



Journeys That Capture The Soul Of The Country . . .

Gain a real insight into the country – places, history, people – whether for a few days or a few weeks.

Many of our clients come again and again – becoming immersed in the warm climate, vibrant colour, traditional cultures and ever-friendly welcome.

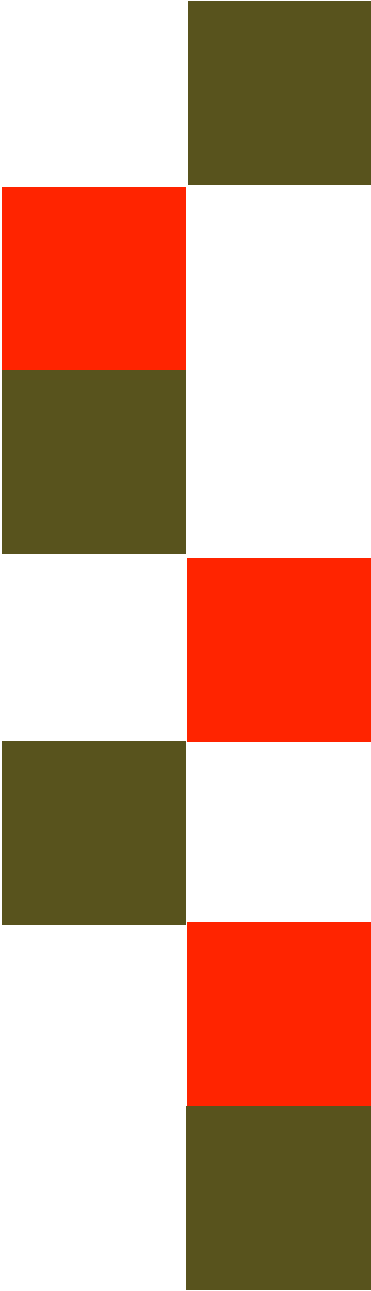
Created and managed as a social enterprise – using best business practices to realise humanitarian aims – at Carpe Diem Travel we strive to improve lives in the places we visit.

Seize the day  
Find yourself  
Give something back  
Travel with us

Cambodia small group discovery

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A decorative graphic on the left side of the page consists of a vertical column of colored squares. From top to bottom, the colors are: olive green, red, olive green, red, olive green, red, and olive green. The squares are arranged in a staggered pattern, with some overlapping horizontally.

This tour is designed from the ground up to provide a real understanding of the history and culture of the Khmer people. During 14 varied and interesting days, you visit not only Cambodia's 'highlights' such as Angkor Wat and the Royal Palace, but also get well away from the tourist trail, meeting the country's people and understanding more about their culture and way of life.

This journey takes a comfortable pace, punctuated by enough free time for visitors to explore for themselves or just relax a little. We believe that no-one can truly appreciate the beauty of anywhere if they have only ten minutes to see it, so we give you time at each place we visit to take photos, talk to local people or just absorb the atmosphere.

Accommodation is in clean, comfortable locally-owned guest houses or small hotels with fan or air-conditioning and private bathroom, each of which has been hand-picked by us. The exception is actually a highlight of the trip – a homestay in the countryside.

A variety of transport is utilised over the two weeks: riding motorcycle pillion cross-country; speedboat; minibus and by foot – plus a few surprises!

This trip is suitable for moderately fit adults of any age and children over 10 years old. There are some short uphill walks, and you must be able to carry your own bags between your room and your transport, and to get yourself on and off boats.

**\*NEW\*** for this season - special extended itinerary dates, indicated below with a star, that involve you in some of Cambodia's most important traditional ceremonies.

There are also options to extend this trip with a seven-day jungle/hill tribe adventure or a few extra days at the beach.



**Day1:** Arrival at PHNOM PENH airport. You will be met by our representative and taken to your hotel to relax and freshen up. Late afternoon there is a one-hour trip along the Mekong River in a private open boat.

