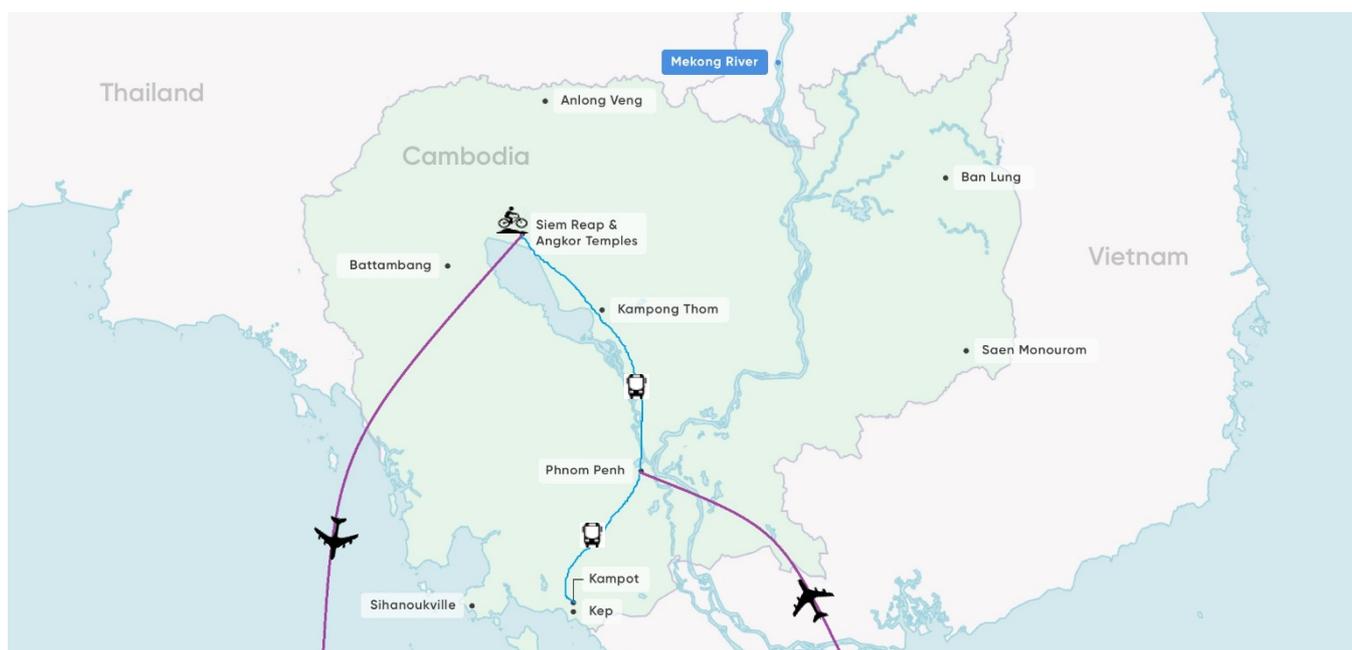


Cambodia - People & Perspective (8 days)

Departs anytime (2021-2022)



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

While most people would imagine that the *Temples of Angkor* are Cambodia's greatest asset, in fact, the country's real treasure is its people. The Cambodians have been to hell and back, struggling through years of violence, poverty and political instability and yet despite this, the Khmer display perseverance and optimism that is as endearing as it is inspiring to all those who visit.

This carefully planned 8-day trip of Cambodia is specifically designed for students seeking insights into the lifestyle of the Khmer people, their values, traditions and environment. It includes activities that examine the country's performing arts, ecological challenges as well as efforts of communities to regenerate themselves after decades of conflict and social neglect.

Taking in the country's most important places of interest as well as its lesser travelled coastal regions, this trip is designed to be highly enjoyable as well as educational. It is further intended to provide students with authentic interaction and enhance their understanding of the tumultuous events that have shaped this endearing country and the greater Asian region.



