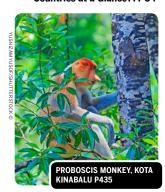
# Southeast Asia on a Shoestring



Brett Atkinson, Lindsay Brown, Jayne D'Arcy, David Eimer, Paul Harding, Nick Ray, Tim Bewer, Joe Bindloss, Greg Bloom, Celeste Brash, Austin Bush, Ria de Jong, Michael Grosberg, Damian Harper, Ashley Harrell, Trent Holden, Anita Isalska, Mark Johanson, Hugh McNaughtan, Rebecca Milner, Simon Richmond, Iain Stewart, Andy Symington, Phillip Tang

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# **Itineraries**





## KS The Best of Southeast Asia

This sampling platter for Southeast Asia hits all the highlights. Start in fun-filled **Bangkok**, then bus over to Cambodia to **Siem Reap** for Angkor's magnificent temples. Continue the party in **Phnom Penh**, then roll southeast to Vietnam's bustling **Ho Chi Minh City**. Head north to charming **Hoi An**, then hit the antique streets of **Hanoi** and the dramatic karst outcrops of **Halong Bay**.

Fly out of Vietnam to Laos' **Luang Prabang** for some laid-back river life, then fly on to chic **Chiang Mai** for fabulous food, terrific temples and jungle encounters. Loop back through Bangkok to **Ko Tao** and learn to dive before hitting the rock-climbing playground of **Krabi**. Cross the border from Ko Lipe to Malaysia's **Pulau Langkawi**, then tumble on to the foodie paradise of **George Town** (Penang) and overland to Malaysia's multi-ethnic capital **Kuala Lumpur**, with a stop in the lush **Cameron Highlands**.

Roll on to **Singapore**, for five-star food-court feasts, then fly to **Medan** in Sumatra and bus to **Bukit Lawang** to meet orangutans. Travel on by bus and boat to **Jakarta**, Indonesia's capital; soak up Java's renowned culture in **Yogyakarta**, then bus it to active volcano **Gunung Bromo**. Finally, leapfrog to **Bali** for sun, fun and surf.





## **Almost Everything**

If you really want to immerse yourself in Southeast Asia, you'll need time to explore. Six months will give you room to roam, from mighty megacities to tropical islands and remote rainforests, with time in between to relax in some of Asia's favourite traveller hang-outs.

Start in **Bangkok** and follow the coast to forested **Ko Chang**, then zip across the Cambodian border bound for the up-and-coming beach islands of **Koh Rong** and **Koh Rong Sanloem**. Stop in French-influenced **Kampot**, then zip inland to battle-scarred but rebounding **Phnom Penh**. Now bus it to **Siem Reap** and admire the splendour of Angkor.

Board a flight to **Pakse**, gateway to the river islands of Si Phan Don, then a bus to gentle **Vientiane** and on via **Vang Vieng** to **Luang Prabang**. Trundle to Nong Khiaw for tribal trekking and follow the rugged revolutionaries' trail to **Hanoi**.

Roll south through Vietnam, sampling history, culture and beaches, then fly from **Ho Chi Minh City** back to temple-studded **Bangkok**. Now start your journey south along the Malay peninsula, snorkelling or diving around **Ko Pha-Ngan** and climbing at **Krabi**.

Slip over to Malaysia for the street eats of **Penang** and teeming coral reefs at **Pulau Perhentian**. Seek terrestrial wildlife inland at **Taman Negara**, and detour to the mist-shrouded hills of the **Cameron Highlands** before taking in the bright lights of **Kuala Lumpur**. A swift train ride will drop you in bright and bustling **Singapore**.

Fly on to **Jakarta** and admire the cultural treasures of **Yogyakarta** and Unescolisted Borobudur. Bask on the beach in **Bali** or the **Gili Islands**, spot real-life dragons on **Komodo** and escape the crowds in **Flores**, or in **Dili** in little-visited Timor-Leste.