**Day 2:** Today will be spent learning about ancient and modern history – starting with a morning visit to the Royal Palace (still inhabited by the King of Cambodia) and the National Museum, where many statues from Angkor Wat are now stored. In the afternoon, visit the genocide museum of Tuol Sleng - which was originally a school and became a Khmer Rouge prison – and the Killing Fields, where many people were taken and “exterminated”.

**Day 3:** Overland travel to SIEM REAP by minibus. There will be many interesting photo opportunities along the way, so ask your tour leader to stop at any natural beauty spot or interesting village. You will also get the chance to sample a hairy local delicacy - deep fried tarantula! You will arrive in the afternoon in time for a trip to the amazing Angkor Wat to watch the sunset.

**Day 4:** Travel to some of the main temples of Angkor including Angkor Thom, site of the heads of the Bayon, and Ta Phrom, largely still claimed by the jungle. Accompanied by an English-speaking local guide, learn about the historical evolution of the Khmer kingdom and the building of the temples. Sufficient time is allowed at each site for you to explore at your own pace, take photographs, or just stare in wonder – plus a long break for lunch to shelter from the heat of the midday sun! Return to the hotel by early evening.

**Day 5:** Visit Banteay Srei, with amazingly intricate detail carved in red sandstone and Kbal Spein, the “river of a thousand lingas”, with ancient carvings on a riverbed and a scenic short trek through the jungle to reach it. Again, the day is unhurried, giving you time of your own and avoiding the pressurised rush of typical guided tours.

**Day 6:** Leave Siem Reap in the morning and travel by minivan to the remote temple complex of BANTEAY CHHMAR – visitors are rare here. On the way you will stop to visit a silk producer and the beauty spot of Trar Peang Thor lake. At Bantay Chhmar is a community based tourism project where you will be able to get a real insight into Khmer village life as well as exploring the jungle temple ruins. After a walk through the several temples scattered around the village you will have the unforgettable experience of eating dinner by torchlight inside the temple itself. That night you will stay in a traditional family homestay (bedding and mosquito nets supplied) and with a bit of help from your tour leader you can learn all about the rural life of your host family.

**Day 7:** You will wake early, as is village custom, and have breakfast at your homestay. Afterwards you will be taken on a Kuyon (a Khmer two-wheeled tractor) to Banteay Top, one of the more remote of the temple group. Once again you will have the opportunity to eat within the temple complex as a picnic will be brought along with your group. When you return to the village please feel free to explore and interact with the villagers. After lunch we will travel by minivan to BATTAMBANG – officially Cambodia’s second largest city but essentially a sleepy town - where you can spend the evening relaxing.



**Day 8:** After breakfast in the hotel you will be driven by motorbike (as a passenger) into the beautiful countryside surrounding Battambang. Headed by a local guide, visit a hilltop temple to enjoy the spectacular view, explore some caves and learn about their harrowing Khmer Rouge history and then drive along winding country tracks into villages that are inaccessible by car. Return to the hotel by early evening.

**Day 9:** Around 90% of the Cambodian population lives in the countryside and today you will see a little bit more! You will once again hop on the motorbikes and spend some more time exploring the beautiful villages surrounding Battambang. Headed by your guide, visit some more places of interest, including a Cambodian cheese factory (not to be missed!). At lunch you will visit an organisation teaching children from local villages and get the chance to cook a traditional Khmer dish (and then eat it!) After lunch there will be a lesson with the kids - so bring some information about your country and home life. In the afternoon we will visit an NGO teaching circus skills to local youths and hopefully see some acrobatic lessons and rehearsals. The evening is free to relax in town but remember to ask your tour leader about circus show schedules if your appetite was whetted!

**Day 10:** Leave Battambang early after breakfast and drive by minivan to the fishing village of Kampong Luong. Here you will take a winding boat trip through the picturesque floating houses, markets and shops. Back in the minivan, continue your journey to sleepy KAMPONG CHHNANG, where you will have lunch and check into your hotel. In the afternoon, take a trip in a tuk tuk through the beautiful countryside to a secret Khmer Rouge cave which was carved into the solid mountain rock by their unfortunate prisoners. Kampong Chhnang means pottery village in Khmer and on the way back to town you will visit a small village making traditional clay pots.

