



Smiling Albino's

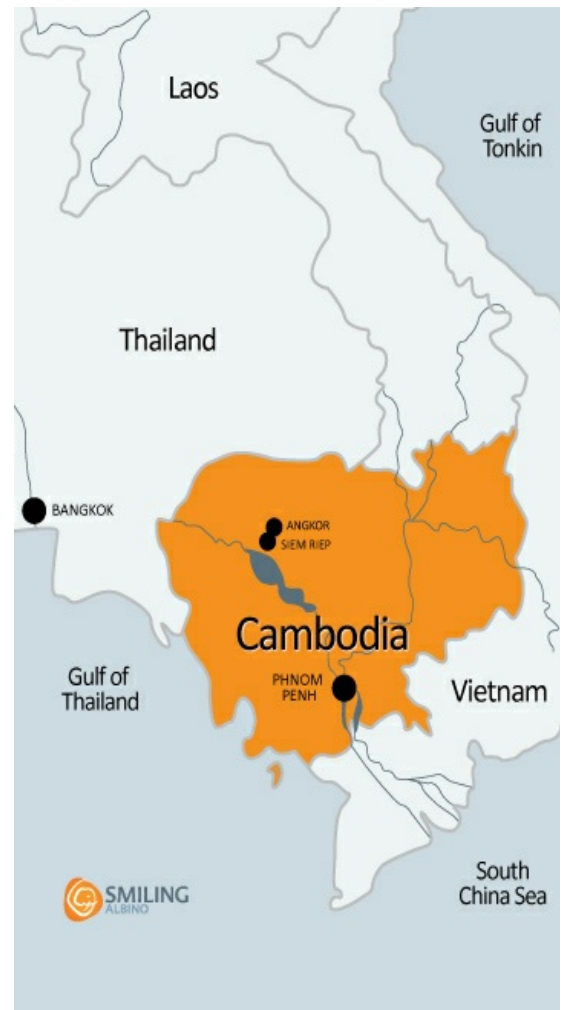
Cultural Cambodia

Siem Reap - Angkor - Phnom Penh - Aqua Mekong

Khmer Kingdom, kayaking, cycling,
river cruise, arts and culture.

Background - Cambodia

Cambodia is a land of dramatic contrasts. From magnificent ancient temples reflecting one of the greatest cultural forces in history, to the charming former French colonial capital and its conflicted past, this trip explores multiple façades. Starting in Siem Reap, you'll marvel at the glory of the Khmer Kingdom and then attempt to understand the turmoil of its recent history and youthful promise of its future. This eight-day adventure brings you up close and personal with Cambodia's essentials, while fitting in an exotic 3-day river cruise down the Mekong River with options for biking, kayaking, and hiking excursions along the way. All this complemented by the country's best guides and hosts, a focus on good food, excellent hostmanship and great accommodations.



Day 1: Welcome to Siem Reap



Welcome to Siem Reap! After settling into the lush and authentic five-star Phum Baitang Resort, our expert host and driver will be waiting in the hotel lobby to take you out for a great afternoon exploring Angkor Thom, Bayon and Tha Phrom temple complexes by bicycle (or you can jump in a khmer tuk tuk for some novel excitement, or if you prefer, enjoy the comfort of an air-conditioned van). Return to the hotel for a refreshing swim and prepare for an evening out.

As the sun sets, we'll crack some champagne over the hills of the outer Angkor temples and marvel at it all. Then we'll treat you to a local style dinner at one of the city's most famous Khmer restaurants.

Flight: TBA

Meals: L, D

Accommodation: Phum Baitang, One Bedroom Pool Villa

Day 2: Thonle Sap Lake and Outer Angkor



After breakfast we'll cycle (or take the private van) along the river through villages and rice fields to explore the lakeside village life on the Thonle Sap Lake. We'll gain an interesting look at floating villages, fishing communities, freshwater mangrove forests and wildlife.

The option of jumping in kayaks can allow us to see and experience things more intimately, naturally... and it's more fun! Flexible touring means you can paddle as much or as little as you like. Later, we'll take an entertaining ox cart ride to visit the Rolous Group before an exclusive picnic in a cool shady area at Bakong Temple, complete with white tablecloths and chilled wine.