Alternatively fly from Jakarta to **Pangkalan Bun** to spot orangutans at **Tanjung Puting National Park**, then fly from Banjarmasin to **Pontianak** and bus to the border to reach Malaysia's **Kuching**, a gateway to more nature and former headhunting cultures.

Take a connecting flight onwards to **Yangon** and the beautiful Buddhist temples of **Bagan**. Take a trek to **Kalaw** or relax by the placid waters of **Inle Lake**. Finish up back in Bangkok for some last-minute souvenir shopping before flying home.





## 🜾 Islands, Beaches Jungles

Become a beach connoisseur by splashing along the coastline of Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia, with some cultural and wildlife detours to keep things interesting.

Start in **Bangkok** and make a beeline for the islands in the Gulf of Thailand: dive-crazy **Ko Tao** and hippy-trippy **Ko Pha-Ngan**. Get certified on Tao, then head to the Andaman coast. **Hat Khao Lak** is the base for dive trips to the world-class Surin and Similan islands. Skip down to adrenaline-charged **Krabi** for rock climbing and cave exploring, then island hop to beach-bum-vibed **Ko Lipe**. Cross the border at Pulau Langkawi and bus south to graze at the famous hawker centres of **Penang**.

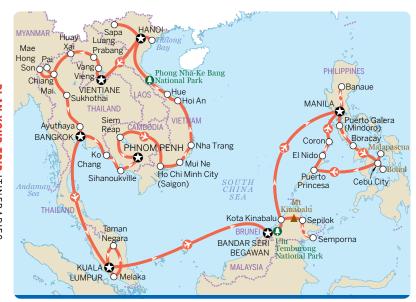
From Penang, take a bus to **Kota Bharu**, jumping-off point for the fabulous dive islands of **Pulau Perhentian**. Head south to **Mersing**, the mainland port for sleepy, beachy **Pulau Tioman**, then head to **Kuala Lumpur** to pick up a flight to Indonesia.

From Indonesia's tip in **Medan**, visit the orangutan reserve of **Bukit Lawang** and hike up a volcano in Berastagi. From Medan fly to less-visited **Banda Aceh** and dive offshore near **Pulau Weh**.

Say goodbye to Sumatra and buzz over to Java, touching down in **Jakarta**, Indonesia's intense capital. Explore **Yogyakarta** and take a day-trip to the giant Buddhist stupa of **Borobudur** and the ancient Hindu temple of **Prambanan**. Continue eastwards to the volcano **Gunung Bromo** for a sunrise spectacle over a lunar landscape.

Leapfrog to **Denpasar** to nuzzle the sandy beaches of the Bukit Peninsula or get cultured in Ubud. Party in **Gili Trawangan**, spot dragons on **Komodo** and go rustic on the beaches of **Flores**. You may need to extend your visa in Denpasar before flying to **Makassar**. Pay your respects in **Tana Toraja**, famed for its surreal funeral rites travel to the remote and pristine **Togean Islands** and **Pulau Bunaken**; it's well worth the trip.

To close the loop, fly from **Manado** to **Balikpapan** on Kalimantan and head overland to reach the orangutan reserve at **Tanjung Puting National Park**. Roll on to Pontianak and cross the border to reach **Kuching** in Sarawak, Malaysia, for one last flight to finish up in calm and comfortable **Singapore**.





## **Mainland to Borneo the Philippines**

An adventurous trip from mainland to islands, climbing to the heavens and diving the depths. Kick off in **Bangkok** and follow the overland trail through **Ko Chang** to **Sihanoukville** for detours to beach islands offshore. Roll on to shabby-chic **Phnom Penh**, and take the river boat to **Siem Reap** to gaze at the architectural wonder of Angkor Wat.

Fly on to full-throttle **Ho Chi Minh City**, and dial down the pace at the beaches of **Mui Ne** and **Nha Trang**. Drift north to the antique city of **Hoi An**, the imperial capital of **Hue** and the extensive caves of **Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park**. Rest in mature capital **Hanoi**, and make detours to karst-filled **Halong Bay** and ethnic highland gateway **Sapa**.

