

Thailand to Cambodia Overland



Departs anytime (2018-19)



Please note: This itinerary can be modified in any way to best suit your school's particular aims, learning objectives and budget.

Please contact us detailing any changes you'd like to make.

This 11-day trip has been specifically designed for adventurous high school students. It entails a journey through two of Southeast Asia's most culturally diverse nations; Thailand, the only nation in the region never to have been colonised and Cambodia, a once powerful nation with a dark, yet fascinating recent history.

The trip is intended to be of educational value and has been specifically designed to enhance students' awareness of Southeast Asia and, the cultural and historical forces that have shaped this dynamic region. Highlights of this trip will include a thorough exploration of Bangkok & Phnom Penh, a visit to the site of the infamous Thai-Burma Railway as well as excursions to the World Heritage listed sites of Ayutthaya and Angkor Temples.

The itinerary also includes a substantial service program, prearranged to encourage awareness of development issues in Cambodia and Thailand. It further includes several recreational based activities to ensure that this trip is as enjoyable as it is memorable.



Billy Penfold
Director

Day 1

Arrive Thailand - Bangkok

Arriving in the bustling city of Bangkok, we will be greeted at the airport by our tour leader and transported to our hotel. Following this, we will venture out for a boat cruise to a vibrant market & arts precinct on Chao Phraya River for our first taste of Thailand.

Later we will enjoy our first taste of Thai cuisine before boating back toward our hotel and a well anticipated night's rest. (lunch, dinner) **Flight details to be advised**

Day 2

Bangkok



Following a brief orientation meeting with our tour leader, we will set out to explore the sights, sounds and smells of this famous Asian city - the epitome of the modern, steaming Asian metropolis and a wonderful dynamic Asian hub. We will begin by boarding a riverboat and explore the Chao Phraya River to see everyday life in Bangkok. Following this, we will visit the Grand Palace with its many spectacular temples. These glorious buildings were once the seat of monarchical power and were built as a city. Learning of the exploits of the modern King, our local guide will explain just why Thailand maintains one of the world's strongest and most respected monarchies. Today we shall also visit Wot Po - a Buddhist temple with a reclining Buddha, 46 metres in length. Mid-

afternoon there will be time to enjoy some of Bangkok's world-famous shopping at MBK Shopping Centre via the sky train before returning to our hotel for an evening swim. Moving around the city, we will discuss transport and infrastructure successes and hurdles as the city continues to grow. (breakfast, lunch)

Day 3

Kanchanaburi (Thai - Burma railway) - Ayutthaya



We will depart Bangkok and travel to the town of Kanchanaburi. This town is the site of the infamous Japanese prison base that held captured Dutch, Australian, British and other allied Prisoners of war (POWs) during World War II. During this tumultuous period, the POWs were forced to build a 415 km railway to Myanmar (formerly Burma) through some of the most rugged jungle terrain imaginable. Today we will visit the largest war cemetery in Thailand, followed by a visit to the infamous *Bridge on the River Kwai*, popularised by the Hollywood Movie of the same name. We will also travel by train along a major stretch of track built by POWs to better glean an idea of the effort that went into the construction of the railway. Mid-afternoon we will travel to Ayutthaya, the former Thai capital city of

Ayutthaya that we will explore tomorrow. (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Day 4

Ayutthaya – Poi Pet (Cambodia)



Once one of the most beautiful cities on earth, Ayutthaya was founded in the fourteenth century and was the capital of Thailand for over 400 years. In its glory days, Ayutthaya's illustrious reputation was legendary and home to three palaces, numerous temple monasteries, and valuable art and treasures. Ayutthaya's wealth and size were often compared to Paris. But despite the city's strategic positioning, its wealth provided too tempting and eventually fell under attack by the Burmese. The Thai King subsequently move the capital to Bangkok, where they have remained ever since.

This morning we take a boat trip inside the historical park and visit two or three beautiful ancient buildings as well as have ample time to wander around the Parks ruins.

This afternoon we will drive to the Thailand - Cambodia border in this very remoter part of Southeast Asia to prepare and cross over into Cambodia. Tonight, staff will talk to us about the coming day's activities working with a local Cambodian NGO (Non-Government

Organisation). (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Day 5 Poi Pet



Today we will undertake community service work assisting a disadvantaged community. Our program will include working at a rural school, located a short distance from Poi Pet. Here we will conduct basic English classes after some brief but useful instruction from our tour leader regarding using grammar structures as effective ways to elicit language.

