Time!

After breakfast this morning you will head off to explore the beautiful ancient temples of Angkor. You will visit Angkor Thom, The South Gate, Bayon, The Elephant Terrace, The Terrace of Leper King, Ta Prom and of course the most famous and important building: Angkor Wat. Angkor Wat is not only famous for its breath-taking architecture but also for its unique decorations, and is such an important symbol in Cambodia that it appears on the country's flag.

At the end of the day you will climb Phnom Bakeng mountain. The effort of the climb will all be worth it when you see the view of several temples and hopefully enjoy a beautiful sunset. This is where memories for life are made.



## Day 11: Temples Take Two!

As Angkor is the largest temple complex in the world, it's easy to understand that 1 day visiting the temples is just not enough, so today after breakfast you will explore some beautiful jungle temples. Your guide will provide you

with more information on the ancient history of the Khmer empire. Just close your eyes and imagine yourself living during this glorious period. It isn't that hard to imagine how things might have been. You will visit Bantey Srey temple, Kbal Spean.

## Day 12: Temples - the Trilogy, and the Floating Village

After breakfast on the morning of your final day in Siem Reap you will visit the Lolei temple and the Roluos group, which includes some of the earliest permanent structures built by Khmer. They mark the beginning of classical period of Khmer civilization, dating from the late 9th century A.D.

In the afternoon you will take a trip to the floating village to see how people have adapted to a life on water. The villagers have their own floating school, clinic, shops, bars – everything you would expect, but all floating! It's a unique way of life and will be a fascinating way to spend your afternoon.



## Day 13: Helping and Handicrafts

After breakfast today there's a visit to projects such as the Sangkheum Centre for Children, where you can help the children with English lessons or handicraft classes. You will also visit the Artisan Angkor centre, which helps young craftsmen and women train and earn a living. You will see traditional Khmer handicrafts and have the chance to pick up some souvenirs!

## Day 14: Time to say Goodbye

Having said goodbye to all your new friends, taken your final photos and packed your bag full of souvenirs you'll travel back to the airport. The return transfer from Siem Reap to your departure airport is not included; however our in-country team will be able to make recommendations.

## Accommodation

While in Phnom Penh you'll be staying in a guesthouse, which is home to all of our Phnom Penh volunteers. Rooms are shared by up to 3 volunteers of the same sex (couples can normally be accommodated – please ask us if you are travelling as a couple and require a private room) and bathrooms are also shared with other volunteers.

While working at your project you will stay at Narin 1, which is between 2 - 9km from the project, depending on where you are volunteering. You should budget approximately US\$12 per week for these journeys.

In Siem Reap you will stay in a unique family run guesthouse. It is situated in the centre of Siem Reap in a quiet area, not too far from the hustle and bustle of the bars and shops so that you can explore in your free time.

## Accommodation facilities

### Phnom Penh

Bedrooms are equipped with fans and a safety deposit box can be requested from reception if you would like one for your valuables. There is a laundry service at the guesthouse which volunteers can use, as well as commercial facilities in the nearby town. Internet is available at the guesthouse for approximately US\$0.50 per hour, so there's no excuse not to send an email home gloating about how much fun you're having! Pure drinking water can be refilled for free, and there is electricity for charging mobile phones and ipods! Bathrooms have western style toilets, running water and showers. A small charge of US\$1-2 per day is payable if you require hot water, but in sweaty Cambodia a cool shower may be just what you're after!

### Siem Reap

You will share a fan room with up to two other volunteers. You will either have an ensuite in your room or it will be adjacent to your room and access will be exclusive to the occupants in your room. The guesthouse offers internet access and a restaurant. The guesthouse has a safety deposit box for you to keep any valuables

## Where is the accommodation?

### Phnom Penh

The guesthouse is located near Orussei Market so you can easily pop over for some shopping! It is approximately 1.5kms from the Cambodia in country team office. Banks are found just 250m away and there is a modern hospital with good facilities 1km away, although we hope you won't need to use it!

### Siem Reap

The guesthouse is situated in the centre of Siem Reap in a quiet area, not too far from the hustle and bustle of the bars and shops.

## Programme Services and Facilities

### Internet

Internet access will be available for you to use during your free time at the guesthouse in Phnom Penh at a small fee or there are local internet cafes in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap that you can use which will be at your own cost. Please be prepared that internet service may be slow and often intermittent.

### Telephone

The international telephone access code for Cambodia is +855.

To place an outgoing, direct dialled international call, dial +44 for the UK, followed by the telephone number. For example to call our office dial +44 1892 516164.

## Laundry

A laundry service will normally be available at your accommodation in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh, alternatively there are other laundry facilities in the cities which may be a little cheaper.

## Meals

Breakfasts are included throughout your programme in Cambodia, however most lunches and dinners are not included so that you have the opportunity to enjoy the local cuisine and eat out in some of the local restaurants and bars.