Fly on from Hanoi to **Vientiane** (Laos), bus to **Vang Vieng** and on to **Luang Pra-bang**, a temple-studded World Heritage town. Ride the Mekong River to the Laos/Thailand border at **Huay Xai** and enter the fabled Golden Triangle.

Onwards to **Chiang Mai**; take in the temples then make detours to the mountains of **Pai** or **Mae Hong Son** for views and cultural encounters. Tumble south through the ancient capitals at **Sukhothai** and **Ayuthaya** before returning to **Bangkok**. Take a budget flight or bus south to **Kuala Lumpur**. Explore colonial **Melaka** and **loop** back to **KL** via the steamy rainforests of **Taman Negara**. Fly to Brunei's unassuming capital, **Bandar Seri Begawan (BSB)**, gateway to wildlife-rich **Ulu Temburong National Park**.

Cross the border into Malaysian Borneo by bus, bound for **Kota Kinabalu**, and ascend Mt Kinabalu, Borneo's highest peak. Detour out to the orangutan sanctuary at **Sepilok**, and scuba dive around **Semporna**, then return to Kota Kinabalu for a flight to the Philippines. After landing in fast-paced **Manila**, bus it to the spectacular Ifugao rice terraces near **Banue** then return to Manila and hit up party isle **Boracay** via dive-tastic **Puerto Galera**. Spend a few days unwinding, then fly or bus to **Cebu City**, the Philippines' second city.

Cebu is an easy base for detours to dive at **Malapascua** and hill-hike on **Bohol**. Fly on from Cebu to **Puerto Princesa** on Palawan and drift north to **El Nido** via lonely beaches and pristine jungles. Take the all-day boat to wreck-diving playground **Coron** before flying back to Manila.





This trip follows Southeast Asia's signature river downstream from northern Laos all the way to Vietnam's Mekong Delta, offering a mesmerising window onto ever-changing landscapes and cultures.

From the bustling international gateway of **Bangkok**, make a beeline for **Chiang Rai**, near the Golden Triangle, where the borders of Laos, Myanmar and Thailand converge. Cross over into laid-back Laos at **Huay Xai** and step back in time. Take a slow boat down the Mekong to **Luang Prabang**, stopping overnight in **Pak Beng**. Soak up the magic before leaving the river for some relaxation in **Vang Vieng**.

Continue to **Vientiane** and reunite with the mighty waterway. The Lao capital has some great cafes, restaurants and even a sprinkling of nightlife (the last you'll encounter for a while after leaving). Board a bus and follow the river southeast, stopping off in **Tha Khaek** and **Savannakhet** before arriving in **Pakse**, jumping-off point for the imposing Khmer sanctuary of **Wat Phu Champasak**. Detour to the waterfalls and villages of the **Bolaven Plateau** then drift south to the laid-back islands of **Si Phan Don**.

Cross into Cambodia. If you missed the Irrawaddy dolphins near Si Phan Don, you'll get a second chance to spot them further south in the laid-back riverside town of **Kratie**. From Kratie, consider a visit to the mountains of **Mondulkiri province**, home to elephants, hill tribes and untamed jungles.

After weeks in rural provinces, it's back to big-city living in **Phnom Penh**, where the Mekong merges with another vital regional waterway, the Tonlé Sap, a riverine link to Siem Reap and the majestic temples of Angkor. See the waters turn gold on a sunset cruise and hit the bars for a well-deserved night on the town.

Suitably recharged, board a fast boat downstream to **Chau Doc** (Vietnam), gateway to the Mekong Delta. Continue to **Can Tho**, commercial heart of the Delta, then hotfoot it to **Ho Chi Minh City** for food and fun. Delve deeper into the Delta with a homestay around **Vinh Long**, or make for the tropical retreat of **Phu Quoc Island**, a well-earned reward. If you still have time and stamina, the rest of Vietnam beckons.





## Where the Wild Things Are

Southeast Asia is home to a magical menagerie of signature wildlife: tigers, elephants, whale sharks, orangutans and the Komodo dragon.

