



Destination Cambodia

Population:	14 million
Language:	Khmer
Time:	GMT/UTC + 7
Electricity:	230V, 50Hz
Dialing Code:	855
Currency:	Riel and/or US\$

General

The Kingdom of Cambodia has borders with Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos. Cambodia has a tropical climate with three different seasons, the dry period, November to March, when the temperatures are cooler and the weather is milder, the monsoon season from May to the end of September and hot season from March to June.

History

Cambodia has a noble and a terrible history and it would take pages to document up to the modern. Cambodia's modern-day culture really began between the 1st to 6th centuries and was referred to as Funan. It is from this period that Cambodia's language, part of the Mon-Khmer family, which contains elements of Sanskrit. During the 8th century the Angkor Empire rose to power. The following 600 years saw powerful Khmer kings dominate and it was during this period that the Khmer kings built the most extensive concentration of religious temples in the world - the Angkor temple complex. In the late 18th century, Cambodia came close to being destroyed by wars in Vietnam and Thailand. More modern invaders have included France, Japan and the North Vietnam Communist Forces. More recently Pol Pot organized the Communist guerrilla force known as the Khmer Rouge. The Khmer Rouge, established a brutal Communist regime that ruled until 1979. In September 1993 the government ratified a new constitution restoring the monarchy and establishing the Kingdom of Cambodia. Thankfully, these gentle Buddhists are rebuilding their Khmer paradise.

Visa Requirements

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the traveler. The visa requirements vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information as up to date as possible, but rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself.

Cambodia has introduced electronic visa processing for the majority of nationalities making it very easy and quick. Please follow the instructions at: <http://evisa.mfaic.gov.kh>. If you prefer, you may purchase your visa on arrival at the airport.

Please ensure that your passport has at least a further 6 months validity and spare pages for any visa stamps.

Travel Insurance

It is mandatory for you to organise travel insurance prior to your departure and we will ask for details of your insurer and the emergency contact details before you leave home.

Health and Medical

Inoculations are not required although it is preferable to have preventative shots against polio, tetanus and typhoid. We strongly advise you to consult your own medical practitioner for specific personal advice. Only bottled water should be consumed and is provided complimentary in the hotels. All fruit and vegetables should be washed thoroughly with bottled water, and salads and cold meats which have been sitting out for a long time should be avoided, especially during summer months. Hospital and medical services are excellent in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap both being staffed by a number of Australian You should carry prescriptions of any medications you may need, making sure you have the generic name as your specific brand may not be available. If you wear glasses, bring a spare pair and a copy of the prescription as well.

Safety and Security

Cambodia is an extremely safe country to visit and travel around. There is very little crime and the gentle Khmer Buddhists are kind and helpful. Of course like anywhere else you need to be aware of your surroundings and ensure the safety of your personal belongings.

Telecommunications

As long as you have global roaming on your mobile telephone you will have no problem connecting to the providers in Syria. Email devices such as Blackberry are a bit more hit and miss but we have found that 3G devices may be more successful than the older models. All the large hotels have internet access and there are internet cafes in the major cities and towns.

Useful Travel Information

Currency: The currency of Cambodia officially is the Riel, however, the most used currency is the US Dollar. In fact almost all goods and services are calculated and paid for in the US currency. There are a number of ATM's in Phnom Penh and Siem Riep. They dispense US\$. Currencies other than US Dollars can be exchanged at the banks. It is recommended to bring a sufficient amount of US Dollars for the entire duration of your stay.

Credit Cards: In the major tourist towns, credit cards are accepted at most upscale hotels, shops and restaurants. Credit cards are generally not accepted at any businesses outside of the major cities. Visa, MasterCard (MC) and JCB cards are the most widely accepted credit cards in Cambodia. Most businesses charge a 2%-4% fee to accept credit cards. Travelers checks are accepted at most banks.

Religion and Culture

Abolished during the Pol Pot regime, the majority, 95%, of Cambodians are adherents of Theravada Buddhism, also practiced in Laos, Thailand, Burma, and Sri Lanka. The remainder of the population are Hindus and the Khmer (Cham) Moslems.

Electrical

Electricity supply is 220v and sockets are mostly of the European two pronged variety, although some places have English style plugs. We suggest you bring a universal adaptor.



European circular plug with two metal pins



Japanese style plug with two parallel metal pins

Alcohol

Alcohol is widely available and there are bars serving a wide range of alcoholic drinks. You will find many establishments serving the locally brewed beer and all the hotels have bars serving a variety of wine, beer and cocktails.

Cuisine

Khmer cuisine is noted for the use of prahok , a type of fermented fish paste, produced locally, in many dishes as a distinctive flavoring. Delicious curries including the national dish of Fish Amok. Coconut milk is used widely and almost every meal is eaten with a bowl of rice. Influences are taken from Indian, Vietnamese and Chinese cuisine. Typically, Cambodians eat their meals with at least three or four separate dishes. Each individual dish will usually be one of either sweet, sour, salty or bitter. Chili is usually served in a separate dish to be used as desired. individual to add themselves. Salads are varied using the freshest of ingredients, a favourite is made with green mango and lime juice and chili dressing, very refreshing on a hot day. Vegetarians are extremely well catered for with the freshest fruits and vegetables prepared and presented in most imaginative ways.

What To Bring



Important Items to Include:

- USA\$ for exchange – remember you will need a lot of small notes for tips
- Your passport
- Travel Insurance Policy
- Copies of your documentation e.g. passport, credit cards etc
- Sunscreen
- Camera (a large zoom can be valuable addition)
- Wide brim hat
- Torch/Pen light
- Waterproof jacket
- Binoculars
- Insect repellent
- Waterproof shoes/sandals Hiking boots or comfortable well worn sturdy shoes
- Luggage locks
- Medicines and prescriptions
- Glasses, sunglasses and items of a personal nature
- Swimmers
- First aid kit

Things to Consider

- Pack light - Leave empty space in your suitcase to buy souvenirs
- Consider a small backpack to carry water and personal items so your hands are free
- Ensure you have mobile telephone global roaming agreement
- Some email devices may not work. Check with your provider

Notes

- Check your airline's policy on luggage allowance and what is allowable in the cabin and what must go into your hold baggage. Many airlines will not allow duty free over the amount of 100 ml on board so check this before stocking up.
- Ladies should be aware that not all feminine hygiene products may be available and are advised to bring a supply with them.
- Travelling with a group will provide you with the pleasure of new friendships and perhaps some frustrations. Your fellow travellers may be from around the world, differing cultures and likely a range of age groups. We ask you to be understanding and patient with your fellow travellers for the benefit of everyone's travel experience. Remember too that you have responsibilities to the group. If you are requested to be at a place at a certain time, ensure that you don't keep the rest of the group waiting.

