

# The big loop of Cambodia



|                                                                                                        |                                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Days:                                                                                                  | 21                                            |
| Price:                                                                                                 | 2320 USD<br>International flight not included |
| Comfort:                                                                                               | ★★★★★                                         |
| Difficult:                                                                                             | ★★★☆☆                                         |
| 📌 Must see 📌 history 📌 Culture<br>📌 Adventure 📌 Ethnic minority 📌 Hiking<br>📌 📌 Travel with children 📌 |                                               |

This circuit crosses Cambodia from east to west and from north to south. From the major unmissable cities (Phnom Penh and Siem Reap) to the jungle of Monduliri via the countryside of Kampong Cham, Kratié and Steung Treng among others, you will discover the country, its heritage (notably the site of Angkor), its inhabitants and the different ways of life depending on the region. At the end of the journey, you will be able to take a breather thanks to a few seaside days on the paradise island of Koh Rong then at Kep in relaxation mode before returning leisurely to the capital for your return flight.

## Day 1. Welcome to Phnom Penh!



Airport Phnom Penh 📍  
🚗 7km  
Phnom Penh 📍

- Welcome by your driver upon your arrival at the airport. Transfer and installation at your hotel. Rest of the day free.

Rooms available from 2 p.m. If you arrive a little early and your room is n't ready yet, you can drop off your bags at reception before going for a walk in town or relaxing by the pool.

- No guide is included on this day

🏠 Accommodation

Mettavary Hotel / Deluxe Queen

## Day 2. Phnom Penh, a bustling capital city



Phnom Penh 📍

Phnom Penh 📍

- Discover the famous Wat Phnom which gave its name to the capital. The "hill pagoda" is the highest point of Phnom Penh.
- Let's then visit the **Royal Palace and the Silver Pagoda**, true jewels of Khmer architecture built in the mid-19th century.

The dress code at the Royal Palace is quite strict: shoulders and knees must be covered. Wearing a mask is compulsory.

- Let's continue with the **National Museum** and discover one of the most important collections of Khmer art: 14,000 sculptures and ethnographic objects, mostly from the temples of Angkor
- Visit to the **Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum (S-21)**, the largest detention and torture center under the regime of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge which will reveal to us a very painful chapter of the history of Cambodia.
- Visit Phnom Penh's **Central Market** and/or **Russian Market** if there's enough time after the previous visits (markets close rather early)

- English-speaking guide included on this day

|                                                                                                 |                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|  Breakfast     | Breakfast at the Mettavary     |
|  Accommodation | Mettavary Hotel / Deluxe Queen |

## Day 3. Stopover in Kampong Cham



Phnom Penh 📍  
 🚗 125km - ⌚ 3h  
 Kampong Cham 📍  
 🚗 85km - ⌚ 1h 30m  
 Kratie 📍

- In the morning, transfer to Kampong Cham, on the way, be bold to take full advantage of a "gastronomic" stop in the town of **Skun**, famous for its spiders and his grilled insects.

**Phnom Pros and Phnom Srei** hills are located in Kampong Cham. Each separated by a kilometer away, the two highest points offer a magnificent view of the countryside and the Mekong. You can visit modern temples on these hills and take advantage of the place to relax pleasantly. Two places steeped in history not to be missed.

- Take the road to Kratie, a city-province on the banks of the great Mekong with a peaceful reputation and magnificent rural landscapes..
- By visiting a **rubber plantation** and the *Chup* factory near Kampong Cham, discover the manufacturing methods of **natural rubber**.

*Note: the visit to the factory is dependent on the harvest; slow activity from January to May*

- Upon arrival, you take a small boat to the river island of Koh Trong where your accommodation is located. Try to pack a small bag (don't forget your bathing suit) as it won't be possible to bring a large suitcase on the small boat.

- English-speaking guide included on this day

|                                                                                                   |                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|  Breakfast     | Breakfast at the Mettavary        |
|  Dinner        | Breakfast at homestay/guest house |
|  Accommodation | Homestay / guest house            |

## Day 4. The Irrawaddy dolphins



Kratie 📍

- Small ferry crossing to reach kratie. Then you take the road to Kampi.

Embark on the Mekong in search of the Irrawaddy dolphins, one of the rare species of freshwater dolphins, in danger of extinction.

- Then return to Kratié and explore the island of Koh Trong, on the Mekong, by bike. Discover the traditional Khmer village, observe the daily life of the villagers and visit the beautiful pagoda and the floating village.