Start in **Bangkok**, and roam east to explore Khao Yai National Park, home to wild elephants and Asian black bears. Follow the peninsula south to Khao Sok National Park to see gibbons and macaques, then explore the underwater wonderland of the Similan Islands.

Continue to **Kuala Lumpur** to board a flight to **Kuching** in Borneo. See rare proboscis monkeys in Bako National Park and gentle orangutans in Semenggoh Wildlife Centre. Cross over to **Kota Kinabalu**, Sabah, to explore the Sungai Kinabatangan and perhaps see rare pygmy elephants. Wind down on the beaches and reefs of the Semporna Archipelago.

Head south into Kalimantan (Indonesia) and explore the jungle waterways of Tanjung Puting National Park. Stay overnight in a *klotok* riverboat and visit the orangutan research station at Camp Leakey. Fly on to Bali then head east to the rocky outcrops of **Komodo** and **Flo**res, home to the Komodo dragon.



## Temple Trails

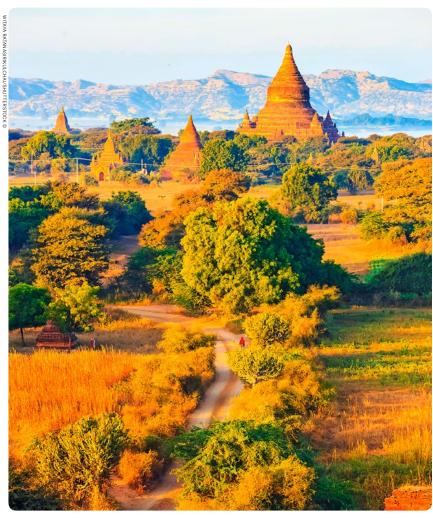
Southeast Asia sets the bar high when it comes to tremendous temples for travellers to explore.

Start out in **Bangkok**, home to iconic Wat Pho, Wat Phra Kaew and Wat Arun, before heading north to the stupa-studded former capital **Ayuthaya** and the ancient Khmer-era capital of Sukhothai.

See gems of the northern Lanna temple style in **Chiang Mai**, then continue through **Chiang Rai** to cross the Mekong River border at **Huay Xai**. Cruise on to **Luang** Prabang, Laos' gilded city of step-roofed temples and saffron-robed monks. Travel on to Laos' deep south to see the Khmer mountain temple of Wat Phu Champasak.

Continue into Cambodia, pass through **Phnom Penh** to the pre-Angkorian temples of Sambor Prei Kuk, and make an adventurous diversion north to the mountain temple of Prasat Preah Vi**hear** before hitting the big league at the temples of Angkor.

Fly onwards from Siem Reap to Yan**gon**, home to the shimmering Shwedagon Paya, then finish up the temple trail at **Bagan**, where a veritable garden of stupas stretches to the horizon.



Top: Bagan (p528), Myanmar Bottom: Phong Nha cave (p857), Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park, Vietnam,



## Off the Beaten Track: Southeast Asia



## KO TARUTAO (THAILAND)

The island heart of a peaceful marine national park, Tarutao is so far south it's practically in Malaysia. But with gorgeous reefs and beaches, inexpensive national park lodgings and low-key backpacker bungalows, it's a top castaway contender. (p783)

## MONDULKIRI PROVINCE (CAMBODIA)

Cambodia's up-and-coming adventure centre, Mondulkiri offers walking with a herd of elephants, ziplining over a waterfall, quad-biking, and authentic encounters with indigenous Bunong people. (p143)

## **BA BE NATIONAL PARK** (VIETNAM)

A stunning landscape of limestone mountains, sloping valleys, mist-shrouded lakes and evergreen forests provides a full dose of nature exploration. For a cultural hook. ethnic minorities host rustic homestays. (p845)

### THAM KONG LOR (LAOS)

Tropic of Cancer

A watery underworld awaits at this 7.5km-long cave explored by longtail boat. Daylight recedes as you putter deep into the darkness and bulbous-shaped calcified sculptures decorate the vaulted ceiling. (p359)

