

## Angkor Wat and the Southern Coast



### **Day 1: Arrive Siem Reap; Tonle Sap boat cruise**

On arrival in Siem Reap, you will be collected by your driver and transferred to the Tara Angkor Hotel for two nights (superior room, B&B basis). There will be time to freshen up at your hotel before your afternoon tour.

In the afternoon, transfer from your hotel to Tonle Sap, the largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia. Take a memorable boat cruise to a nearby floating village for a glimpse of everyday life on the lake.

For most of the year Tonle Sap is fairly shallow (approx. one metre deep, spread across an area of 2,700 square km). However, during the monsoon season, the water is pushed up from the Mekong River into the lake, resulting in an increased area of 16,000 square km and a depth of up to nine metres, ultimately flooding nearby fields and forests. The floodplain provides a perfect breeding ground for fish. The livelihood of most of the local community depends largely on fishing and Tonle Sap accounts for 75 percent of Cambodia's annual inland fish catch.

Return to your hotel late afternoon. Overnight in Siem Reap.

### ***Your Financial Protection***

All monies paid by you for the air holiday package shown [or flights if appropriate] are ATOL protected by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 3145.

For more information see our booking terms and conditions.

## Day 2: Temples of Angkor

Today you'll visit the most famous and spectacular of the Khmer temples: the ancient city of Angkor Thom, with the Bayon temple at its centre, and Angkor Wat, the largest and, many would argue, most impressive temple site in the world.

Angkor Thom, formerly the capital of the Angkor Empire, is a huge site, accessed via a grand gate, and encompassing several structures, including the Bayon, Phimeanakas, and the Elephant Terrace. You'll likely recognise many of the sites from pictures of Angkor, notably the Bayon with its famous face towers, almost as iconic as Angkor Wat itself.

You'll have a full morning to explore Angkor Thom in the company of your guide. For lunch, you may prefer to head into town or return to your hotel in order to escape the midday heat.

Late afternoon, begin your tour of the stunning Angkor Wat. The largest temple in the world, Angkor Wat is an architectural marvel. A huge but perfectly symmetrical complex enclosed within a moat and a succession of concentric galleries, its design was meant to mirror the Hindu universe. At its centre are five towers, representing the five peaks of Mount Meru of Hindu mythology. Your guide will be able to explain to you in greater detail the dense symbolism that underpins Angkor Wat.

In the early evening, find a comfortable spot to watch the sunset over the temple, before returning to your hotel.



## Day 3: Fly to Phnom Penh; driven transfer to Kep

Transfer to Siem Reap airport for the early morning flight to Phnom Penh. On arrival, meet your driver and transfer to Takeo Province. It's a 3-4 hour drive, with a lunch stop in Kampot en route. Expect to reach Kep in the early afternoon.





Founded in the 18<sup>th</sup>-century by French colonists, Kep is a pretty seaside town with a beautiful setting on the southern Cambodian coast, surrounded by mountains, forest, reefs and pristine beaches. Far from being a mega beach resort, the town receives relatively few visitors and centres on a single strip of restaurants and a small market. There is a public beach which is quiet for most of the year (except during the New Year festivities), and a small number of boutique resorts with private beaches, including the wonderful Knai Bang Chatt, where you stay for the next six nights (garden view).

Knai Bang Chatt is a luxurious boutique hotel with 18 beautifully-furnished rooms and access to its own private beach. The hotel was designed by architects who studied under Vann Molyvann, himself a pupil of Le Corbusier, and displays their trademark modernist style. There's nothing superfluous about Knai Bang Chatt. The hotel has a simple, bold style. Stone and concrete villas, painted in muted colours, are decorated with carefully-chosen furnishings. We love the minimalist aesthetic, free of pomp and glitz. The rooms at Knai Bang Chatt are comfortable and stylish, most with a private terrace or balcony overlooking the sea.



Knai Bang Chatt is set in pretty gardens. There's a wide lawn leading up to the beach, dotted with large shady trees, hammocks and sunbeds that offer shelter from the sun. The communal areas are generous in size and there are plenty of spaces in which to put your feet up and relax. The restaurant and bar area overlook the ocean, as does the swimming pool.



There are several activities available within the region of Kep. You can hire a moped or bicycle and explore the surrounding area, including Kampot, a colonial-era settlement. Another must see is Kep's small national park (1km away), or you may like to go further into Bokor National Park (25kms). Mt. Bokor is 1,079m and a proper trek can be arranged with rangers.

Activities that can be booked with Knai Bang Chatt include:

- Catamaran sailing lessons from the sailing club
- Visit Rabbit Island with its beautiful powder white beaches and great snorkelling, and enjoy a delicious BBQ lunch prepared for you (30 mins by local boat).
- Try windsurfing, kayaking, water-skiing or surf-boarding
- Try your hand fishing with the local fishermen
- Join the hotel's yoga, tai chi and meditation sessions
- Take part in one of the hotel's cooking courses

### Day 9: Departure

Leisurely breakfast at Knai Bang Chatt before transferring by road to Phnom Penh. If time allows, take a guided tour of the city's main attractions, including the Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda, before transferring to the airport for your homebound flight.

<b>Cost:</b>	<b>£1,230 per person</b> sharing (low season), or <b>£1,525pp</b> sharing (high season and holidays), to include internal flights, transfers, accommodation on bed and breakfast basis, guided tours of Angkor Wat
<b>Excludes:</b>	International flights (from £600, flying with Cathay Pacific), visas, insurance, meals/drinks not specified, tips