



USEFUL INFORMATION FOR TRIPS TO CAMBODIA

AIRLINES (DOMESTIC)

Cambodia currently has 3 domestic airlines, operating flights within Cambodia:

Angkor Air with three airports in active use (Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Sihanoukville). Cambodia Angkor Air (code K6) operates flights between Phnom Penh and Siem Reap and also Sihanoukville and Siem Reap, and has standard one class category.

Bassaka Air with two airports in active use (Phnom Penh and Siem Reap). Bassaka Air (code 5B) operates flights between Phnom Penh and Siem Reap and has economy & business class options.

Bayon Airlines with three airports in active use (Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Sihanoukville). Bayon Airlines (code BD) operates flights between Phnom Penh and Siem Reap and Sihanoukville and Phnom Penh, and has economy & business class options.

AIRLINES (INTERNATIONAL)

The following airlines currently fly into Cambodia: Thai Airways, Bangkok Airways, Air Asia, Air France, Asiana Airlines, Cambodia Angkor Air, Cebu Airways, China Airlines, China Eastern Airlines, China Southern Airlines, Dragon Air, EVA Air, Jetstar Asia, Korean Air, Lao Airlines, Malaysia Airlines, Qatar Airways, Shanghai Airlines, Silk Air, Tiger Airways and Vietnam Airlines.

Cambodia Angkor Air operates international routes to Saigon, Hanoi, Bangkok and Guangzhou with further plans for expansion within the region.

AIRPORT TAX

Departure tax is included in the ticket price for both domestic and international flights.

CLOTHING

Comfortable lightweight clothing in natural fabrics such as cotton is most suitable for traveling in Cambodia. The dress code is fairly casual as in most parts of the tropics but it is advisable to cover arms and legs in the evenings against biting insects. A lightweight raincoat and umbrella are a good idea in the rainy season and the umbrella can also offer useful shade from the sun.

Shoes (and socks) must be removed before entering any religious building or private home.

ELECTRICITY

Cambodia uses 220V, and a mixture of flat 2-pin, round 2-pin or 3 pin plugs. It is recommended to bring a universal plug adaptor. Power outages happen occasionally but most hotels have their own generator.

ENTERTAINMENT & DINING

Western style entertainment is easy to find in Cambodia. Phnom Penh and Siem Reap have a wealth of good restaurants and a large number of bars and some nightclubs. In the rest of the country, entertainment is still emerging, but some tourist-oriented restaurants and bars can be found in most tourist destinations in Cambodia. Exo can provide a list of recommended restaurants in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap.



ETIQUETTE

Dos in Cambodia:

- Ask for permission before taking photographs of any Cambodian people or monks. Most times you will be welcomed to take photos but on occasion some people might request some payment – therefore best to ask first!
- It is customary to remove your shoes and socks when entering a place of worship such as a pagoda or temple. Additionally, visitors should dress appropriately when inside a religious site (upper arms and legs should be covered, hats removed). If temples are part of the days sightseeing flip flop/thong shoes can be practical.
- It is respectful to remove your shoes when entering someone's home.
- If invited to dine in a Cambodian family's home, it is polite to bring a small gift for the host such as fruit, dessert, or flowers.
- If invited to attend a Cambodian wedding, it is customary to bring money as a wedding gift (\$20 per couple would suffice)
- When using a toothpick at the table, use one hand to cover your mouth.
- Though not necessarily expected, a respectful way of greeting another individual is to bow the head slightly with hands pressed together at the chest (known as "Sampeah").

Don'ts in Cambodia

- Don't use your feet to point at someone. In Buddhism feet are considered the lowest part of the body and it is rude to point with them!
- Don't touch a Cambodian person on the head. Being the highest part of the body it would be condescending to pat someone on the head.
- Don't start eating before the host if you are a guest at a dinner.
- Women should never touch male monks or hand something directly to them.
- Keep public displays of affection to a respectful minimum. Whilst some tourists cycle in skimpy shorts and with tank top shirts it is not well appreciated by Cambodians. We recommend normal knee length shorts and T-Shirts with short sleeves as being appropriate.
- Be responsible and do not enter schools, orphanages or hospitals – this is not acceptable in most peoples home countries and should not be done in Cambodia despite often being offered to tourists.