- English-speaking guide included on this day

|                                                                                                   |                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|  Breakfast     | Breakfast at homestay/guest house |
|  Lunch         | Breakfast at homestay/guest house |
|  Dinner        | Dinner at the hotel               |
|  Accommodation | Soriyabori Resort / Deluxe        |

## Day 5. Transfer by private car to Sen Monorom



Kratie 📍  
🚗 230km - ⌚ 4h  
Sen Monorom 📍

- In the **morning**, after breakfast, take the road towards **Sen Monorom**.

Upon our arrival, we first go to **The Coffee Plantation Resort** which will teach you about the production of "black gold", from the cultivation of the coffee trees to the harvesting and roasting of the beans.

*We recommend having lunch on site; their small restaurant on the water is in a friendly setting*

- **In the afternoon**, we take the direction of the **Bousra** waterfalls, the largest and most beautiful in Cambodia. Pouring over 3 floors, they offer a magnificent spectacle and a natural swimming pool where you can swim.
- Once arrived at destination, we check in at the hotel; The rest of the day is free.
- If you still have strength, you can explore the city and its surroundings, or take a short walk from the ecolodge to admire the landscape.

- English-speaking guide included on this day

|                 |                                 |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast     | Breakfast at the Soriyabi       |
| 🍴 Dinner        | Dinner included at the ecolodge |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Sumeru Eco Lodge/Bungalow       |

## Day 6. Start of the elephant trek



Sen Monorom 📍

- After breakfast, we go to the starting point of this day with the **Mondulkiri Project**. The day begins with a short information session on the work carried out by the association and the elephants that we will meet. Our hike then begins in the protected forest; the terrain is steep as we head towards the top of the hill where the **jungle lodge** is located, a kiosk set up in the middle of nature and offering an exceptional view of the valley. We then set off to meet the elephants with our hands full of bananas.

After our lunch and a little rest in the hammocks provided for this purpose, we go back down to the valley in the company of the pachyderms towards a pretty waterfall where we can swim and cool off. Those who wish can participate in cleaning the pachyderms.

Then we say goodbye to our friends and return to "town".

(Bottles of water provided)

Elephant work is now banned in Cambodia. The animals live freely in the sanctuary and there is obviously no question of considering an elephant ride.

Business to expect:

- Closed walking shoes
  - Bathing suit and towel
  - Sun protection: hat/cap and cream
  - Mosquito repellent spray
  - Poncho or k-way
  - Camera
- Return to the resort to rest and departure with your driver in the evening to go to dinner in town (included).

- English-speaking guide included on this day

|                 |                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast     | Breakfast at the Ecolodge |
| 🍴 Lunch         | Picnic                    |
| 🍴 Dinner        | Diner at Route 76         |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Sumeru Eco Lodge/Bungalow |

## Day 7. By the Mekong River, near the border with Laos



Sen Monorom 📍  
🚗 320km - ⌚ 4h 30m  
Steung Treng 📍

- In the morning, transfer without guide to Steung Treng.
- We settle in at the Mekong Bird Resort, a small family establishment full of charm surrounded by nature and at the water's edge.
- Embark on a boat trip of about 1 hour to discover the Mekong and its trees with gigantic aerial roots. Maybe bring earplugs if you can because the engine is quite noisy. You may be lucky enough to see its many water birds such as the lapwing, the river tern, the great stone curlew or the Mekong wagtail, a species discovered in 2001.

*Possibility of returning by kayak; notify the resort and they will attach kayaks to the boat with ropes*

- English-speaking guide included on this day

|                 |                                          |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast     | Breakfast at the Ecolodge                |
| 🍴 Lunch         | Lunch at the resort                      |
| 🍷 Dinner        | Dinner at the resort                     |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Mekong Bird Resort / DBL & TWN bungalows |

## Day 8. Preah Vihear, a masterpiece



Steung Treng 📍  
🚗 150km - ⌚ 2h 15m  
Preah Vihear 📍

- Transfer to Preah Vihear. On your arrival, check-in and rest.
- A small detour allows you to admire the powerful Sopheakmit falls forming a natural border with Laos, as well as a beautiful pagoda at the exit of the site. There is an imposing statue of Buddha several tens of meters high and surrounded by 12 small statues representing the Chinese astrological signs.
- In the afternoon, our driver drops us off at the entrance to the archaeological site of Preah Vihear because we have to change vehicles to go up to the temple (a 4x4 is necessary). Listed as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2008**, this remarkable masterpiece of Khmer architecture located on the Thai border is an integral part of the **Royal Route** made famous by André Malraux.