#### SIARGAO (PHILIPPINES)

Famous for its surf breaks, this Catholic island in northern Mindanao is blessed with pretty coves, sand-dusted beaches and laid-back villages. Nearby Camiguin has hikes and off-road motorcycling on the slopes of four volcanoes, and reef dives offshore. (p599)

## **ULU TEMBURONG NATIONAL PARK (BRUNEI** DARUSSALAM)

This pristine tract of primary rainforest, reachable only by boat, is one of the few remaining expanses of the truly wild jungle that once covered all of Borneo, (p67)

> Puncak Jaya (5030m)

> > Sudarso

Aru

ARAFURA SEA

Islands

NEW

PAPUA

#### O Banaue PHILIPPINELuzon SEAMANILA Catanduanes **PHILIPPINES** Mindoro Samar Panay Cebu **SIARGAO** Bohol Palawan Mindanao PACIFIC Mt OCEANKinabalu (4095m) Jolo Tawi-Tawi **ULU TEMBURONG** Sangir NATIONAL PARK Islands Morotai Waigeo **TOGEAN ISLANDS**

Sula Islands Misool Sulawesi SERAM SEA Tana INDONESIA Toraja Butung (Buton) Islands 🕯 BANDA Selayar

> ATAÚRO Wetar **ISLAND** DILL

Babar Islands TIMOR-LESTE

**AUSTRALIA** 

## ATAÚRO ISLAND (TIMOR-LESTE)

If you've made it all the way to Timor-Leste, take one more hop over to this blissfully undeveloped isle off Dili for excellent snorkelling, diving, hiking and hammock-swinging. (p806)

## TOGEAN ISLANDS (INDONESIA)

Lombok

The blissful Togean Islands are an unadulterated vision of the tropics. Wander blinding white-sand beaches fringed by coconut palms and enjoy world-class snorkelling and diving on majestic coral reefs. (p292)

Kai

Tanimbar

Islands

# **Behind the Scenes**

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# LONELY PLANET INTHE WILD

Send your 'Lonely Planet in the Wild' photos to social@lonelyplanet.com We share the best on our Facebook page every week!

# Map Legend

#### Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Ŏ Jain 0 lewish
- Monument
- **a** Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- ø Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

#### Activities. Courses & Tours

- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kavaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing Other Activity

#### Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping
- ← Hut/Shelter

## Eating

Eating

#### Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

#### **Entertainment**

Entertainment

#### Shopping

Shopping

### Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate ♣ Hospital/Medical
- @ Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone (II) Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

#### Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- ▲ Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park ) ( Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

#### **Population**

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- Citv/Large Town
- Town/Village

#### Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- ++ (£)++ Cable car/Funicular
- −Si − Cycling
- -@- Ferry
- Metro/MRT/MTR station
- Parking
- Petrol station
- Skytrain/Subway station
- Taxi
- → Train station/Railway
- -@- Tram
- Underground station
  - Other Transport

#### Routes

Tollway Freeway Primary

Secondary Tertiary

Unsealed road Road under construction

Plaza/Mall Steps = Tunnel

Pedestrian overpass Walking Tour

Walking Tour detour Path/Walking Trail

#### **Boundaries**

--- International State/Province Disputed Regional/Suburb

Marine Park Cliff - Wall

#### **Hydrography**

River, Creek Intermittent River Canal

Water

Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake

Reef

#### Areas

Airport/Runway Beach/Desert Cemetery (Christian)

Cemetery (Other)

Glacier

Mudflat

Park/Forest

Sight (Building)

Sportsground

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book

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#### Hugh McNaughtan

Indonesia A former English lecturer, Hugh swapped grant applications for visa applications, and turned his love of travel intro a full-time thing. Having done a bit of restaurant-reviewing in his home town (Melbourne) he's now eaten his way across four continents. He's never happier than when on the road with his two daughters. Except perhaps on the cricket field...