Billy Penfold
Director

Day 1

✈️ Arrive Cambodia (*Phnom Penh*) 🚌



We will be greeted at Phnom Penh International Airport by our tour leader before boarding our bus to travel into the heart of the city to our hotel. En route, our tour leader will provide us with a quick *Khmer* language lesson and share with us some essential information about travelling in this friendly country.

With no time to lose, we will venture out for an exploration of this challenging city. Phnom Penh is a city of motorbikes whizzing through laneways without a thought for pedestrians. A place of markets exuding powerful scents; and all the while the sounds of life – of commerce, of survival – reverberate through the streets. At the height of the colonial period, Phnom Penh was reputed to be the most beautiful city in French Indochina – a beauty lost during the years of conflict and neglect. Whilst forever hectic, the city today is a fun and friendly place, having risen from the ashes to become a centre of art and cuisine in the Indochina region. Our exploration of the city will begin with a visit to Wat Phnom to learn of the founding of Phnom Penh in the 15th Century, from where we will enjoy panoramic views of the surrounding neighbourhoods.

This evening we take a fun *tuk-tuk* tour to experience the city's pop-up neighbourhoods, French-inspired buildings as well as some of its iconic landmarks. Our *tuk-tuks* will then drop us at a popular restaurant where we will enjoy our first taste of fine *Khmer* cuisine. (*meals: lunch, dinner*) **Flight details to be advised**

Day 2

Phnom Penh



This morning we set out to visit the infamous *Tuol Sleng* Prison and the *Killing Fields*, tragic remnants of Cambodia's recent history during the Khmer Rouge reign from 1975-1979 when an estimated two million people perished from overwork, starvation and execution.

Today we will also visit the city's Russian Market. Visiting these sweltering bazaars are a must when travelling in Cambodia, and whilst we can't vouch for the authenticity of everything, the experience, colour and interaction are the real attraction of these markets. Later we will visit the Silver Pagoda

situated alongside the Royal Palace to learn about the royal family and French colonial influences.

As the sun sets, we take an evening boat cruise on the Mekong River to see the city skyline from another perspective and see how the city is developing in all directions. (*meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner*)

Day 3

Tamao 🐻 Kampot



Today we will journey out of the city for a special excursion to the Ta Mao Wildlife Sanctuary. Here we set off on bicycles to explore the myriad of animals that are residents of the park including Asian bears. We will also learn of the issues developing countries face in preserving their fragile environments where competition for resources is particularly acute.

We then begin an adventurous journey to the country's southwest region to the township of Kampot near the coast. Here we explore a local cave and visit a nearby Buddhist monastery to learn about the daily routine of the

monks living here.

This riverside town, with streets rimmed by dilapidated shophouse architecture, has a dreamy quality we will enjoy this evening as we stroll around its friendly streets (*meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner*)

Day 4

Mt Bokor, Preah Monivong National Park 🚶 Phnom Penh



The legacy of some ninety years of French Colonial rule is today still evident throughout Cambodia, in its cities as well as in the remote regions that we will visit. First established by the French in 1917, the picturesque Mt. Bokor Hill Station was built by engaging convict labourers that were routinely exploited by French provincial governments throughout their colonies. On top of the mountain, the French established a casino, post office, school and other buildings as a resort before civil war broke out that led to the settlement being abandoned. This site in more recent times was used by the

Khmer Rouge and later the Vietnamese Army during the 1980s & 90s.

This afternoon we will visit Preah Monivong National Park. Cambodia is home to an incredible collection of wildlife. While many of the amazing species are on the endangered or at-risk list, there are numerous initiatives across the country to boost dwindling populations which we will learn of. In the late afternoon, we will return to Phnom Penh and enjoy a swim in our hotel pool before a final scenic *tuk-tuk* tour to enjoy the city's nightscapes. *(meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner)*

Day 5

Phnom Penh 🚶 Siem Reap



Following breakfast, we walk a short distance to the Silver Pagoda within the grounds of the Royal Palace. Here we will learn about the Royal family and French colonial influences while touring some of the royal buildings and residences.

