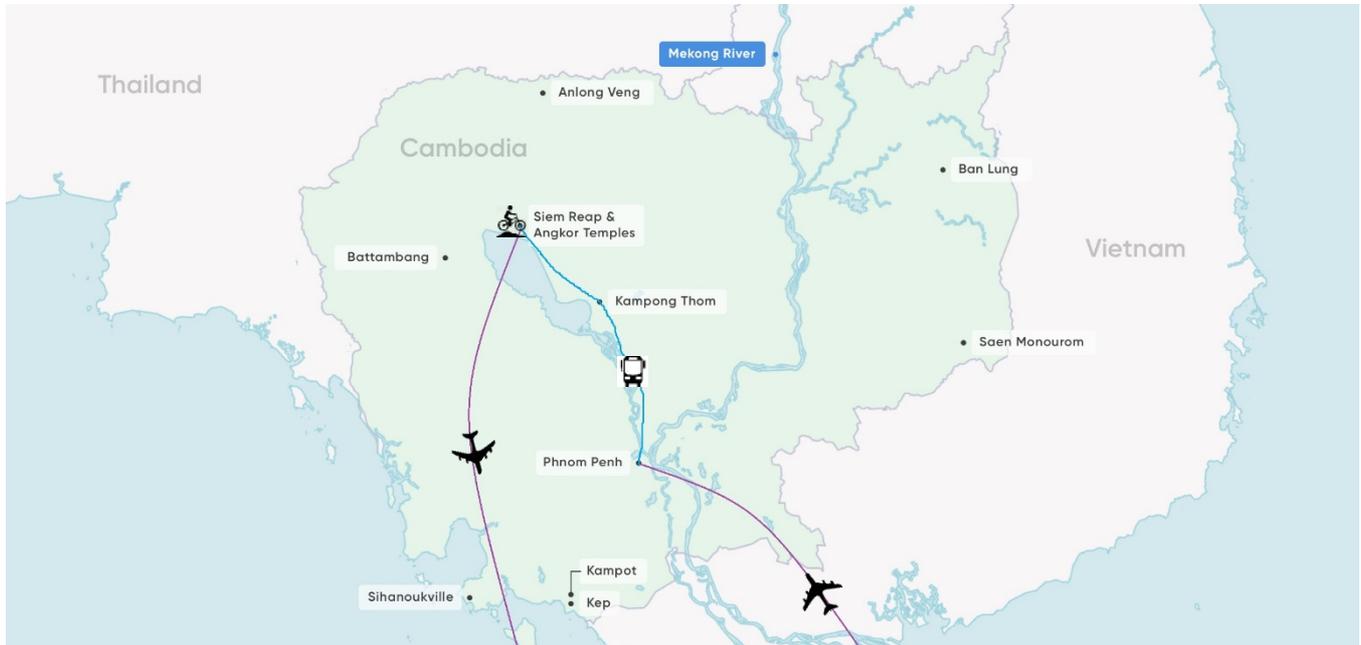


## Cambodia *Week Without Walls (7 days)*



Departs anytime (2021-2022)



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

A visit to Cambodia promises a roller coaster of emotions and experiences. As you admire the beauty of what was once the most prominent empire in Southeast Asia, you must simultaneously come to terms with one of history's most tragic events when around a quarter of the country's population perished under the Pol Pot regime.

Today Cambodia is a safe and welcoming nation and a wonderful destination for students interested in the development and ecological issues, politics and Southeast Asia history.

This 7-day educational tour to Cambodia has been designed to provide students with several unique travel experiences including authentic interaction with their Khmer contemporaries, a 'Great Race' urban challenge, a hands-on cooking class, as well as the chance to meet a survivor or a collaborator of the Khmer Rouge regime.

As this trip is intended to be of a service-learning nature, it will further entail a challenging service program working alongside villages in a remote district to assist a local community in a sustainable agricultural project.

Most importantly, this trip is designed to be highly enjoyable and provide students with a very memorable and fulfilling introduction to one of the friendliest countries in Asia.



Billy Penfold  
Director

## Day 1

### Arrive Cambodia (*Phnom Penh*)



On arrival in Cambodia, we will be greeted at Phnom Penh International Airport by our tour leader before boarding our bus to travel to our hotel in the city's centre. En route, our tour leader will give a quick *Khmer* (Cambodian Language) lesson and share with us some essential information about travelling in this friendly country.