FOOD

As in many Asian countries, the staple food of the Cambodian diet is rice. This is usually served with dried, salted fish, chicken, beef or pork. Fish is often fresh from Tonle Sap Lake and is eaten with a spicy peanut sauce called *tuk Trey*. Popular dishes include *sam chruk*, a roll of sticky rice stuffed with soya bean and chopped pork and *amok*, a soup of boneless fish with coconut and spices. In Siem Reap and Phnom Penh, Western food is widely available and increasingly so in the provinces.



GIVING SOMETHING BACK

We are often asked about visiting orphanages, schools or hospitals as part of a visit to the country. Whilst the intention is to do good, similar behavior would not be acceptable in Europe or America for example. Exo supports the Child Safe campaign, 'Children are not tourist attractions' and does not arrange any visit to a school or orphanage. The EXO Foundation, our charity entity, has identified a few NGO's and businesses supporting sustainable tourism and development in Cambodia. Please see <http://www.exofoundation.org/on-your-travels> for further details.

HEALTH

No vaccinations are required except for yellow fever if you are coming from an area where the disease is present. However visitors should be inoculated against typhoid, cholera, hepatitis A & B, tetanus and polio. Malaria and Dengue Fever are present in some parts of Cambodia and it is advisable to take precautions especially if traveling off the beaten track. Please consult with your usual doctor or a doctor specialized in tropical countries before traveling.

HOURS OF BUSINESS

Offices are usually open from Monday to Friday from 07:30 or 08:00 until 17:00 and often close for lunch between 12:00 and 14:00. Shops open early and close any time between 18:00 and 22:00. Most shops are open 7 days a week.

INSURANCE

Medical facilities are rather limited in Cambodia and it is essential to take out a good medical insurance policy before traveling. Such an insurance should cover the cost of an evacuation flight out of Cambodia (most of the time to Bangkok or Singapore) which is sometimes necessary either on a regular flight or on a special flight. For adventure tours such as cycling, proof of purchase of a travel insurance policy will be required. In Siem Reap, the Royal Angkor International Hospital (affiliated with the Bangkok Hospital Medical Center) is the best choice, as is the International SOS Clinic in Phnom Penh.

INTERNET

Internet access is widely available in every major city in Cambodia. In Phnom Penh and Siem Reap there are many Internet cafes from which to stay in contact with your home though most hotels and also cafes and restaurants offer Wi-Fi on a complimentary basis. Even in outlying regions, many hotels provide Internet access.

LANGUAGE

Cambodia's national language is called Khmer and unlike the other languages of the region is not a tonal language. The written script originated in southern India. As in other former French colonies the educated older generation often speaks very good French while the younger generation prefers English. Outside the major centers of Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, Battambang and the South Coast, most people speak only Khmer but it is usually no problem to find somebody who can speak some English.



MONEY

The currency of Cambodia is called 'riel'. There is however no need to change your currency into riel as US dollars are the preferred currency and accepted everywhere. Please note that ripped, torn, or old bills will not be accepted. ATM machines, which distribute US dollars, are nowadays found in the main cities across the country and, of course, in abundance in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh. Banks are open Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 15:00 and Saturday morning until 12:00. In the major cities there are exchange bureaus and most hotels will change US dollars although for other currencies it is usually necessary to visit a bank. Traveler's checks can be exchanged at banks and some hotels but can be difficult to change outside of the major cities. Visa Card and MasterCard are now accepted in many hotels, restaurants and shops in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap. However, US dollars cash are still the most reliable form of money to carry. If you are traveling in a local tuk tuk, make sure to have the right amount of cash and change with you as the drivers are unlikely to carry lots of cash with them.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Normal print films are available in Cambodia but professional quality films (like slide films) are very difficult to find and it is better to bring your own. In cities like Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, digital photos can easily be downloaded and loaded onto a DVD in case you run out of memory. Extra memory cards are readily available in the large cities but are not necessarily original versions.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS & KEY DATES

2017

01 January	International New Year Day
07 January	Victory over Genocide Day
11 February	Meak Bochea Day
08 March	International Women's Day
14-15-16 April	Khmer New Year Day
01 May	International Labour Day
10 May	Visak Bochea Day
13-14-15 May	King Norodom Sihamoni's Birthday
14 May	Royal Plowing Ceremony Day
01 June	International Children's day
18 June	Queen Norodom Monineath Sihanouk's Birthday
19-20-21 September	Pchum Ben Festival Day
24 September	Constitutional Day
15 October	Commemoration Day of King Norodom Sihanouk
23 October	Anniversary of Paris Peace Accord Day
29 October	King Norodom Sihamoni's Coronation Day
02-03-04 November	Water Festival Day
09 November	Independence Day
10 December	International Human Rights Day



The above list is fairly exhaustive though the most important dates are highlighted in bold. Closure of tourist sites such as the Royal Palace can occur at short notice and our guides and operational staff will do their best to reschedule sightseeing should this occur. Khmer New Year does not see rampant water throwing as in neighboring countries. Restaurants may close for public holidays though there are plentiful alternative options instead which can be offered.