Mid-morning, we will set off for our bus trip travelling north to Siem Reap. While long, this journey will afford us a wonderful glimpse into the lives of those who subsist in what is still an overwhelmingly agriculturally based society. We will stop at a mid-way point where we can taste some special local delicacies including durian and for the more adventurous

amongst us – deep-fried spiders.

After checking into our hotel, we will head out to visit a highly successful non-government organisation (NGO) that works actively to empower Cambodia's youth by giving young Cambodians a hand up - rather than a handout. We will be joining in the efforts of the NGO who have initiated highly successful programs throughout the city and its hinterland in the fields such as women's health, as well as nutrition and vocational training initiatives. *(meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner)*

Day 6

Siem Reap 🚲 *(Temples of Angkor)*



This morning we will set out to explore the magnificent *Temples of Angkor* and enjoy roaming this inspirational and ancient expanse on sturdy and environmentally friendly mountain bikes.

Often mistakenly referred to as 'Angkor Wat' which merely denotes the name of the largest temple, the Angkor Temple complex is a diverse arrangement of some 112 structures that began construction in the early to mid-12th Century and is dedicated to several gods as the Khmer Empire developed and its culture transitioned from a predominately Hindu to

Buddhist philosophy.

Beginning with a visit to the aesthetically and architecturally breath-taking Angkor Wat Temple, we will explore this massive three-tiered pyramid dedicated specifically by the Khmer King Suryavarman II to the Hindu god, Vishnu.

After lunch, we will visit *Ta Prohm*, made famous in the Hollywood movie *Tomb Raider*. This quiet, sprawling complex is only partially cleared of jungle overgrowth. Intentionally left somewhat unrestored, large fig and silk-cotton trees grow from the towers and corridors offering some of the best photo opportunities at Angkor.

NB: The bike ride is a highly enjoyable activity suitable for any student of average fitness with the ability to ride a bike. The activity will cover a total distance of around 15-20kms. The bikes we will use are new, sturdy mountain bikes with helmets provided. We also employ a support crew to follow our group and make running repairs and carry students if they are not able to ride. Students will be required to carry a water bottle during this activity. (meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Day 7

Siem Reap (student-initiated activities)



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 your Cambodian travel experience. These activities can be included based on students' knowledge of the country or their interests or passions for any aspect of the country's culture. The activities we can include are many and varied and can entail an introduction to a country's creative or performing arts scene, interaction with local contemporaries, an 'Amazing Race' style activity, outdoor educational pursuits such as hiking, bike riding or a plethora of cultural programs. Please contact us for further ideas.

Activity 1:



Cambodian Circus This traditional Cambodian performance makes for great entertainment, leaving the spectator in awe at the talents of these brilliant young performers. A fantastic blend of traditional and modern theatre, music, dance, acrobatics, juggling and contortion all beautifully choreographed in a story about Cambodian lives and society. The show is a project of a non-profit organisation founded by eight young Cambodian ex-refugees of the Khmer Rouge regime, committed to reviving the Cambodian arts. (meals: breakfast, lunch)

Activity 2:



Arts and Crafts: Throughout history, the artisans and craftsmen of Cambodia have created a style of arts and crafts that is truly unique and exquisitely Khmer. Today we will learn more about the arts of Cambodia during a visit to an artisan base where we may try our hand at painting, weaving or even carving. As part of this program, students will have the opportunity to attempt traditional lacquerware production, charcoal painting and bas-relief temple rubbing assisted by local artisans. (meals: breakfast, lunch)

Activity 3:



Mt. Kulen waterfall excursion: This morning we will enjoy a day trip to the sacred Cambodian site of Mt. Kulen. On our journey, we will stop at a landmine museum to learn more of the terrible legacy of conflict in Cambodia from last century. Here we will see many inert examples of this terrible weapon that continues to cause so much suffering and the ongoing efforts to eradicate them.