- English-speaking guide included on this day

|                 |                                      |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast     | Breakfast at the resort              |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Preah Vihear Boutique Hotel / Deluxe |

## Day 9. Arrival in Siem Reap



Preah Vihear 📍  
🚗 165km - ⌚ 3h  
Siem Reap 📍

- Transfer by road to Siem Reap.
- Along the way, discover Koh Ker, capital of Cambodia for a short period in the 10th century. You notably visit Prasat Thom, a 30 m high mountain temple.
- Visit **Beng Mealea** Temple invaded by ficus roots. It was used as a set for the 2004 movie « **Two Brothers** » by Jean-Jacques Annaud.

- English-speaking guide included on this day

|             |                                              |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast | Breakfast at the Preah Vihear Boutique Hotel |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------|

## Day 10. The Majestic Angkor Temples



Siem Reap 📍

7km

Angkor Wat 📍

3km

Angkor Temples 📍

Siem Reap 📍

- Day visit in a **tuktuk** of the marvelous temples of **Angkor** located around and inside the **Angkor Thom**.

You will notably discover **Angkor Wat**, symbol of the apogee of the Khmer Empire under the Angkorian era. Inside Angkor Thom, discover **Bayon** and its many towers with gigantic faces, **Baphuon** and its gigantic 40m reclining Buddha statue, **Phimeanakas**, the **Terrasse des Elephants** and its wide variety of sculptures, but also the **Terrasse du Roi Leper**.

Continue by **Ta Prohm** famous for its huge trees with sprawling aerial roots and conclude with a sunset from the heights of **Phnom Bakheng**.

Possibility of making the visits in the opposite direction to avoid the crowds. Just let your guide know at the start of the day.

Temples are sacred places, avoid short clothes, cover your shoulders and wear pants or a long skirt.

In order to preserve these fragile monuments, it is forbidden to touch the sculptures or to sit on elements of the temple.

In Cambodian culture, it is offensive to heckle inside a sacred place, calm and respect are key words.

It is not recommended to buy items or sweets from child sellers, this only encourages begging and the practice of skipping school, prefer a donation to an association if it is important to you.

If you wish to photograph the monks (called Bonzes), you must obtain their permission beforehand. In addition, you must not touch them, they have the right to touch you but not the opposite.

- English-speaking guide included on this day

🍽️ Breakfast

Breakfast at the Apsara

🏠 Accommodation

Apsara Greenland Boutique Hotel / Deluxe

## Day 11. Banteay Srey, the women citadel



Siem Reap 📍

🚗 50km - ⌚ 1h

Kbal Spean 📍

4km - ⌚ 1h

Kbal Spean 📍

🚗 14km - ⌚ 20m

Banteay Srey 📍

🚗 40km - ⌚ 1h

Siem Reap 📍

- Near Kbal Spean, continue with a visit to the **Angkor Center for the Protection of Biodiversity**. You will be able to see the efforts made by local and international teams to protect local endangered species: snakes, turtles and other reptiles, birds and exotic mammals. Children and animal lovers will be delighted by this visit of discovery and awareness.
- We then begin the short hike necessary to reach the site of Kbal Spean nicknamed "the underwater temple". Ruins of temples dating from the 9th century border a river whose bed is **strewn with carved lingas**. A small waterfall near the protected sacred site will allow us to cool off or even swim there (bring a small towel).

Very accessible hike of around 1.5 km (or 3 km round trip) with a small elevation gain over the last 700 meters. Bring walking shoes/sneakers as the path is quite rocky.

- After lunch, continue with a visit to Banteay Srey, a temple on a human scale compared to the gigantic Angkor Wat or Bayon. This pink sandstone temple nicknamed "The Citadel of Women" is known for the refinement of the bas-reliefs and sculptures which adorn its walls and columns. Your discovery continues with a visit to the **Banteay Samre temple**.

- English-speaking guide included on this day

|                 |                                          |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast     | Breakfast at the Apsara                  |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Apsara Greenland Boutique Hotel / Deluxe |

## Day 12. En route to Battambang !



Siem Reap 📍  
🚗 172km - ⌚ 3h  
Battambang 📍

- In the morning, transfer to **Battambang**.
- Along the way, discover the Wat Slaket and Ek Phnom pagoda, an 11th century sandstone Brahmin temple now in ruins. It was sacked by the Khmer Rouge under Pol Pot, and looted by the Vietnamese upon liberation. A place steeped in history.