#### Rebecca Milner

Southeast Asia regional content California born, longtime Tokyo resident (15 years and counting!), Rebecca has coauthored Lonely Planet guides to Tokyo, Japan, Korea and China. She is also a freelance writer covering travel, food and culture, published in *The Guardian*, the *Independent*, the *Sunday Times Travel Magazine*, the *Japan Times* and more. After spending the better part of her twenties working to travel – doing odd jobs in Tokyo to make money to spend months

at a time backpacking around Asia – Rebecca was fortunate enough to turn the tables in 2010, joining the Lonely Planet team of freelance authors.



#### Simon Richmond

Malaysia Journalist and photographer Simon Richmond has specialised as a travel writer since the early 1990s and first worked for Lonely Planet in 1999 on their Central Asia guide. He's long since stopped counting the number of guidebooks he's researched and written for the company, but countries covered including Australia, China, India, Iran, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar (Burma), Russia, Singapore, South Africa and Turkey. His travel features have

been published in newspapers and magazines around the world, including in the UK's Independent, Guardian, Times, Daily Telegraph and Royal Geographical Society Magazine; and Australia's Sydney Morning Herald and Australian newspapers and Australian Financial Review Magazine.



#### lain Stewart

Vietnam lain trained as journalist in the 1990s and then worked as a news reporter and a restaurant critic in London. He started writing travel guides in 1997 and has since penned more than 60 books for destinations as diverse as Ibiza and Cambodia. Iain's contributed to Lonely Planet titles including Mexico, Indonesia, Central America, Croatia, Vietnam, Bali & Lombok and Southeast Asia. He

also writes regularly for the *Independent*, *The Observer* and *The Daily Telegraph* and tweets at @ iaintravel. He'll consider working anywhere there's a palm tree or two and a beach of a generally sandy persuasion. Iain lives in Brighton (UK) within firing range of the city's wonderful south-facing horizon.



#### Andy Symington

Thailand Andy has written or worked on more than a hundred books and other updates for Lonely Planet (especially in Europe and Latin America) and other publishing companies, and has published articles on numerous subjects for a variety of newspapers, magazines and websites. He part-owns and operates a rock bar, has written a novel, and is currently working on several fiction and nonfiction writing projects. Originally from Australia, Andy moved to northern Spain many

years ago. When he's not off with a backpack in some far-flung corner of the world, he can probably be found watching the tragically poor local football side or tasting local wines after a long walk in the nearby mountains.



#### **Phillip Tang**

Vietnam Phillip Tang grew up on a typically Australian diet of pho and fish'n'chips before moving to Mexico City. A degree in Chinese- and Latin-American cultures launched him into travel and then writing about it for Lonely Planet's Canada, China, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Peru and Vietnam guides. Writing at hellophillip.com, photos @mrtangtang, and tweets @philliptang.

#### **Contributing Writers & Researchers**

Isabel Albiston, Ryan Ver Berkmoes, Adam Skolnick



#### Michael Grosberg

Philippines Michael has worked on more than 45 Lonely Planet guidebooks. Whether covering Myanmar or New Jersey, each project has added to his rich and complicated psyche and taken years from his (still?) relatively young life. Prior to his freelance writing career, other international work included development on the island of Rota in the western Pacific; time in South Africa where he investigated and wrote about political violence and helped train newly elected

government representatives; and a stint teaching in Quito, Ecuador. He received a Masters in Comparative Literature and taught literature and writing as an adjunct professor at several New York City area colleges.



#### Damian Harper

Thailand With two degrees (one in modern and classical Chinese from SOAS), Damian has been writing for Lonely Planet for more than two decades, contributing to titles as covering destinations as diverse as China, Beijing, Shanghai, Vietnam, Thailand, Ireland, London, Mallorca, Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei, Hong Kong, China's Southwest and the UK. A seasoned guidebook writer, Damian has penned articles for numerous newspapers and magazines, including The Guardian and

The Daily Telegraph, and currently makes Surrey, England, his home. A self-taught trumpet novice, his other hobbies include collecting modern first editions, photography and Taekwondo. Follow Damian on Instagram (damian.harper).