Traveling with kids? We can arrange a painting workshop with local children or the local art teacher during lunch so that they can enjoy the true magic of Angkor. Afterwards, we'll head back to the hotel to relax. In the evening we'll head back to Thonle Sap Lake for a short sunset boat ride and then dinner in town. This is a great day off the main tourist path and is a truly intimate cultural experience.

Flight: TBA

Meals: B, L

Accommodation: Phum Baitang, One Bedroom Pool Villa

Day 3: Angkor's Main Sites, Phare Circus



Today, indulge in essential Angkor. Either jump on a bike, an adventurous tuk-tuk, or into our private van and take in Angkor's signature sites, Angkor Thom, Bayon and the jungly, overgrown Tha Phrom. Your host will fill you in on some history, architectural details and an intriguing story or two while we explore the largest complex, Angkor Wat. Keeping a methodical pace to avoid 'temple overload', we'll break for lunch at a local restaurant near the ruins and then hit a couple of more sites before returning to the hotel to relax and refresh in anticipation of an entertaining evening.

After dinner, we'll enjoy VIP seats at the spectacular Phare Circus performance. The Khmer Circus gets really great reviews in Siem Reap. Originally from Battambang, the troupe uses classical and modern theater techniques, combined with acrobatics, juggling, contortion, balancing and fabulous costumes to dazzle the audience. We may even get to meet some of the performers backstage. Shows start at 19:30 and last one hour.

Meals: B, L

Accommodation: Phum Baitang, One Bedroom Pool Villa

Day 4: Fly to Phnom Penh, Explore Key Sites



This morning we'll catch the morning flight to Phnom Penh and visit as many of the key sites we have time for. We can explore the bustling Russian Market, Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda.

After a great local lunch, we'll explore Wat Phnom, or visit Boeng Kak lake, a 90 hectare lake in downtown that has been filled-in as part of a huge abandoned development project.

Flight: TBA

Meals: B, L

Accommodation: Raffles Le Royal, State Room

Day 5: Phnom Penh Dark Sites, Board The Aqua Mekong



This morning we'll explore the dark sides of the city, 'Tual Sleng' (S21 Prison) and 'Boeung Cheung Ek', usually referred to as 'The Killing Fields', which was the largest cemetery in the country during the frightful reign of the Khmer Rouge from 1975-1979.

After Lunch we'll make our way to Phnom Penh port where you'll board your boutique cruise ship. The attentive crew will welcome you warmly to the laid back luxury of the Aqua Mekong. Settle into your elegantly appointed, river-facing suite as the vessel begins the cruise. Thus begins one of life's most memorable and photogenic adventures. Ascend to the Observation Deck if you wish, to sip sundowners against the backdrop of Phnom Penh's skyline. A dinner performance by renowned Cambodian Apsara dancers who continue an ancient tradition venerated on the intricately carved walls at Angkor Wat will round-off the evening.

Meals: B, L, D

Accommodation: Aqua Mekong, Suite

Day 6: Aqua Mekong - Ka'om Samnor - Vinh Xuong Vietnam Border



Shout “Good Morning, Vietnam!” while we cross the border and sail towards Tan Chau, a beautiful border town by the Mekong River. Take the Aqua Mekong skiffs from Tan Chau along the Bassac Canal for photo opportunities of river life along the border. Disembark at Tan Chau pier for a *xe loi* (pedi-cab) ride around town. Explore Tan Chau’s vibrant and fragrant market before walking back to the pier from which we will take the skiffs back to the Aqua Mekong.

Explore My An Hung village by crossing over the seemingly delicate but actually quite sturdy monkey bridge. After we walk around this charming, sleepy Vietnamese village, we will enjoy a traditional Mekong musical performance and have the opportunity to taste freshly picked local fruits. The ‘Unicorn Dance’ follows, then sundowners in the village by a roaring fire.