Take advantage of your visit to linger on the immense statue of the seated Buddha which sits near these ruins.

- Once arrived at destination, we check in at the hotel; The rest of the day is free.
- To the south of Battambang, a visit to the Banon temple erected at the top of a hill offers you, after climbing the 358 steps, a lovely panorama of the Cambodian countryside. Passing through the traditional villages along the road, you can watch the family making rice cakes and chat with the locals about their daily lives.

Also take the opportunity to stop in the vineyards of Battambang. Something to admire the greenhouse work of Cambodian winegrowers. And to taste if you wish wine, grape juice, ginger, and why not cognac!

- Discover the temple of **Phnom Sampov**, "*the hill-ship*". You stay there until sunset to watch the flight of the **bats** and their incredible choreography in the sky

- English-speaking guide included on this day

|                 |                                |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast     | Breakfast at the Apsara        |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Bambu hotel / chambre Superior |

## Day 13. Battambang, a charming city



Battambang 📍

- You will start your day discovering the authenticity of Battambang with a ride on the famous **bamboo train**. Being early in the morning, this activity is ideal to start the day. The fresh air will pleasantly tickle your face when your eyes admire the rice fields painted in the landscape.

Then head to the ruins of the temple d'Ek Phnom destroyed by the Khmer Rouge and looted upon liberation by the Vietnamese. You can also visit a pagoda and a massive statue of the Buddha.

The driver will then take you to first discover the workshop where the **rice cake** is made, the one used to cook spring rolls and spring rolls. Then a few meters further you will see the manufacturers of **glutinous rice**, this dish, enclosed in a bamboo stick, which is all the rage in Cambodia. You will then visit, opposite, the pagoda of **Wat Samrong Knong** which houses the killing fields, an area that witnessed the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge regime.

After this visit you will take the direction of a **crocodile farm**, where you will be able to see these gigantic reptiles very closely.

The penultimate stage of this tour will take place in a workshop making **banana chips**. Here you will help the cooks to cut these fruits to help them, against which you can taste this delicious snack.

You will finally go to a larger workshop this time, that of **manufacture of prahok**. This condiment, fish brine, is highly sought after in Cambodia despite its off-putting smell.

At the end of the day, you can visit the **Psar Nat** market (closes at 6 p.m.).

- English-speaking guide included on this day

|                 |                                |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast     | Breakfast at the Bambu hotel   |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Bambu hotel / chambre Superior |

## Day 14. On the way to Kampong Chhnang on the banks of Tonlé Sap lake



Battambang 📍  
 🚗 120km - ⌚ 2h  
 Pursat 📍  
 150km - ⌚ 2h 30m  
 Kampong Chhnang 📍

- After breakfast, we head with our driver towards **Kampong Chhnang** and more precisely to the NGO Smiling Gecko which has its headquarters in the surrounding area.
- Halfway, we take a break in the provincial capital of **Pursat** to stretch our legs and why not have lunch there. There is no shortage of stonemasons, marble workers and cabinetmakers in this region if you want to stop for a moment to observe them.
- At **Kampong Chhnang**, we board a small boat to visit the floating villages of **Phum Kandal** and **Chong Kos** where we can observe the lives of the locals and admire the brightly painted wooden houses, with their small terraces equipped with hammocks and bamboo electricity poles.
- Once we arrive at our destination, we settle in at the resort; The rest of the day is free.

*We also say goodbye to our guide who accompanied us here from Siem Reap*

- English-speaking guide included on this day

|                 |                                       |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast     | Breakfast at the Bambu hotel          |
| 🍴 Dinner        | Diner at the resort                   |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Farmhouse Resort & Spa / Khmer Deluxe |

## Day 15. A pre-seaside laypover in Kep



Kampong Chhnang 📍  
 🚗 230km - ⌚ 4h 30m  
 Kep 📍

- Free morning at the resort of the NGO **Smiling Gecko** which offers the opportunity to discover the numerous activities that they have developed on their 150 hectares of land to professionalize disadvantaged families and provide education to more than a hundred children: training in catering and hotel trades, carpentry and cabinetmaking workshops, fish farming (tilapia breeding) and plant crops of all kinds.

Your driver will not be far away. Feel free to coordinate together if you want to explore the surrounding area, especially the pottery village of Kampong Chhnang.

