

CAMBODIA, HIDDEN SPLENDOURS

10 Days / 09 Nights



★ Anglo Indiago Travels (P) Limited ★

Highlights: Siem Reap – Kratie – Monduliri – Phnom Penh

Day 1: Siem Reap | Explore Angkor's Ancient Wonders

Arrive in Siem Reap, gateway to the Angkor Archaeological Park and UNESCO World Heritage Site, containing the stupendous remains of a mighty Khmer civilization. Travelling by Tuk Tuk, head out to some of the astounding Angkor temples and immerse yourself in the fascinating history of these ancient ruins. A highlight is Banteay Kdei a peaceful compound that is home to a rare, ancient Buddha statue. Board a small private boat on the moat of Angkor Thom, an entire inner-walled city that previously served as a Khmer royal capital. Cruise to Prasat Chrung Temple, one of four identical temples positioned at each corner of the Angkor Thom complex. This little-visited, elevated temple is the perfect spot for sunset views across this magnificent complex.

Day 2: Siem Reap | Angkor Temples, Buddhist Blessings and Spectacular Sunset Views

Spend an enthralling day exploring some of the magnificent ancient temples in the Angkor Archaeological Park. The dominating centerpiece is the Angkor Wat temple complex, one of the greatest ancient wonders and largest religious monuments in the world. Other iconic Angkor temples include 12th century Ta Prohm, distinguishable by overgrown fig tree roots bursting through its massive stone blocks. Stroll through the temple, losing yourself in the evocative, 'forgotten city' atmosphere. Continue to Angkor Thom, containing the spectacular Bayon Temple, distinguishable by the giant, serene faces of King Jayaraman VII carved into stone towers. Later, receive a traditional blessing from a Buddhist monk at Wat Tang Tock, a small temple monastery. Our day concludes with an optional outing to watch the sun setting over Angkor Wat's iconic spires.

Day 3: Siem Reap | Experience Khmer Rural Village Life

Beyond Siem Reap, nestled in remote countryside, we visit an authentic Khmer village, Peak Sneng, where we have a unique opportunity to learn about the simple daily lives of rural folk. Stroll through this peaceful Khmer village, stopping-off at the local school to engage with students, take a ride on local-style transport and learn about time-honored crafts from artisans, such as palm leaf weaving. Our visit however also benefits the village, with proceeds from the tour directly impacting the villager's lives in a positive way. Highly appreciated donations contribute to the village's most pressing needs, such as school computers, or a new roof for an elderly resident's home.

Day 4: Siem Reap – Kratie | Road Trip Through Rural Cambodia

A full day's drive takes us from Siem Reap to Kratie, via the quaint towns of Kampong Thom and Kampong Cham. We pass swathes of quintessential Cambodian countryside, picture-perfect villages and local markets and make a stop at Cambodia's oldest surviving pagoda. Trade a car for a local ferry boat to cross the mighty Mekong River, reaching the magical island of Koh Trong. Without cars or typical modern facilities, this charming island lying opposite Kratie Town is blissfully removed from time and modernity. Here, locals live out a simple rural life in palm-shaded communities.

Day 5: Kratie | Boat Cruise to Spot the Elusive Irrawaddy Dolphins

A former colonial town, Kratie boasts a rich legacy of French architecture. This riverside town however is one of Cambodia's most popular bases for sightings of the rare, Irrawaddy dolphins, which inhabit the Mekong River in ever-dwindling numbers. We board a private boat and venture into the Mekong's swirling waters to spot these elusive freshwater dolphins and critically endangered creatures. Our guide will assist us to find the best vantage point. While cruising along the river, we also get to see rare birds and local fishermen casting their nets.

Day 6: Kratie – Mondulkiri | Scenic Drive and Mountain Temple Views

We make the scenic drive to Mondulkiri, observing enroute how the landscape subtly changes from flat plains to mountainous terrain. We also make a stop at a lookout point up in the hills, from where we can marvel at the vast stretch of jungle scenery below. For even more stupendous views, continue onwards to Dob Kromom ("Grandma and Grandpa Mountain") Hilltop Pagoda. Steeped high on a mountain, the ascent to this serene Buddhist temple is rewarded with sweeping vistas of this extraordinary Cambodian province.

Day 7: Mondulkiri | Wild Day Out at an Elephant Sanctuary

Rise early and head for the Elephant Valley Project, a pioneering elephant sanctuary that is home to the smaller-sized Cambodian Elephants and their larger Thai cousins. Learn all about the important conservation work amid this natural environment and the elephant's habits and personality traits. As part of a small group, we shadow two elephant families as they go about their daily lives in the lush Cambodian jungle. Listen as the local mahouts share fascinating insights into how they handle the needs and emotions of their elephant charges. A truly memorable day spent alongside these gentle and precious creatures.

Day 8: Mondulkiri – Phnom Penh | Coffee Plantations and Jungle Waterfalls

The predominantly fertile red soil, high elevation and highland climate of Mondulkiri Province lends excellent conditions for a number of crops to thrive, including coffee beans. Irrigated by natural streams, these coffee plantations are tended to largely by farmers from indigenous hill-tribes that have inhabited the area since before the Angkor-era. Nestled amid the mountain plains, we also stop at Bousra, a powerful, three-stage waterfall. Tumbling through a gorge set in dense jungle, this scenic waterfall offers great photographic opportunities. Continue onwards to Phnom Penh, a rapidly developing capital city, where centuries of momentous history and Khmer culture are still evident.

Day 9: Phnom Penh | Experience Rural Life on a Riverine Island

A mere 30-minutes northeast of Phnom Penh lies Silk Island, embedded in the Mekong River. After the city life, this riverine island provides a peaceful, pastoral respite and an authentic taste of rural Cambodia. Our local guides for the day, an ex-pat and a Silk Island native couple, personally guide us round their rustic island home. We visit a local market, school, pagoda and an eerie, abandoned hotel. There is also ample opportunity to engage with the islanders and learn new skills, including traditional noodle-making with a local vendor.

Day 10: Departure

Transfer to Siem Reap International Airport for your onward journey...

End of the services...

NOTE. This tour can be modified as per your requirements.