## What's Included

- Shared room in guesthouse
- Breakfast only (or US\$2.50 allowance)
- Airport pick up
- In country orientation
- Local in country team and 24hr emergency support
- Activities and excursions as specified in the itinerary
- Entrance fees to all attractions as listed on the itinerary



## What's Not Included

- All flights
- Travel insurance
- Visa fees
- Drinks and meals not included in the programme
- Local transport while at the project
- Food (lunch and dinner not provided)
- Tips for guides and drivers



## What to Pack

Please note that this kit list is intended to help you plan what you may need to take with you and therefore you may not need all of the listed items on your travels, nor is it exhaustive.

## Personal Admin

- Passport, insurance certificates and personal documentation
- Photocopies of all the above to be left at home with your next of kin
- Spending money
- Cash for airport departure tax
- Proof of inoculations (please speak to your doctor about necessary immunisations)
- Guidebook on country

## General

- Camera / Film / Batteries
- Notebook and pen / diary
- Torch / Extra Batteries
- Sunglasses
- Pocket-knife (comes in handy for general use)
- Water bottle – at least 1 Litre
- Day pack/rucksack for everyday use
- Personal enjoyment - books, cards, music, to enjoy with your fellow volunteers etc.
- Personal hygiene items (deodorant, soap, shampoo, toothbrush etc)
- Alarm clock

## Clothing

- Hat
- Sandals
- Sturdy walking boots or trainers (essential for the Adventure option)
- Waterproof Jacket
- Fleece/pullover (for cool evenings)
- Long trousers
- Warmer clothing for winter
- Swimwear
- Towel
- Medical Kit
- Personal Hygiene Kit (ex. Antihistamines, Anti- diarrhoea tablets, headache tablets)
- Personal Toiletries
- Sunscreen
- Mosquito and insect repellent

## Teaching Aids

- Flashcards
- Visual aids such as pictures
- Paper and pens
- Whiteboard markers etc
- Pictures of yourself and the area you are from - useful when doing a self introduction

You will find these resources very useful when teaching the children. You may also want to budget a small amount of money to buy some materials when you are in Cambodia if you prefer.

## Minimum Age

Minimum age 18

## Minimum Numbers

This trip requires minimum numbers to operate.

## Flights

You should arrange for your flights to arrive into Phnom Penh Airport, Cambodia (airport code PNH) on your programme start date and depart from Siem Reap Airport, Cambodia (airport code REP) on your programme end date. Please note, there will be an extra transfer charge of \$6 per person for those volunteers arriving late at night (from



20:00 - midnight).

To book your flights, please contact your travel advisor who will do their best to get you the best deal on the day. Please provide them with your full name as it is stated in your passport. Before you make the call please make sure you have your required departure dates, return dates and other details you may require.

It is important that once you have booked your flights you add these details to your Online account, or alternatively, you can contact us with your departure date, the flight number and arrival time at your destination.

**Please note:** This programme requires a minimum of 4 participants to run. Please contact us to confirm whether the minimum numbers have been met for your start date, we recommend that you do not book your flights until we have confirmed these numbers and that the programme will be running.

## FAQs

- 1. What are the typical group sizes?**  
Groups sizes vary depending on the time of year, but generally you can expect to be with between 3 and 8 fellow travellers.
- 2. How much spending money would you recommend I take?**  
You will need between £80-£100 per week. If you want to do some extra activities in your free time then you will need a bit more.
- 3. What are the average ages of travelers on this trip?**  
The majority of participants on this program are aged between 18-30, however it is popular with travelers of all ages.
- 4. I am a first time traveller, and a bit apprehensive about travelling on my own. Do many people do this by themselves?**  
The majority of our participants are solo travelers, so you will be one of many in the same position. We e-mail out a buddy list 2-3 weeks before you start, so you can begin to get to know one another beforehand.
- 5. Is Cambodia safe?**  
Absolutely, and you have co-ordinators with you at all times to ensure your safety.
- 6. Do I need to take a sleeping bag?**  
No, all bedding is provided for you.
- 7. Do I need to take a mosquito net?**  
No, you will not need to take one with you.
- 8. Will there be a safe/safety deposit box?**  
Yes, this will be available to you.

## Police Check

This trip requires a Police Check to be carried out - please contact us for further information on how to do this.

## Support & Advice

Your safety is paramount which is why all our programs have been visited and assessments have been conducted to ensure any major risks have been minimized.

In addition, you will have access to a 24 hour emergency contact number so you can contact one of our staff at any time should you need to. In addition our overseas partners and coordinators are on hand in-country to assist you.

## Financial Security

We know that the last thing you want to worry about when you're planning your trip of a lifetime is whether your money is in safe hands. As a leading global gap year provider it's our job to make sure your finances are secure, so when you book with us you can be confident that we do just that.