**Day 11:** Journey through the countryside to the peaceful, colonial town of KAMPOT. You will stop en-route to visit Oudong, the former seat of the Khmer throne, where you can enjoy panoramic views of the countryside from the hilltop monument. For lunch you will visit a picturesque village to learn about country life and their communal farming practices. On arrival in Kampot, we will stay in a tranquil Khmer style house with amazing views over the Prek Tnout river. The afternoon is free to swim, take a walk or just watch the sun slowly sink over the hills from the riverside.

**Day 12:** In the morning your tour leader will take you to Kampot for a stroll along the river or a visit to the market. Then you will hop into the minivan for short journey to the abandoned colonial seaside resort of KEP-SUR-MER. Here you can explore the empty shells of what were once luxurious villas belonging to Cambodia's elite, take a walk along the small palm-fringed beach and swim in the warm tropical water. You will also get the chance to try one of Cambodia's best dishes - Crab in Kampot pepper sauce. That evening you can have a drink on your guesthouse's veranda while enjoying the beautiful coastal views.

**Day 13:** After breakfast your minivan will take you back to Phnom Penh where you will arrive back in good time to visit the markets to buy some all-important presents and souvenirs, go for a walk around town or just take a swim in a local resort pool. In the evening you can enjoy a nice meal in one of the capital's many good restaurants. Our tour leaders are able to give you advice and recommendations if required, and can accompany you if available.

**Day 14:** Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

## Dates and Prices 2010/11

All our trips start and finish in Phnom Penh. The departure dates marked with a \* and a number indicate a special extended itinerary where you can participate in a local festival - a really special experience! We can arrange additional nights' accommodation at the start or end, and other activities too, just ask us for suggestions. Regardless of when you arrive or leave airport transfers are included.

April 29	*4	January 2 2011	
June 13		February 8	*3
September 5		April 30	*4
October 1	*1	June 12	
November 8	*2		

Sharing a twin or double room: from £895

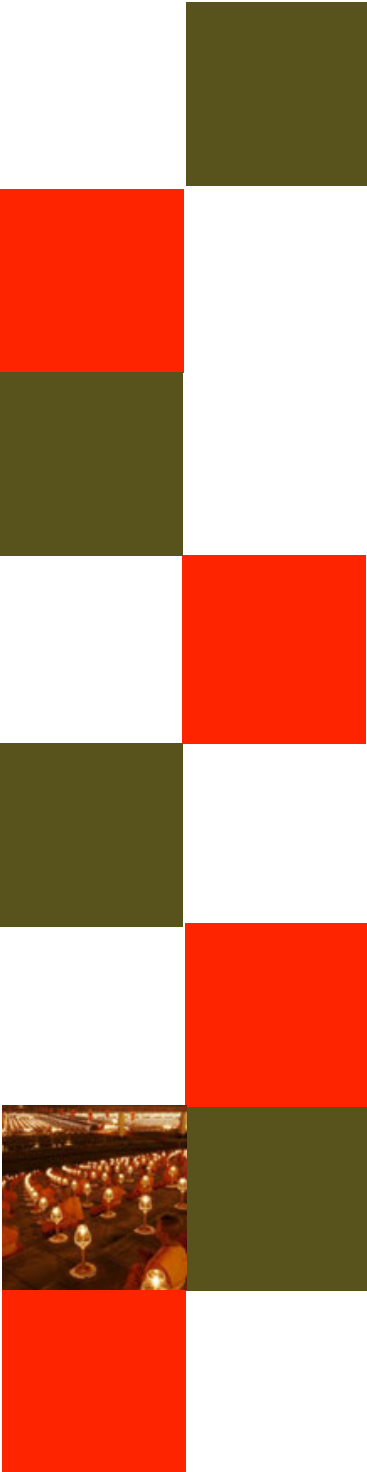
In a single room: from £1025

Supplements for day \*2 (extra day, sharing/single room)  
£70/£80

Special festival activities, for itinerary dates indicated:

\*1 - Pchum Ben is the most culturally and religiously significant event of the year. This "festival of souls" concentrates on blessing the souls of ancestors, relatives and friends who have passed away. Buddhist temples are the focal point for this festival and most Cambodia visit their local temple to make traditional offerings and pray.