Upon arrival at Mt. Kulen we will dine on a picnic lunch before exploring the area. Some of the nearby attractions include a reclining Buddha, ancient riverbed carvings as well as magnificent waterfalls. It was on top of this mountain just recently that an unknown city - complete with temples, waterways and roads - was discovered and has yet to be excavated. We will return to Siem Reap before heading out for some independent exploration. (meals: breakfast, lunch)

Day 8

Tonle Sap Lake - Depart Siem Reap ✈️ home



An appreciation of the role water plays in this underprivileged country is an important part of any student trip to Cambodia and something we will learn the significance of as we visit the Tonle Sap Lake.

A fifth of Cambodia's provinces border this expansive lake, whilst a quarter of the country's population (some three million people) inhabit its banks and depend on this vast freshwater source for irrigation, fishing and other uses.

So as we may learn more about this fragile way of life, we will travel by boat to explore these lake communities, to glean insights into the lives of these

landless inhabitants who eke out a living providing fish to the country's restaurants and hotels.

Most of the families who live on the lake are ethnic Vietnamese or Cham minority people, whose livelihoods are constantly challenged by threats to their water supply, pollution and other communities as our tour leader will explain.

There will be time this afternoon to pick up a last-minute souvenir, or perhaps enjoy an excruciatingly ticklish fish foot massage before we transfer to the airport for our flight home. Our tour leader will take care of all our onward travel arrangements and wave us farewell. *(meals: breakfast) **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 while anyone of reasonable fitness will be able to take part. There are no real physical difficulties however students will be expected to walk every day. You will also be expected to be able to ride a bike. 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, boat, bicycle.

Group Size

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

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

Specific Trip activities

PHNOM PENH

- Visit *Toul Sleng* centre
- 'killing fields' excursion
- Phnom Penh city tour
- Q&A session with Khmer Rouge Collaborator and/or survivor
- *Russian Market* tour
- *Tuk-Tuk* exploratory activity

TAMAO (KAMPOT)

- Ta Mao Wildlife Sanctuary

MT BOKOR

- Preah Monivong National Park
- *Bokor Hill Station*

SIEM REAP

- *Angkor Temples* excursion
- Khmer performing arts circus activity
- Apsara cultural dance activity
- Silk farm visit
- Tonle Sap river community excursion
- Pre-planned visit to leading non-governmental organisation (NGO)
- [Please see below: 7 things to check before choosing a student travel company # 5. How authentic are your service-learning programs?](#)
- *Student-initiated activity:*
- Hands-on craft session with local artisans
- Mountain biking activity
- *Phare* Cambodian circus activity
- *Mt. Kulen* waterfall day trip

Cambodia - People & Perspective (8 days)

#Please contact [Student Educational Adventures](#) for a competitive flight quote for flights from your country.

Inclusions

- All accommodation, transport, activities, entrance costs and other programs as described in the itinerary
- Professional *Student Educational Adventures* tour leader throughout trip & additional specialist guides
- Community project sourcing and arrangements
- Extensive destination-specific risk management and assessments
- Meals (along with drinking water) as listed and underlined in the daily itinerary
- 24 hours **IN COUNTRY** support from *Student Educational Adventures* staff
- Pre-departure support, briefings and planning meetings for students and parents
- All equipment
- Parents information evening presentation
- Parental & student advice for vaccinations & equipment etc.
- Tips for local guides & drivers
- **Cost of the community project**

Exclusions

- International flights to/from Cambodia #
- Some meals as described in the itinerary
- Cambodian visa (Not required by some nationalities)

7 things to check before choosing a student travel company



Choosing the right travel company is one of the most important decisions you'll make for your students. As you compare different school travel providers, you'll need to weigh up everything from staffing arrangements to overall trip cost – and, of course, educational value.

To help you choose with confidence, we've created a checklist of seven essential factors to consider when you're assessing travel companies. You'll be pleased to know that these factors are a feature of every trip we run.

1. Does your travel provider have a truly local presence?

You might not know it, but many school travel companies have no local presence in the countries they send your students to. Behind the façade, these providers are marketing companies who outsource their trips to in-country operators – often importing a foreign manager at your schools' expense. Value for money aside, running trips in this way has far-reaching consequences in an emergency, when access to language skills and local knowledge are vital.

