

EXCURSIONS/GENERAL INFO + LINKS

DAY 3 – 3 PARTS (EARLY START/HALF DAY):

PART 1 - ANGKOR WAT AT SUNRISE (3 DAY PASS – OK)



Wikipedia description of Angkor Wat

Angkor Wat is the largest [Hindu](#) temple complex in the world, situated at [Angkor, Cambodia](#), built by King [Suryavarman II](#) in the early 12th century as his state temple and capital city. As the best-preserved temple at the site, it is the only one to have remained a significant religious centre since its foundation – first Hindu, dedicated to the god [Vishnu](#), then [Buddhist](#). The temple is at the top of the high classical style of [Khmer architecture](#). It has become a symbol of Cambodia, appearing on [its national flag](#), and it is the country's prime attraction for visitors.

Angkor Wat combines two basic plans of Khmer temple architecture: the [temple mountain](#) and the later [galleried temple](#). It is designed to represent [Mount Meru](#), home of the [devas](#) in [Hindu mythology](#): within a [moat](#) and an outer wall 3.6 kilometres (2.2 mi) long are three rectangular galleries, each raised above the next. At the centre of the temple stands a [quincunx](#) of towers. Unlike most Angkorian temples, Angkor Wat is oriented to the west; scholars are divided as to the significance of this. The temple is admired for the grandeur and harmony of the architecture, its extensive [bas-reliefs](#), and for the numerous [devatas](#) adorning its walls.

PART 2 - ANKGOR THOM/BAYON (3 DAY PASS – OK)



Lonely Planet review for Angkor Thom

From Angkor Wat, the bridge leading to the south gate of Angkor Thom has two incredible balustrades of giants handling *nagas* (mythical serpents, often multiheaded), an incredible first impression made only more dreamlike by the elephants plodding out of the arched entrance topped by the four enormous faces of Avalokiteshvara (the Buddha of Compassion). Angkor Thom is a walled compound bordered by a 100m wide moat. It was built by the great King Jayavarman VII (r 1181-1219) as his royal palace.

The complex has five gateways, each with double portals. Four of the gateways point to each side of the compass, while the fifth is a Victory Gateway.

Behind the 8m walls lie some of Angkor's most important monuments: the Bayon, the Terrace of Elephants and the Terrace of the Leper King. The Bayon was the King's state temple. It rises from the centre of Angkor Thom's compound in a cluster of conical towers. Smiling in every direction are the four divine faces of Avalokiteshvara, carved with a great likeness to King Jayavarman VII in his state of peaceful meditation. There are 54 towers in total with a staggering 216 faces. Complementing the faces are the intricate bas-reliefs depicting daily life in the king's court and the bloody battles against the Chams. Read more: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/cambodia/siem-reap/sights/architecture/angkor-thom#ixzz1yQmFLXdy>

PART 3 - TA PROHM - tbc (3 DAY PASS - OK)



Lonely Planet review for Ta Prohm

Ta Prohm is as seductive as Lara Croft. The site of some of her cinematic adventures, it is a series of dark galleries and pillars held hostage under the iron clasp of gigantic roots. The walls are decorated with carvings of sensuous celestial nymphs with smaller roots crawling across them like a rash.

Built in AD 1186 by King Jayavarman VII, the temple was dedicated to his mother. In its prime it was a holy trunk of great treasures. According to the Sanskrit inscriptions on the walls, the temple held thousands of pearls, precious stones and golden dishes weighting more than 500kg. Read more:

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/cambodia/siem-reap/sights/architecture/ta-prohm#ixzz1yQmuZ3z2>

DAY 5 – 2 PARTS (EARLY START/FULL DAY):

PART 1 - PHNOM KULEN (KULEN MOUNTAIN – SEPARATE FEE: \$20 USD)



Lonely Planet review for Phnom Kulen

From a lofty height of 20m, the Phnom Kulen waterfall cascades off the mountain where King Jayavarman II announced independence from Java and proclaimed himself god-king. The river here also runs over *lingas* and is an attractive sight for modern-day pilgrims. There is also an 8m-long reclining Buddha and a small temple nearby.

There is also a little explored unnamed set of ruins at the foot of the mountain that is gaining mythical status among locals. Not many know how to get there, though they know of its existence. Would-be explorers are challenged to find it! Read more: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/cambodia/siem-reap/sights/waterfall/phnom-kulen#ixzz1yQneFGDR>

PART 2 - BANTEAY SREI (3 DAY PASS – OK)



Lonely Planet review for Banteay Srei

This 'Citadel of Women' dedicated to Shiva, is a stunning tour de force of classical art and the most ornate of all of the temples. Though it is relatively tiny in size compared to its mammoth counterparts, it has the most intricate carvings and is believed to be the instigator of the Khmer art movement. The detail is astounding and each doorway, each lintel and every wall is a masterpiece.

Read more: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/cambodia/siem-reap/sights/architecture/banteay-srei#ixzz1yQnxC3YF>

DAY 7 (MORNING ONLY/HALF DAY):

ROLUOS GROUP (3 DAY PASS – OK)



Lonely Planet review for Temples of Roluos

The very first site of the ancient Khmer civilisation was here in Roluos, then known as Hariharalaya. The temples of Roluos were built by King Indravarman I (r 877-

89). The first was Preah Ko (Sacred Bull) named after the Nandin statue found on site. Preah Ko has six brick towers each dedicated to his parents, maternal grandparents and to King Jayavarman II and his wife.

Next came Bakong, a terrestrial version of the celestial Mount Meru. It is a five-tiered pyramid-temple and was the inspiration for many of the temples that followed. Read more: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/cambodia/siem-reap/sights/architecture/temples-of-roluos#ixzz1yQoHmF7A>