Real Gap Experience is part of TUI Travel Plc, one of the largest travel organisations in the world, and these days in the travel industry, large means secure.

## Insurance

Whether you're traveling for two weeks or two years, trekking the Amazon in Ecuador or on safari in Africa, insurance is an essential part of your adventure and will help you enjoy your travels, secure in the knowledge that you have the protection you need. In fact, everyone traveling with us must have adequate cover before their trip begins.

Of course you are free to buy insurance from any provider, however at Real Gap Experience, we have partnered with World Nomads to offer policies that have been specifically designed to meet the needs of global travel. If you think you're already covered by an existing policy, such as those offered by credit card providers, check the policy wording very carefully to ensure it covers you for your Real Gap Experience.

For more information on travel insurance please contact us to speak to one of our travel advisors.

## Money Matters

The unit of currency in Cambodia is the Riel (KHR; symbol CR) with notes in denominations of CR100,000, 50,000, 20,000, 10,000, 5,000, 2,000, 1,000, 500, 200 and 100. 4,000 Riel is equal to approximately US\$1

The US dollar tends to be more widely used by travellers and is accepted all over Cambodia – make sure you carry your US dollars in low denomination notes. However, it is always best to have about US\$10 worth of riel kicking around, as it is good for motos, remorque-motos and markets. If you pay for something cheap in US dollars the change comes in riel. In remote areas of the north and northeast, locals only deal in riel or small dollar denominations.

Please be aware that torn, drawn on and tatty US\$ notes are often not accepted, so please take care of your notes at all times.

Coins are not used in Cambodia, which takes a bit of getting used to.

There are credit-card-compatible ATMs (Visa and MasterCard only) in most major cities and the machines all dispense US dollars. You'll find your money goes a very long way if you purchase local foods and drinks.

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant 2.75 \$

Domestic Beer (0.5 litre draught) 1.55 \$

Coke/Pepsi (0.33 litre bottle) 1.00 \$

Water (0.33 litre bottle) 1.00 \$

(Prices quoted in US Dollars)

## Passports and Visas

Passports and visas are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. As a general rule most countries expect that you will have at least 6 months' validity on your passport beyond your intended stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, and you should consult the relevant embassy.

## Cultural Considerations

Cambodia is a third world country and you will see places and people far less fortunate than yourself. The accommodation you will be staying in is very basic and you will not have the luxuries that you may be accustomed to in this country. Please respect that this is the way locals live and take the opportunity to experience this new way of life.

The friendly people, the great atmosphere and beautiful location will more than make up for this. Most travellers enjoy this change in life style. It is very healthy, refreshing and opens your mind to a new world.

Upon meeting one another, Khmer people greet each other with a bow, with the hands meeting in prayer. As commonplace throughout Southeast Asia, you should welcome others with your palms together in a prayer with your fingers facing upwards. It is not acceptable to pat others on the head, please refrain from doing so, as locals believe it to contain the persons' soul.

Please be prepared that you may be asked many questions by the local community such as 'How are you?' or 'Are you married?' or 'How old are you?'. Please do not take offence to these personal questions- the locals are always trying to learn the English language and trying out their new conversational skills with visitors to the area.

## Tipping

Tipping is not customary in Cambodia, however the locals will appreciate any gratuities if they provide you with a

good service.

## Religion

Hinayana Buddhism is the principal religion in Cambodia with around 90% adhering to this faith. Monks with alms bowls are quite an ordinary sight in Cambodia.

## Clothing

Please ensure you respect the local etiquette when visiting the wats (temples), by following the guidelines below:

- Refrain from wearing shorts or tank tops
- Remove your hat and shoes upon entry to a wat or vihara (sanctuary)
- Khmer women dress fairly conservatively, and you are expected to do the same, long sleeved shirts and trousers or skirts for women are preferred

## Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

Smoking and drinking is acceptable in Cambodia and readily available. However, please respect other people. Smoking is not permissible in volunteer apartments or the host families' homes. Drinking is only permissible in moderation and must not impact upon any volunteer work you undertake. While we want you to have fun in your free time, antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated.

## Bathroom Facilities

You will experience a range of different shower and toilet facilities. Unless you are staying in a hotel you will rarely have hot water. The cool water takes a little getting used to but I'm sure you'll find it refreshing after a hot and humid day. Toilets will be a combination of western and Asian. Remember to put all toilet tissue in the bin provided and not in the toilet.

Whilst on excursions you will notice that many places do not have a western toilet and will have a typical Asian toilet; again this is all part of the Asian culture. Also, many places do not have soap in the bathrooms. It is a good idea to take a small bottle of soap gel and keep it in your day bag. This is an antibacterial gel that you don't need to rinse off. These are available in chemists in the travel section.