- After lunch included at the resort, transfer by road to Kep, a charming seaside town famous for its crab market and its national park ideal for a beautiful stroll.
- Check-in at the hotel and free time to relax.

Suggestions: Take the opportunity to have lunch at the **\*\*crab market\*\***, relax on the small beach or take the **\*\*short hike\*\*** of 2-3 hours in the Kep National Park (departing from the Veranda Natural Resort)

- Free program in Kep
- No guide is included on this day

|             |                         |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast | Breakfast at the resort |
| 🍴 Lunch     | Lunch at the resort     |

## Day 16. The Kampong Trach caves and Kampot pepper



Kep 📍

- Near Kep, exploring the caves of **Phnom Kampong Trach** has some nice surprises in store for you. Considered as natural temples by local Buddhists, they hide many statues and altars. As the high point of this "caving" excursion, a beautiful representation of a reclining Buddha awaits you in an open-air clearing created by the collapse of the rock.
- *The Kampot region is internationally recognized for its exceptional pepper. It is therefore impossible to go to Kampot without taking a trip to one of the many pepper plantations in the region!*

We therefore visit the family pepper production farm, **La Ferme de Sothy** with a guide to the plantation who will explain the origin and why of the fame of this spice. You will learn more about cultivation methods and how to cook this famous pepper.

- After lunch (included at the plantation), we return to the hotel.

Free afternoon.

☕ Breakfast

Breakfast at the Tara Lodge

🍴 Lunch

Lunch at the plantation (Khmer Lunch formula)

🏠 Accommodation

Tara Lodge / Superior

## Day 17. Extension to Koh Rong



Kep 📍

🚗 125km - ⌚ 3h 15m

Sihanoukville 📍

🚤 20km - ⌚ 1h

Koh Rong 📍

- Transfer by car to the pier of Sihanoukville, a southern seaside town with beautiful sandy beaches and gateway to the paradise islands of **Koh Rong** and Koh Rong Samloem.
- Boat transfer to **Koh Rong** from Sihanoukville pier. Our team on site will be waiting for you at the pier to give you your boat tickets.

The boat staff will take half of your ticket. Save the other half for the return!

☕ Breakfast

Breakfast at the Tara Lodge

🏠 Accommodation

Sweet Dreams Koh Rong / Bungalow (Partial Sea-View)

## Day 18-19. Beach days



Koh Rong 📍

☕ Breakfast

Breakfast at Sweet Dreams

🏠 Accommodation

Sweet Dreams Koh Rong / Bungalow (Partial Sea-View)

## Day 20. Welcome to Phnom Penh



Koh Rong 📍  
🚢 20km - ⌚ 1h  
Sihanoukville 📍  
🚗 270km - ⌚ 3h  
Phnom Penh 📍

- After breakfast and checking out of our room, we return by boat to Sihanoukville.

The boat departure is scheduled for 9:30 a.m.

- Upon arrival in Sihanoukville, a driver will meet you at the pier for a final transfer by road to Phnom Penh.

No guide is included on this day

|                 |                                        |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------|
| 🍳 Breakfast     | Breakfast at Sweet Dreams              |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Palace Gate Hotel & Residence / Studio |

## Day 21. Have a good flight and welcome back!



Phnom Penh 📍  
🚗 7km  
Départ Phnom Penh 📍

- Free program before your evening transfer to **Phnom Penh International Airport** (included; we will organize the transfer according to your flight schedule).

Note: you must leave your room before noon. If your flight is in the evening, you can leave your suitcases at the hotel reception for a last walk around town.

|             |                          |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| 🍳 Breakfast | Breakfast at Palace Gate |
|-------------|--------------------------|

## Itinerary map



## Individual price per person

| 2-2      | 3-3      | 4-5      | 6-6      |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 3300 USD | 3200 USD | 2680 USD | 2320 USD |

## Included

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- Transfers from and to the airport
- Transportation to activities and program stages
- Land travel indicated in the program
- Hotels and accommodation
- Breakfasts at the hotel
- Meals mentioned
- French-speaking guide for activities when indicated
- Entrance fees for activities

## Not included

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- International transport
- Tips
- Travel/cancellation/repatriation insurance
- Visa fees
- Extra drinks/alcohols
- Consumption at the hotel
- Meals not mentioned
- Phone calls
- Any excursion not mentioned in the program
- Late check-out of rooms (standard check-out to be done before noon)
- Certain hotel extra (e.g. Christmas meals, Chinese/Khmer New Year/etc.)