Meals: B, L, D

Accommodation: Aqua Mekong, Suite

Day 7: Aqua Mekong - Binh Thanh, Sa Dec, Cai Be Vietnam



Begin this morning's excursion by boarding our skiffs to Binh Thanh Island, where the villagers weave mats and baskets from Mekong river reeds and water hyacinths. At the village's simple temple where worshippers adhere to the indigenous practice founded in 1939 known as Hòa Hảo Buddhism, in which emphasis is placed on modesty over ornate offerings, we will have an interaction with village elders to learn about their life before, during and after the war. On our return skiff journey, we'll stop by one of the local fish farms to learn how these farmer fish directly underneath their floating home.

People of the Mekong Delta rely on flat-bottom wooden boats called sampan to get around and transport goods to market. We'll climb aboard one to paddle through the Cai Be floating market, where more than 400 sampans gather every day, starting in earnest from 5 a.m. Each boat has one bamboo stick on the front to display that vendor's product, be it Vietnamese fish sauce, rice paper for wrapping dumplings, or colorful sweet confectionery. We'll continue our exploration of this area on foot or by bicycle for more up close glimpses of Mekong Delta dwellers.

Meals: B, L, D

Accommodation: Aqua Mekong, Suite

Day 8: Aqua Mekong - Disembark at My Tho, to Saigon



After a leisurely breakfast enjoying your new favorite Asian flavors, we will say goodbye to our Khmer and Vietnamese guides, the international crew and the Aqua Mekong, to continue by road from the Mekong River into the thrilling frenzy that is modern Saigon.

Meals B, L

About Your Hotels

About Phum Baitang

This elegant hideaway set within eight acres of lush gardens and paddy fields near the Angkor World Heritage Site provides an authentic Cambodian experience in a lush and intimate setting. The wooden and stilted villas are inspired both inside and out by traditional Cambodian design. A luxurious spa, yoga pavilion, fully-equipped fitness room and 50m outdoor infinity pool complete the resort's leisure facilities.



About Raffles Le Royal

Raffles Hotel Le Royal is the premier hotel in Phnom Penh, with those rare attributes of history and style. It was first established in 1929, and was reopened in 1997 after extensive renovations. This grand hotel fulfils all the requirements of a modern world-class hotel with its facilities and amenities, but imparts an old-world charm through its style and decor, which is elegant yet comfortable, classic yet casual.



About The Aqua Mekong

The 62.4 meter (205 feet) Aqua Mekong has been designed as a floating five-star hotel. Local sustainable materials and artisan touches are evident throughout the generous interior spaces that provide the utmost comforts for guests between the on and off shore excursions. The ship incorporates elegant lounge and dining areas and is equipped with modern navigation and experienced river pilot and crew.



Package Details

PRICE: Approx. \$6,925 US/person (minimum 2 persons)

INCLUDING

- Accommodation with daily breakfast
- 3 nights at Phum Baitang in a 1 Bedroom Pool Villa
- 1 night at Raffles Le Royale in State Room
- 3 nights in Design Suite on the Aqua Mekong with all meals on board
- Flights in Economy Class - Siem Reap - Phnom Penh
- Private airport transfer at all location
- Fast Track Service upon arrival in Siem Reap
- Flexible touring in Cambodia as indicated with English speaking guide, plenty of snacks and drinking water, all admission fees, cost for all logistics and transportation.

EXCLUDING

- International flights to Siem Reap and from Saigon
- Personal expenses, souvenirs, alcohol, laundry and etc.
- Visa fee for Cambodia

The Smiling Albino Service Difference



We understand implicitly that a perfect adventure is much more than nice hotels, great meals and hassle-free logistics. For a travel experience to be perfect, all pieces must work together like a symphony. It is the fine details which our guests appreciate most, like cold face towels after a hike, electrolyte beverages for your day cycling, and wine uncorked when the moment is right. From local maps to bottled water and colorful anecdotes on the areas we visit, a Smiling Albino adventure is a thorough, intimately hosted experience. We will also provide you with a complimentary mobile phone for your use throughout your stay. You'll be treated with executive care during your Smiling Albino adventure.

We look forward to hosting you!

The Team at Smiling Albino

Smiling Albino - Bangkok, Thailand

info@smilingalbino.com - www.smilingalbino.com

Ph: +66-2-107-2542, 1-877-THAI-WAY

"See a different part of the world, differently."