Whilst sectors of Cambodia have improved owing to tourism in recent years, most of Cambodia remains deprived owing to years of conflict and social neglect. During our time in the region, our tour leader will talk to us about these developmental issues as well as the effects of rampant development, environmental degradation, and the arrival of casinos and their impact in the

local population and economy. (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Day 6 Poi Pet – Siem Reap (Student Initiated Activities)

Today we depart by bus to the interior of the country driving some 150km. Along the way, we have the chance to see (or taste) barbecue grilled field rats or deep-fried spiders and cockroaches at local street-side stalls. Passing through the town of Banteay Meanchey we stop at the traditional House of Khor Sang build in 1907 to see how the wealthy Khmer once lived. The house is decorated with both French and Cambodia decorations. We will arrive in Siem Reap at lunch and have time for a swim in our hotel pool.

Prior to travelling, a Student Educational Adventures staff member will talk to teachers and students about specific activities that your students might like to add to their overseas experience. These activities can be included based on students' knowledge of the country or their interests or passions for any aspect of a country's culture. The activities we can include are many and varied. These may include; an introduction to a country's creative or performing arts scene, visits to local schools, great race activities, outdoor educational pursuits such as hiking, bike riding or a plethora of cultural programs. Please contact us for further ideas.

OPTION 1:



Great race: The Race around Siem Reap is a competitive team building event designed to take students on a competitive race throughout the surrounding city.

The activity is designed so that students may learn more about of Cambodia as well as aspects of Southeast Asian culture and daily life.

In small teams, students engage in a challenge where the objective is to locate race checkpoints, solve team challenges and then travel to the next checkpoint. There is a great prize for the winning team also! (breakfast, dinner)

OPTION 2:



Mountain biking activity There are numerous biking tracks on the outskirts of Siem Reap that we can take to explore the rural countryside.

This activity will give students a great opportunity to visit local villages and gain an understanding and appreciation of everyday life. The bike ride affords us the ability to travel to some of the most traditional villages. Little has changed in this region's way of life, where horse and cart are still a common form of transport and farming practices are still done by hand. (breakfast, dinner)

OPTION 3:

Arts and crafts: Around Siem Reap there are various arts and craft centres where we may try our hand at painting, weaving or even traditional dancing. We can also learn about lacquerware techniques, charcoal paintings and bas-relief temple rubbings. Time can also be spent out in the villages helping with weaving baskets, fishing nets and thatched roofing. After a swim in the hotel pool, our tour leader will escort us downtown for dinner. (breakfast, dinner)

Day 7

Siem Reap – Temples of Angkor



This morning we will set out to explore the magnificent Temples of Angkor. Often mistakenly referred to as 'Angkor Wat' (which simply denotes the name of the largest temple), the Angkor Temple complex is a multifarious arrangement of some 112 structures that began construction in the early to mid-12th Century. It is dedicated to several gods as the Khmer Empire developed and its culture transitioned from a predominately Hindu to a Buddhist philosophy.

Our activities begin with a visit to the aesthetically and architecturally breathtaking Angkor Wat Temple. Here we will learn of this massive three-tiered pyramid, reputed to be the world's tallest religious structure, dedicated specifically by the Khmer King Suryavarman II to the Hindu god, Vishnu.

After lunch we will visit *Ta Prohm*, the jungle temple made famous in the Hollywood movie *Tomb Raider*. This quiet, sprawling monastic complex is only partially cleared of jungle overgrowth. Intentionally left partially unrestored, large fig and silk-cotton trees grow from the towers and corridors offering some of the best photo opportunities at Angkor. Tonight we take in a performance of the local circus that will bring to life traditional legends and stories by way of vibrant dance, music and acrobatics. (breakfast, dinner)

Day 8 & 9

Siem Reap



This morning we begin two days of community service work in another rural community. It is here we will build a house on stilts for a family stuck in the poverty cycle. Jobs will entail moving timber and concrete posts, nailing, sanding, handling tin sheets, landscaping and gardening. It is advised that students prepare adequately. Whilst rewarding, the project requires diligence and timeliness, working towards main objectives. Local tradesmen will give guidance and on-the-job training. At the end of each day, we will commute back to our hotel. During our time building we will also learn about daily life, how the village functions as a close community, subsistence living and prospects

for the villagers who live here.