RELIGION

Buddhism is the dominant religion in Cambodia with 90-95% of the population being Buddhist. Islam is practiced by a small percentage of the population, mainly the Cham people residing near the Vietnam border, and Christianity and Hinduism are the religions of less than 1% of the Cambodian people.

SAFETY

Despite its turbulent history, Cambodia is a safe country to visit. All tourist areas have been cleared of landmines with a comparatively small portion remaining in the more remote areas. As a global rule, never leave your belongings unattended and always maintain eye contact and a firm grip on cameras and shoulder bags.

SHOPPING

Cambodian handicrafts include silks, woodcarvings, rattan weavings, handmade papers and the *krama*, the traditional Cambodian scarf. Phnom Penh and Siem Reap's local markets are the best places for shopping and there are also dozens of charity-run shops throughout the country where you can shop for a cause. Ask your guide for more information.

TELEPHONE

If you have worldwide coverage, you can bring your own mobile phone and use it to make domestic or international calls. Check with your mobile phone provider for the costs before using it abroad - it may be expensive. It is quite easy to get a SIM/Micro SIM on arrival and use within Cambodia if required and cards cost only a few dollars.

Internet cafes offer the best deals with programs such as Skype providing cheap, decent quality overseas calls.

TIME

Cambodia is GMT + 7 and does not operate a daylight-saving system.

TIPPING

Tipping for good service is not expected but is always appreciated in a country where the average annual income is incredibly low compared to Western standards. It is customary to tip tour guides and drivers at the end of a tour. Hotel porters should also be tipped. Do not let a guide talk you into tipping more than you plan to. It is totally up to you who you tip, when and how much and should be based on service received.



TRAVELERS CHECKS

Banks such as ANZ Bank and ACLEDA will change your Travelers Checks for US Dollars but a commission applies (2% to 5%). Very few shops, hotels or restaurants accept Travelers Checks.

NOTE: Travelers Checks can be difficult to change outside of major cities.

VISAS

Most visitors to Cambodia require a visa to enter the country and all travelers must have a passport valid for 6 months after their planned exit from Cambodia.

Most nationalities can get a visa on arrival at the international airports (Siem Reap and Phnom Penh) without prior registration. These Visa on Arrivals are valid for 30 days, single entry and cost USD30 and require one passport sized photo. The immigration at Siem Reap and Phnom Penh airports can arrange photos on arrival for \$2 per person though we suggest to bring them with you to ensure quicker passage into the country.

Electronic Visas are now available through the Ministry's website with a processing time of 3 days. A scanned copy of the passport and USD37 paid by credit card will issue an emailed visa which the traveler must print and bring with them. Most border crossings accept e-visas, however it is recommended to double check with the government or Exo.

Visas are available at the Thailand/Cambodian/Vietnam/Laos checkpoints however scams are common due to the low income of border staff and it is recommended to arrange visas in advance in your home country or through the e-visa program.

WEATHER

Cambodia has two distinctive seasons: Rainy from June to October and dry from November to May. Traveling during the rainy season has its benefits as the temple moats in Siem Reap are full, making for great photos. The rains are usually in the afternoon and last 1-3 hours. The dry season can be dusty, but easier for walking through the jungle terrain around the temples. The temperature is fairly steady 30-35 Celsius during the day time, although November to January often has cooler temperatures.

WATER

It is not advisable to drink tap water but bottled mineral water is safe and available everywhere. All hotels provide a complimentary bottle of local mineral water per person in the room. Ice cubes in drinks is generally OK in good standard hotels and restaurants but it is best to avoid it on street stalls or in country areas. Some minor stomach problems are always possible when travelling in exotic countries. Bring a supply of your usual anti-diarrhoea medicine.