To make sure you're getting a genuinely local experience, it's important to choose a bonafide in-country travel company who has a real local presence in the country you're travelling to. For example, we use our own in-country supervisors and tour leaders to manage the school trips we run. As local experts, they travel with you and your students throughout your entire trip and are responsible for every aspect of your students' wellbeing.

2. Is your school trip *really* of value to your students?

A trip abroad with friends will appeal to any young person, and many will relish the chance to explore a world away from home. But to be of real and enduring educational value, a school trip should challenge students beyond the kinds of basic touristic experiences they might just as easily have on a family holiday.

To this end, your school travel provider should provide a customised itinerary that shows quality and depth of engagement. We tailor each of our itineraries to push students beyond a surface-level exchange and maximise their time in-country so they're learning the whole time they're travelling. Our activity-rich programs are big on cross-cultural interaction, team-building and authentic local experiences. We also include community service projects wherever possible, which make our trips not only highly educational but life-changing, too.

3. Is the person leading your students up to the task?

The best people to lead you through a country are the folk who live there. But on top of having expert local knowledge, the people leading your students should also be expertly trained to deal with young student travellers. A tour leader who's up to the task can teach across the full range of personalities, interests and abilities found among every student group.

For this reason, we make sure our tour leaders have at least three years' experience leading student groups before they go in-field with yours. And they're more than just guides – they're also teachers, translators and troubleshooters. Our tour leaders will welcome you warmly when your group arrive, manage all of your trip logistics, and work responsibly to make sure you and your students always stay healthy and safe.

4. How safe is your travel provider, really?

While some travel companies offer a 24-hour call centre, there's no substitute for having local people by your side and looking after you where you are. Local staff know the lay of the land, how to access the best medical attention in times of crisis and which dialect or language to speak when you need it most. This is especially important outside of major cities, where major providers' services can be limited.

Our in-country staff and tour leaders not only access the best international providers (such as SOS, Global Rescue and Columbia Asia), but also complement these with expert knowledge of the nearest and most appropriate medical attention within every local area. So, if a worst-case scenario happens – when you need to communicate with non-English speaking doctors; when a comprehensive first aid kit won't do the job; or when the phone number of an international medical provider just isn't sufficient – you can be sure your student group is in the best of hands, no matter where they are.

5. How authentic are your service-learning programs?

Today, having students raise money for their overseas trip is a common way for schools to give back to the places they visit. However, exchanging skills – and smiles – with local communities can leave a positive legacy that's even more powerful.

Fundraising, while well-intentioned, can be in vain if it's not done in consultation with local communities. To make sure your impact isn't simply an add-on, choose a school travel company that facilitates projects that solve real community problems and which help build local capacity.

Take our community service projects, for instance. We develop them through extensive cooperation with local people's committees, NGOs and women's organisations to ensure your students' altruism has a lasting impact. All our service components are meticulously planned, designed to be meaningful and transparent, and, most importantly, provide tangible long-term benefits for communities.

6. Does the program you're being offered match your students' learning needs?

No two school groups are the same, which is why no two school trips should follow the same itinerary. Check that the travel company you choose offers a customised program that's flexibly designed to match your students' unique interests. In our experience, nothing inhibits a successful trip more than 'off the shelf' programs with generic activities.

For this reason, each trip we run is tailored to your school's curriculum and your students' distinct learning needs. We also like to involve students in co-designing their itinerary. Prior to their trip, we run a series of student-initiated activities to promote agency and collaboration, setting them up for success once they're overseas.

7. Is the tour priced competitively?

A foreign travel experience for your students needn't cost the earth. And while variations in destinations, flights and trip durations add complexity to the task of pricing your trip, the school travel company you choose should offer you that transparency, without question.

Alongside integrity in pricing sit sound educational outcomes. If your trip provider can't quantify how your students will benefit from the trip, then you might ask whether they're the right fit for you and your school.

Because we operate entirely in-country, with exclusively local staff, our overheads are significantly lower compared to those of other travel companies. With us, your money goes directly toward creating your tour, rather than to overseas administration costs or third-party suppliers.