Whilst temples are the first thing that springs to mind when people mention Cambodia, the country's urban areas can surprise with a sophistication that we will learn more about this afternoon. Phnom Penh is a city of

motorbikes, whizzing through laneways without a thought for pedestrians who wander its powerful smelling markets as the sounds of life – of commerce, of survival – resonate through its streets. Once the 'Pearl of Asia' (depending on what history books you read!). The city, like two generations of Cambodians, has been to hell and back owing to years of conflict and neglect. Despite this, its colonial beauty and charm are still evident to the keen observer.

This evening we take a quick stroll out to see life on the banks of the Tonle Sap River which typically includes impromptu aerobics classes and rap performance by the city's youth. (*meals: dinner*) **Flight details to be advised**

## Day 2

### Phnom Penh



After breakfast, we set out to explore some of Phnom Penh's most important places of interest including a visit to the *Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum*, a former high school which was used by the Khmer Rouge as a security prison (S-21). From 1976 to 1979 some 15,000 people were incarcerated in this school, interrogated and often tortured before finally being taken away to be executed. Like the Nazis, the Khmer Rouge were meticulous in keeping records of their barbarism, evidence of which can be readily viewed as can testimonials of survivors as well as guards. *Tuol*

*Sleng* (and similar sites across Cambodia) are now considered places of vital historical significance that serve to remind future generations of the horror of this tumultuous period in history. Students will also have the rare opportunity to meet a Khmer Rouge photographer or prison survivor to learn of their experiences during this dark period in history.

In the second half of the day, we will journey to the outskirts of Phnom Penh to visit the *Killing Fields* – a stark reminder of Cambodia's tragic recent history during the Khmer Rouge reign. It was during this relatively brief time a little known teacher called Pol Pot instituted a reign of terror over the country and 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 many of whom were buried in killing fields such as the one we visit.

Our final stop will be the *Russian Market*. This scorching bazaar is renowned for its handicrafts and antiques (probably fake mind you!), including miniature Buddhas, betel-nut boxes, silks, silver jewellery, musical instruments and so on. After a swim at the hotel pool, we head out for a walking tour of this dynamic city followed by dinner. (*meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner*)

## Day 3

### Phnom Penh

This morning we visit the Silver Pagoda in the grounds of the Royal Palace. Here we will learn about the Cambodian Royal family and French colonial influences. The current king resides here, King Sihamoni. His father the previous king Sihanouk was under house arrest in this very palace during the Khmer Rouge reign over Cambodia.



For lunch, we will visit 'Friends' charity restaurant and workshop run by disadvantaged youth before heading across the river to visit a slum area of the city. Here we will meet a Missionary who has been living and working in Phnom Penh where he runs a small T-shirt printing business which aims to employ street kids to help get their lives back on track. We will learn about life in Phnom Penh and the opportunities and aspirations of some of its less fortunate residents.

Later in the day, we take a *tuk-tuk* ride around the city passing the diplomatic quarter to view the city diplomatic quarter, Independence Monument as well as Diamond Island. Our excursion will afford us an after dark glimpse of this city of significant contrasts that has seen significant Chinese investment in recent years amid the poverty which still characterises much of the city and indeed, the country. Whilst in Phnom Penh we will also enjoy a sunset boat cruise on the Mekong & Tonle Bassic Rivers to learn of the importance of this water resource, hydro damning projects upstream and the impacts of human activity along the riverbanks. *(meals: breakfast, dinner)*

#### Day 4

##### Phnom Penh 🚗 Siem Reap (*non-governmental organisation interaction activity*)



Our new adventure begins as we farewell Phnom Penh to travel to Cambodia's central region. En route, we will stop at an intriguing spider village at which time the braver amongst us may like to sample fried tarantula or baked crickets.

While the journey is a long one, it is also a chance for us to gain an insight into the lives of most of the Khmer population who are still rural dwellers. En route, we will visit a local Non-Government Organization (NGO) established by in a remote province which receives little of the economic benefits that are accessible in other parts of Cambodia. Here we learn

about the Cambodian education system and glean from our interaction with our Khmer contemporaries of opportunities (or lack thereof) available for Cambodian youth and how girls are disadvantaged and what is being done to rectify the problems.

This afternoon we will arrive in the travel mecca of Siem Reap - a centre of Khmer pop culture and the place where the energy and vigour of this developing country are most evident. There will be ample time to enjoy a swim at our hotel pool before we venture out for a thorough exploration of Siem Reap and dine at one of its numerous restaurants.

Tonight, we take in a performance of the local circus where legends and folk stories are re-enacted as the performers use dance, fire sticks and acrobatic displays to convey their performance. This circus is highly enjoyable and provides students with an insight into this unique Cambodia art form. *(meals: breakfast, dinner)*

#### Day 5

##### Siem Reap (*Temples of Angkor*) 🚲



This morning we will set out to explore the magnificent Temples of Angkor and on sturdy and environmentally friendly mountain bikes (NB; a support vehicle will be provided for students/staff who cannot ride).