#### Ashley Harrell

Cambodia, Indonesia After a brief stint selling day spa coupons door-to-door in South Florida, Ashley decided she'd rather be a writer. She went to journalism grad school, convinced a newspaper to hire her, and starting covering wildlife, crime and tourism, sometimes all in the same story. Fuelling her zest for story-telling and the unknown, she travelled widely and moved often, from a tiny NYC apartment to a vast California ranch to a jungle cabin in Costa Rica, where she

started writing for Lonely Planet. From there her travels became more exotic and farther flung, and she still laughs when paychecks arrive.



#### Trent Holden

Indonesia A Geelong-based writer, located just outside Melbourne, Trent has worked for Lonely Planet since 2005. He's contributed to 30-plus guidebooks covering Asia, Africa and Australia. With a penchant for megacities, Trent's in his element when assigned to cover a nation's capital – the more chaotic the better – to unearth cool bars, art, street food and underground subculture. On the flipside he also writes books to idyllic tropical islands across Asia, in between

going on safari to national parks in Africa and the subcontinent. When not travelling, Trent works as a freelance editor, reviewer and spending all his money catching live gigs. You can catch him on Twitter @hombreholden.



#### Anita Isalska

Malaysia, Thailand Anita Isalska is a travel journalist, editor and copywriter. After several merry years as a staff writer and editor – a few of them in Lonely Planet's London office – Anita now works freelance between Australia, the UK and any Alpine chalet with good wi-fi. Anita writes about France, Eastern Europe, Southeast Asia and off-beat travel. Read her stuff on www.anitaisalska.com.



#### Mark Johanson

Laos Mark Johanson grew up in Virginia and has called five different countries home over the last decade. His travel-writing career began as something of a quarter-life crisis, and he's happily spent the past eight years circling the globe reporting for Australian travel magazines (such as Get Lost), British newspapers (such as The Guardian), American lifestyles (such as Men's Journal) and global media outlets (such as CNN and BBC). When not on the road, you'll find him gaz-

ing at the Andes from his home in Santiago, Chile. Follow the adventure at www.markjohanson.com.



#### Nick Ray

Cambodia A Londoner of sorts, Nick comes from Watford, the sort of town that makes you want to travel. He lives in Phnom Penh with his wife, Kulikar, and children, Julian and Belle. He has written for countless guidebooks on the Mekong region, including Lonely Planet's Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos & Northern Thailand and Myanmar books, as well as Southeast Asia on a Shoestring. When not writing, he is often out exploring the remote parts

of Cambodia as a location scout and manager for the world of television and film, including everything from *Tomb Raider* to *Top Gear*. Motorbikes are a part-time passion and he has travelled through most of Indochina on two wheels.



#### Tim Bewer

Thailand After university Tim worked as a legislative assistant before quitting capitol life to backpack around West Africa. It was during this trip that the idea of becoming a travel writer and photographer was hatched, and he's been at it ever since. He has visited more than 80 countries, including most in Southeast Asia. His first journey to Laos was in 1997, before the highway from Vientiane to the south was paved, and he's returned nearly a dozen

times since. He lives in Khon Kaen. Thailand.



#### Joe Bindloss

Southeast Asia regional content Joe first got the travel bug on a grand tour of Asia in the early 1990s, and he's been roaming around its temples and paddy fields ever since on dozens of assignments for Lonely Planet and other publishers, covering everywhere from Myanmar and Thailand to India and Nepal. When not on the road, Joe works as Lonely Planet's Destination Editor for the Indian Subcontinent



#### **Greg Bloom**

Philippines Greg is a freelance writer, tour operator and travel planner based out of Siem Reap, Cambodia, and Manila, Philippines. Greg began his writing career in the late '90s in Ukraine, working as a journalist and later editor-in-chief of the Kyiv Post, an English-language weekly. As a freelance travel writer, he has contributed to some 35 Lonely Planet titles, mostly in Eastern Europe and Asia. Greg also researched the Plan Your Trip section

and the Survival Guide section.



