



# Cambodia

855 / POP 15.5 MILLION

## Includes ➔

Phnom Penh.....	174
Siem Reap .....	194
Temples of Angkor .....	205
Battambang .....	216
Kratie .....	228
Ratanakiri Province...	232
Mondulakiri Province..	237
Koh Kong City.....	240
Sihanoukville.....	243
Kampot.....	252
Kep.....	256

## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Cuisine Wat Damnak (p201)
- ➔ Friends (p186)
- ➔ Sandan (p248)
- ➔ Tepui (p184)
- ➔ Jaan Bai (p220)

## Best Places to Stay

- ➔ La Résidence d'Angkor (p199)
- ➔ Pavilion (p182)
- ➔ Les Manguiers (p254)
- ➔ Terres Rouges Lodge (p235)
- ➔ La Villa (p219)

## Why Go?

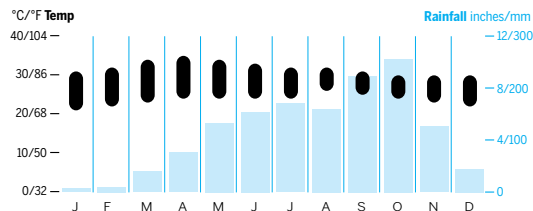
Ascend to the realm of the gods at Angkor Wat, a spectacular fusion of spirituality, symbolism and symmetry. Descend into the darkness of Tuol Sleng to witness the crimes of the Khmer Rouge. This is Cambodia, a country with a history both inspiring and depressing, a captivating destination that casts a spell on all those who visit.

Fringed by beautiful beaches and tropical islands, sustained by the mother waters of the Mekong River and cloaked in some of the region's few remaining emerald wildernesses, Cambodia is an adventure as much as a holiday. This is the warm heart of Southeast Asia, with everything the region has to offer packed into one bite-sized chunk.

Despite the headline attractions, Cambodia's greatest treasure is its people. The Khmers have been to hell and back, but thanks to an unbreakable spirit and infectious optimism, they have prevailed with their smiles and spirits largely intact.

## When to Go

### Phnom Penh



### Nov–Feb

The windy season brings relatively cool climes and is the best all-round time to visit.

### Apr–May

Khmer New Year falls in mid-April and the mercury regularly hits 40°C.

### Jul–Sep

Green season: rice paddies shimmer, and prices plummet.

## Connections

By air, Cambodia can be reached from most major Asian hubs, but there are no direct flights from North America or Europe. The country shares several border crossings with Vietnam and Thailand, both of which can be reached painlessly and cheaply by bus from various Cambodian cities. Buses to Thailand generally require a change at the border, while Vietnam-bound buses are usually through buses. The two most popular bus routes are Siem Reap to Bangkok and Phnom Penh to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). The latter can also be done by boat. To get to Laos overland, you must travel via the fairly remote Nong Nok Khiene/Trapeang Kriel crossing, which connects Stung Treng in northeast Cambodia with southern Laos.

## ITINERARIES

### One Week

Soak up the sights, sounds and smells of **Phnom Penh**, Cambodia's dynamic and fast-changing capital. Travel by road to **Siem Reap**, gateway to the majestic temples of **Angkor**, passing by the pre-Angkorian temples of Sambor Prei Kuk or taking a longer detour via the charming colonial-era city of **Battambang**. Explore Angkor in depth; no one does temples quite like Cambodia.

### Two Weeks

After exploring Phnom Penh and Siem Reap for a week, hit the provinces. Those heading to Thailand should head south to Cambodia's up-and-coming coastline. Soak up the languid charms of **Kampot** and **Kep**, then head to **Sihanoukville**, where dreamy islands lurk offshore. Try some adrenaline adventures around **Koh Kong** before exiting the country. Laos- or Vietnam-bound travellers can easily spend a week in the wild east, trekking in **Ratanakiri** or **Mondulakiri** and tracking rare Irrawaddy dolphins on the Mekong River around **Kratie** or **Stung Treng**.

## NEED TO KNOW

- ✦ **Currency** Riel (r)
- ✦ **Language** Khmer
- ✦ **Money** ATMs common in major cities
- ✦ **Visas** Available on arrival for most nationalities
- ✦ **Mobile phones** Prepaid SIM cards are cheap, but you need a passport to register

## Fast Facts

- ✦ **Area** 181,035 sq km
- ✦ **Capital** Phnom Penh
- ✦ **Country Code** 855
- ✦ **Emergency** Police 117

## Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	3580r
Euro Zone	C\$1	5440r
Laos	10,000K	4970r
Thailand	10B	1220r
UK	£1	6595r
USA	US\$1	3960r
Vietnam	10,000d	1880r

## Set Your Budget

- ✦ **Budget hotel room** US\$5–15
- ✦ **Decent restaurant meal** US\$5–10
- ✦ **Beer in bar** US\$1–2
- ✦ **Short moto ride** US\$0.50

## Internet Resources

- ✦ **Phnom Penh Post** ([www.phnompenhpost.com](http://www.phnompenhpost.com)) The online version of Cambodia's newspaper of record.
- ✦ **Cambodia Daily** ([www.cambodiadaily.com](http://www.cambodiadaily.com)) Hard-hitting journalism; most articles are truncated online, so buy the print version (1800r).
- ✦ **Khmer440** ([www.khmer440.com](http://www.khmer440.com)) The expats' forum of choice, plus travel news and events listings.
- ✦ **Cambodia Tribunal Monitor** ([www.cambodiatribunal.org](http://www.cambodiatribunal.org)) Detailed coverage of the Khmer Rouge trials.
- ✦ **Andy's Cambodia** (<http://blog.andybrouwer.co.uk>) Gateway to all things Cambodian; includes a popular blog.