On the evening of day 9, we take part in a hands-on cooking demonstration hosted by a talented local chef. *There is the option to replace the house building service project with an agricultural project.* (2 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 1 dinner)

Day 10

Siem Reap – Phnom Penh



This morning another adventure begins as we farewell Siem Reap to travel to Cambodia's capital city Phnom Penh. En route we will stop on a few occasions, our most anticipated rest stop being a break at a spider village where we may try eating a fried tarantula or crickets.

Cambodia's capital can be an assault on the senses as we will discover soon enough! Motorbikes whiz through laneways without a thought for pedestrians; markets exude pungent scents; and all the while the sounds of its ever-restless populous eking out a living reverberate through the streets. Once the 'Pearl of Asia', Phnom Penh's shine was tarnished by the impact of war and revolution. But the city has since risen from the ashes and these

days exude appeal and mystery.

On arrival in Phnom Penh we visit Wat Phnom located on the only hill overlooking the city followed by a *tuk-tuk* orientation tour around the waterfront area. This evening we will enjoy a boat trip on the Mekong River to watch the sunset and learn about this important water source that travels through 6 countries. (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Day 11

Depart Phnom Penh ✈ Home



Today we will visit Phnom Penh's most confronting places. We will begin our trip to the disquieting Toul Sleng Prison and the *Killing Fields* – stark reminders of Cambodia's tragic recent history during the Khmer Rouge reign from 1975-1979. It was during this relatively brief time that a little-known teacher called Pol Pot instituted a reign of terror over the country. He implemented a plan to turn Cambodia into an agriculture-based society, systematically emptying the cities and forcibly moving the people onto collective (state-owned) farms where they performed hard labour. It is estimated that during this time over a fifth of the country's population perished by overwork, starvation and execution.

As a final and upbeat end to our journey, we will explore the city's bustling Russian Market whose vendors sell handicrafts, silverware and the cheapest software to be found anywhere in the world. We then transfer to the airport for our international flight home. (breakfast, lunch, dinner) **Flight details to be advised**

Summary

Grading

Moderate; Students will be required to be in good health to get the most out of this trip whilst any one of reasonable fitness will be able to take part. There are no real physical difficulties however students will be expected to walk every day. Students will also be expected to work diligently during the days of the community service project. It will be necessary for you to carry your own luggage throughout the trip but only for short distances.

Accommodation

Student accommodation is on a twin/triple share basis. Teacher accommodation is on a single room basis. Hotels hold a 3-star equivalent rating.

Transport

Modern air-conditioned bus & vans.

Group Size

Minimum group size 20 students & 2 staff members travelling *free of charge*.

▲ [Smaller group sizes can be quoted upon application](#)

Your Tour Leader

Your tour leader is probably the person who most influences the success of your trip. Thus, Student Educational Adventures employs our own team of meticulously trained student dedicated, local tour leaders - not foreigners, imported at your students' expense with no language skills or insight into your host culture.

These nationals are not only the best folk to show you their country. They are your teachers, translators and an enthusiastic purveyor of authentic experiences. They are there to facilitate your immersion into new cultures and are the bridge between you and the world of education and new experiences.

Your tour leader is always with your students throughout your trip and is thoroughly versed in safety protocols and duty of care responsibilities. This ranges from assisting in the most basic of health and safety measures to ensuring that teachers & students are always safe during our trips. All have been chosen because of their ability to deal with the needs and unique issues associated with escorting young people through this wonderful and at times, most foreign of regions.

Service Learning Program

All service-learning programs initiated by Student Educational Adventures are conducted after careful consultation with the local community and with community People's Committees.

These projects are initiated based on a model of mutual learning and designed as an immersion experience. An understanding of the importance of an integrated approach to community development is useful to frame what students and teachers might see, learn or experience during a student immersion.

Thailand to Cambodia Overland (11 days)

Inclusions

- All accommodation, transport & transfers, sightseeing, attractions and programs as described in the itinerary
- Student Educational Adventures Group Leader throughout the tour
- Local guides where required
- Meals (+ drinking water) as listed in the daily itinerary
- Pre-departure support, briefings & planning meetings for students and parents
- 24/7 in-country support

Exclusions

- International flights to/from Thailand & Cambodia
- Some meals
- Poi Pet & Siem Reap community program: (approx. US\$2,600 - cheaper programs available on request)
- Cambodia Visa & Thailand Visa (if required)