#### Celeste Brash

Thailand Like many California natives, Celeste now lives in Portland, Oregon. She arrived however after 15 years in French Polynesia, a year and a half in Southeast Asia and a stint teaching English as a second language (in an American accent) in Brighton, England – among other things. She's been writing guidebooks for Lonely Planet since 2005 and her travel articles have appeared in publications from BBC Travel to National Geographic. She's

currently writing a book about her five years on a remote pearl farm in the Tuamotu Atolls and is represented by the Donald Maass Agency, New York.



#### **Austin Bush**

Vietnam, Thailand Austin originally came to Thailand in 1999 as part of a language study program hosted by Chiang Mai University. The lure of city life, employment and spicy food eventually led him to Bangkok and have managed to keep him there since. Austin works as a writer and photographer, and has contributed text and photos to more than 20 Lonely Planet titles including Bangkok; The Food Book; Food Lover's Guide to the World;

Ko Samui Encounter; Laos; Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei; Myanmar (Burma); Pocket Bangkok; Phuket Encounter; Thailand; Thailand's Islands & Beaches; Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos & Northern Thailand; and The World's Best Street Food.



#### Ria de Jong

Singapore Born in Sri Lanka to Dutch/Australian parents, Ria has always relished the hustle and excitement of this continent of contrasts. After growing up in Townsville, Australia, Ria moved to Sydney as a features writer before packing her bags for a five-year stint in the Philippines. Having moved to Singapore in 2015 with her husband and two small children, Ria is loving discovering every nook and cranny of this tiny nation. This is Ria's second Southeast

Asia on a Shoestring update.



#### OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, Across Asia on the Cheap. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born. Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London.

Melbourne, Oakland, Dublin, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things; inform, educate and amuse'.

## **OUR WRITERS**



#### **Brett Atkinson**

Central Vietnam Brett Atkinson is based in Auckland, New Zealand, but is frequently on the road for Lonely Planet. He's a full-time travel and food writer specialising in adventure travel, unusual destinations and surprising angles on more well-known destinations. He is featured regularly on the Lonely Planet website, and in newspapers, magazines and websites across New Zealand and Australia. Brett has covered areas as diverse as Vietnam, Sri Lanka, the Czech Republic,

New Zealand, Morocco, California and the South Pacific.



#### Lindsay Brown

Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia Lindsay started travelling as young bushwalker exploring the Blue Mountains west of Sydney. Then, as a marine biologist, he dived the coastal and island waters of southeastern Australia. He continued travelling whenever he could while employed at Lonely Planet as an editor and publishing manager. Since becoming a freelance writer and photographer he has coauthored more than 35 Lonely Planet guides to Australia. Bhutan,

India, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea



#### Jayne D'Arcy

Timor-Leste Taking the first step on a new country's soil used to send shivers of excitement up Jayne's spine: now everything about new sights and activities does. Keen to research by bike, she also loves checking out a new town's early morning scene with a quick dawn run. Recent winner of an Australian award for best adventure travel story, she plans to keep on trekking. She's worked in Ireland and Timor-Leste, and is now based in Melbourne, Australia. Instagram: @jayne.darcy.



#### David Eimer

Myanmar (Burma), Thailand David has been a journalist and writer ever since abandoning the idea of a law career in 1990. After spells working in his native London and in Los Angeles, he moved to Beijing in 2005, where he contributed to a variety of newspapers and magazines in the UK. Since then, he has travelled and lived across China and in numerous cities in Southeast Asia, including Bangkok, Phnom Penh and Yangon. He has been covering China, Myanmar and Thailand for Lonely

Planet since 2006. David also wrote the Plan Your Trip, Understand and Survival Guide chapters.



#### **Paul Harding**

Indonesia, Laos, Philippines As a writer and photographer, Paul has been travelling the globe for the best part of two decades, with an interest in remote and offbeat places, islands and cultures. He's an author and contributor to more than 50 Lonely Planet guides to countries and regions as diverse as India, Belize, Vanuatu, Iran, Indonesia, New Zealand, Iceland, Finland, Philippines and – his home patch – Australia.

OVER MORE PAGE WRITERS

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