## Vaccinations & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. The risks to your health whilst travelling will vary depending on your general health and the type of activities you are going to be partaking in and the length of your stay.

Since we are not medically qualified, it is recommended that you consult with your Doctor or a recognised Travel Medical Advisory Service who will assess your particular health risks before recommending vaccines and/or

anti-malarial tablets and advising you on what precautions you should take.

## Safety

As in most countries, there are locals in Cambodia that will always take advantage of tourists; the following advice is intended to help you stay safe:

- Always keep your personal items such as passport, money and camera with you or in a safe place. You can buy mini padlocks to prevent people from going into your backpack without your permission.
- Try not to carry more than USD \$50 with you at any one time
- Always walk around in groups
- Stick with the escorted trips. If you do go out in the evening unescorted, you do so at your own risk. Please tell the co-ordinator or your home-stay family where you are going and what time you will be back.
- A tuk tuk is the most common mode of transport used in Cambodia, we recommend that you use this type of transport to visit local attractions.

This information is not intended to scare you. Unfortunately, bad things can happen, as they can do in any country and we want you to be prepared. We want you to stay safe and have a good time.

Khmer people are generally very friendly people and easy to get along with. Please be friendly, respectful and stay aware and you will have a great time.

We advise that you check your government's advice before travelling abroad. For UK, American and Australian customers please see the relevant links below;

UK: [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk)

USA: [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)

Australia: [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au)

## ATM Theft

It is very likely that you will need to withdraw cash at some point during your travels. Please be cautious when withdrawing money from an ATM and ensure that you are vigilant of other people near the ATM, especially those that offer unsolicited assistance if your card is detained. It has been recognised that individuals are operating unlawful withdrawals by placing 'traps' in ATMs whereby personal bank cards are being detained, causing the victim to believe their card transaction has not been completed, and leaving their bank card in the ATM which is then later retrieved by the thief.

If your card is confiscated or you are concerned that your card has been tampered with, please report immediately to the bank or cancel your card. Every now and then, some ATMs in Cambodia run out of money, if this happens during a transaction, please contact a member of staff at the bank in Cambodia and contact your bank at home, taking note of the time it happened.

## Language Guide

Khmer is the official language in Cambodia; however, English and French are widely spoken. We suggest you obtain a Lonely Planet or language guide for the destination(s) you are travelling to.

Below are some useful Khmer phrases to remember when you get to Cambodia:

Hello - *joom reab sour/sour sdei*

Please - *suom*

Excuse me - *suom tous*

Thank you - *ar kun*

Yes (by women) - *jas*

Yes (by men) - *bat*

No - *te*

How are you? - *tau neak sok sapbaiy jea te?*

Goodbye - *lear heouy*

Where is a/the...? - *tau...nouy eir na?*

How much is a room? - *chnoul mouy bantuop tleiy ponmann?*

## Food & Drink

Khmer cooking is very similar to the food you would find in Thailand just without the spices. Rice and fish are the main staple foods in Cambodia and most dishes are cooked in a wok, known locally as chhnang khteak. The local delicacy is Amok (fish cooked in coconut milk) though many dishes are prepared with chicken, pork or beef. You will find an array of tasty shrimps and crab along the coast. Phnom Penh offers a cosmopolitan variety of food, where you will be able to try original recipes or for those less adventurous, Western food is also available. Please remember to let us know before you depart if you have any special dietary requirements.

## Public Holidays

When planning your trip, you should be aware of the major national holidays celebrated throughout the country. However, although businesses and government offices are closed on public holidays, tourist attractions and shops are almost never closed. The main impact on the tourist of these holidays is the increased competition for travel and accommodation from Cambodians who use long weekends to get away from the big city.

To view a list of the public holidays for Cambodia please see the link below:

[www.worldtravelguide.net/cambodia/public-holidays](http://www.worldtravelguide.net/cambodia/public-holidays)

## Weather

The climate of Cambodia is tropical. There are two different seasons, the wet and the dry season. The wet season runs from May through to October, where the southwestern monsoon carries strong winds, high humidity and heavy rain-though mainly in the mornings. The dry season, carried by the northeastern monsoon lasts from November to April and brings little rain.

## Time

Cambodia is 6 hours ahead of GMT in the summer and 7 hours ahead of GMT in winter.

## Electricity

Electricity in Cambodia uses 230 volts, 50Hz. There are two types of plug sockets used in cambodia;



Flat blade

or



Two round pins

## Trip Note Disclaimer

The information contained in this trip note has been compiled with great care and is provided in good faith. Any itinerary featured is correct at time of release. However, our itineraries may change as make improvements that result from travellers' comments, our own research or from time to time as a result of reommended travel advice.

You can rest assured that it is always our goal to provide you with the most rewarding trip and experience ever!

## Our Details

If you have any questions about this trip please do not hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to answer them.

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