During your stay in Battambang on days 8 and 9, you will join with your tour leader and a local family to prepare food and give offerings to the monks. If you wish, you can purchase traditional clothing at the local market for very reasonable prices - a chance to really integrate.





\*2 - During the rainy season, so much water flows down the Mekong that when it joins with the Tonle Sap river at Phnom Penh, the force of the water actually causes the Tonle Sap to change direction! As water levels fall, the flow in the Tonle Sap returns to its usual direction, an event marked by Bonn Om Tuk, the most extravagant festival in the calendar. Phnom Penh's population swells as boat crews and their supporters flock to the riverbank to watch hundreds of brightly colored boats with over 50 paddlers battle it out for top honours.

During an extra day in Phnom Penh, your tour leader will take you through the throngs of promenading people to a "place with a view" - a popular cafe with a first floor balcony where places will be reserved for you. Spend a couple of hours boat and people-watching, and when the sun sets you can see brightly decorated floats cruise along the river with firework displays.

\*3 - Makha Bochea. Marks the four auspicious occasions, which happened nine months after the Enlightenment of the Lord Buddha. According to tradition, on this day: 1,250 enlightened disciples of the Buddha spontaneously gathered ; every one had been previously ordained; they knew to meet together without any previous appointment; and it was the full-moon day.

The Lord Buddha gave an important teaching to the assembled monks on that day 2,500 years ago, which laid down the principles of the Buddhist teachings.

An early start on the morning of day 11 will allow you to witness and participate in the ceremonies at Oudong, which is the former royal seat of Cambodia and host to a \$4.5m stupa built in December 2002 to house some fabled remains of the Buddha. Your tour leader will accompany you and can give advice on proceedings.

\*4- Royal Ploughing Ceremony. In the ceremony, two sacred oxen are hitched to a wooden plough and they plough a furrow in some ceremonial ground, while rice seed is sown by court Brahmins. After the ploughing, the oxen are offered plates of food, including rice, corn, green beans, sesame, fresh-cut grass, water and rice whisky.



Depending on what the oxen eat, court soothsayers make a prediction on whether the coming growing season will be bountiful or not. The ceremony is rooted in Brahman belief, and is held to ensure a good harvest.

On the morning of day 3 you will watch the ceremonies before continuing to Siem Reap.

Prices for all itineraries include:

- bed and breakfast accommodation
- all tour transportation
- all guides and admissions
- English-speaking tour leader

Not included:

- personal expenses (laundry, tips etc.)
- visa (currently US\$20 on arrival)
- departure tax (currently US\$25)

# North Eastern Extension

## Waterfalls, Elephants, Hilltribes

Day 1: Depart for KRATIE by 4WD (around 5 hours, with a few short stops en route). In the afternoon, travel by small private boat to see the rare freshwater dolphins in the Mekong River – the only place in Cambodia where they can be seen. Overnight at a small local hotel.

Day 2: Travel by private 4WD to Banlung, capital of RATTANAKIRI province - this trip will take around 5 hours along an unsealed road. Along the way, you may well see some wildlife - this road sees hardly any cars and travels entirely through the countryside. On arrival, check into a local eco-resort, small simple wooden lodges surrounded by forest. In the afternoon, swim in the beautiful crater lake of Boeng Yeak Lom, with beautiful clear water, in the middle of the rainforest.

Day 3: Travel by private 4WD through beautiful scenery to the Virachey National Park, passing a number of Kreung (minority tribe) villages built in the bamboo forest. Travel by small private boat to some more remote villages (where you will eat a simple packed lunch - included), and walk back to the boat departure point (around two hours on fairly flat terrain) before returning back to Banlung.