Often mistakenly referred to as Angkor Wat (which simply denotes the name of the largest temple in the complex), the Angkor Temples are a multifarious 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 our biking activity with a visit to the aesthetically and architecturally breathtaking Angkor Wat Temple, we will explore this massive three-tiered pyramid crowned by five lotus-like towers. After lunch, we will visit *Ta Prohm*, the jungle temple over which nature has well and truly run riot. Intentionally left partially unrestored, massive fig and silk-cotton trees grow from the towers and corridors offering some of the best photo opportunities at Angkor.

Sometime today we will visit the beautiful Bayon Temple and time permitting, some other less-visited sites. Dinner will be at one of the local restaurants that also provide a show after the style of the Court Apsara dancers. **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. A support crew will follow our group to make running repairs and carry students (up to 3) if they are not able to ride. Students will be required to carry their own water during this activity. (meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner)**

## Day 6

### Siem Reap (rural agricultural project)



We will travel outside the limits of Siem Reap to undertake our community project assisting a rural village to establish an agricultural enterprise. This effort will entail the construction of greenhouses and garden beds in cooperation with the local inhabitants to produce crops that can be sold in the market to provide an additional income for the village. Whilst Siem Reap has enjoyed much prosperity in recent years, the hinterland surrounding enjoys little of this prosperity, and daily incomes around \$2 a day. This project will entail the building of a series of bamboo-framed greenhouses complete with wiring and suspended pots filled with cow manure. Other tasks will include planting established fruit trees and establishing a well for irrigation. This program will entail a series of labouring tasks as we break into groups to digging, hammering, planting and transporting of materials. We will also try out a local form of transport – ox cart rides around the village. At the completion of the project, there will be a short hand-over formality before we return to Siem Reap in the late afternoon. On our return, we take part in a highly enjoyable Khmer cooking class to learn the intricacies of this delicious and little known Asian cuisine. Dinner will be a feast of chicken *amok*, Khmer spring rolls and whatever else we cook for ourselves! (meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner)

## Day 7

### Siem Reap (student-initiated activities) ✈ Depart Siem Reap

*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 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, visit 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.*

#### Activity 1:



**Mediation with monks:** Cambodia is a deeply religious Buddhist country with Buddhism impacting on so many aspects of the country's culture and history. Today we will visit a local pagoda where we will have the opportunity to talk to novices and senior monks about the significance of the various religious monuments to glean an insight into this rich ritual. We will also partake in a mediation session before enjoying a vegetarian meal in the monastery. (meals: breakfast, lunch)

#### Activity 2:



**Cambodian Martial art session:** Today we will take part in an enjoyable and physical session of the ancient Cambodian martial art of Bokator. The martial art nearly went extinct under the Khmer Rouge regime. Some of the masters survived and continued to teach this historic part of Cambodian history. Bokator predated Muay Thai and was indeed used against Thai invaders throughout Cambodia's history. We will receive an introductory lesson and

learn some of the techniques of the martial art. Bokator warriors can be seen on many of the Angkor temple carvings. *(meals: breakfast, lunch)*

**Activity 3:**



**Apsara School:** Apsara dance is a classical, graceful dance performance in Cambodia to narrate historical stories. The performance is done in elegant, handmade costumes and can be seen in many establishments in Siem Reap today.

Today we will have the chance to see the young performers being trained as well as take part in a classical dance class, gaining insights unavailable to other travellers. As we are shown around the school, we will see various classes at different levels as they train to become the next generation of

Apsara performers.

Later in the day, we head to the airport for our homebound flight where our tour leader will wave us farewell. *(meals: breakfast, lunch)* **Flight details to be advised.**



**Summary**  
Grading

**Moderate:** Students & staff 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 work diligently during the community service project. 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

#### **SIEM REAP**

- *Angkor Temples* mountain bike excursion
- Khmer performing arts circus activity
- Apsara cultural dance activity
- 2-day agricultural service program  
*Please see below # 5 How authentic are your service-learning programs?*
- Silk farm visit
- 'A day in the life' rural farm experience
- Pre-planned visit to leading non-governmental organisation (NGO)
- Cambodian cooking class
- *Student-initiated activity:*
  - *Cambodian Martial arts class*
  - *Apsara Dance Class*
  - *Meditation with the Monks*
  - *Mt. Kulen waterfall day trip*

[#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 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)

## Cambodia – Week without walls (7 days)

## 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.