Day 4: Today, really get "off the beaten track" - trek for around 5 hours (fairly easy grade) through the countryside, passing through jungle and minority villages. A packed lunch is included, and late afternoon you will arrive in one of the villages where you will stay overnight.

Day 5: Pick up from the village by your 4WD and transfer to "jungle transport" - an Asian elephant - for a one-hour ride to the Kachang waterfall, where you can take a refreshing swim. In the afternoon, visit the stunning Cha Oung waterfall, where it is possible to walk behind the waterfall and the drop is so steep that the cascade of water dwarfs anybody standing under it. Return to your lodge in time to take a walk up to the hill to watch the sunset.

Day 6: Visit the Banlung market, which sells locally grown fruit, before returning by 4WD to KRATIE, where you will stay overnight.

Day 7: In the morning, visit the largest wat in Cambodia - complete with over 100 columns, it is a place of local pilgrimage and home to some very old monks. In the afternoon, travel by private boat to an island in the Mekong river, then walk for around 3km around its coast to see its flora and fauna (including some unexpected creatures!) and rural way of life. Return to Kratie town early evening.

Day 8: Return to PHNOM PENH after breakfast, following a different route which goes through the forest close to the Mekong River. On the way, see the pepper plantations and how bricks are made. Lunch will be at a small restaurant on the way. Arrival in PHNOM PENH mid-afternoon, in time to connect with an evening flight out (additional nights' accommodation can be arranged for an additional charge)

From GB£780 per person (minimum two people), based on twin/double share



# Beach Extension

## Rest and relaxation

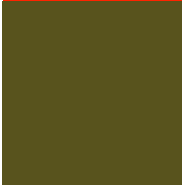
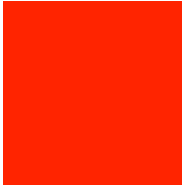
Day 1: Travel by private car to the beach resort of SIHANOUKVILLE, arriving around lunch time. The rest of the day is free.

Day 2: Free time.

Day 3: Free time

Day 4: Travel by private car back to PHNOM PENH airport, arriving in time to connect with an afternoon or evening flight.

Additional accommodation in Phnom Penh can be arranged in the event of a morning departure flight.



Malibu beachfront guesthouse

From GB£285 per person (minimum two people), based on twin/double share



Sokha 4\* resort hotel

From GB£380 per person (minimum two people), based on twin/double share

# Social Enterprise

## Giving something back

Carpe Diem Travel is a social venture, established to empower local people and provide direct support to humanitarian projects on a profit-reinvestment basis.

We believe that truly responsible travel should benefit both the client and the destination in equal measures. The client gains an insight into other countries and cultures, learning a little bit about themselves in the process. The destination receives economic benefit and opportunities for self-development – but never at the sacrifice of their culture or integrity.

In order to achieve these aims we operate two policies alongside each other: the first to minimise what we take, the second to maximise what we give back.

Respect for local people, their culture and their surroundings is key to our philosophy. In undeveloped areas, we work closely with local communities and village elders to minimise the impact our trips have on the region. In addition to this, all our clients receive pre-trip guidelines on cultures, customs and environmental considerations relating to the destination they are visiting.

Most of our journeys include visits to local development, conservation or community-based projects. We aim to provide all our clients, even those who just come for a couple of days, with as much appreciation of the country as possible.

Self-administration of projects and funds we enable and sponsor ensures that **100%** of our support goes **directly** to the people who need it. Our country representatives, as well being there to ensure your journey runs smoothly, are responsible for monitoring the progress of projects and overseeing how funding is used.

As a social enterprise, most of our work is undertaken on the ground. Our sales and administrative functions are almost entirely internet based, utilising modern technology to minimise unnecessary overheads such as flashy storefronts and glossy brochures. In this way we maximise the benefit our destinations receive from your holiday.

Carpe Diem Travel is a UK registered limited company and complies fully with EC legislation to ensure your security and peace of mind.

