



Trek to Angkor Wat



Activity: Trek **Grade:** **(Challenging)** **Duration: 10 days**

Lying in the heart of old Indochina, the small country of Cambodia is home to dazzling green rice-paddies and jungle dotted with temples and ruins, villages of thatched, stilted houses, and small towns where Buddhist temples nestle amongst graceful French colonial buildings.

Our exciting trek takes us off the beaten track to sacred Phnom Kulen – the highest point for miles at 487m. This region is rich not only in history, but in beautiful landscapes and friendly culture. We sleep in village homestays, allowing a unique insight into the local way of life.

This is a hot, dusty challenge, but our finish point at Angkor Wat, one of the most renowned and impressive sights in South-East Asia, will reward your efforts.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Depart London for Siem Reap

Day 2: Arrive Siem Reap

We arrive in Siem Reap and check into our hotel, where we can relax or take time to explore this busy, fascinating town and enjoy our first glimpse of the local culture. Night hotel.

Day 3: Siem Reap – Pagoda

After breakfast and a detailed trip briefing, we take a short transfer out of town and begin our trek. Heading out south-east across dazzling green rice-paddies and farmland, we pass through several small villages. Cambodia is one of the friendliest countries in South-East Asia and we will get plenty of smiles and waves as we pass! We're never far from a temple or pagoda, and we make time to stop at a couple for a closer look. After a lunch-break in one of the villages, we continue our trek through rice fields and green pastures, now heading north to the pagoda for our evening's accommodation. Night homestay.

Trek approx. 5-6 hours; 16km

Day 4: Pagoda - Wat Preash Bat Bun Tham

After a delicious breakfast at camp, we start our day's trek along small dirt roads before turning off into scrub and brush-land. It's a long day today, and we gradually wind our way northwards towards our evening's destination. Night homestay.

Trek approx. 8-9 hours; 22km



DETAILED ITINERARY (cont.)

Day 5: Wat Preash Bat Bun Tham – Beng Mealea – Svay Leu

Today's route sees us heading towards Phnom Kulen, though we won't reach this low mountain until tomorrow. We veer right after passing a small village and head out across the paddy-fields, where we are treated to fabulous views of Phnom Kulen in the distance. Following cow-cart tracks, we wind our way towards Beng Mealea and the fascinating ruins of this little-visited temple. After an opportunity to explore, there's a short transfer to Svay Leu Pagoda. There is often a lively market near the pagoda, which we should have time to explore – a real insight into the way of life. Night homestay.

Trek approx. 7-8 hours; 20km

Day 6: Svay Leu – Phnom Kulen

After an energising breakfast we set off on a challenging haul to the top of Phnom Kulen (487m), Cambodia's sacred mountain and the highest point for miles around. Deeply revered, the local people make pilgrimages to the pagodas and ruins on the mountain top. The mountain forms a high plateau, from where there are fabulous views across the forests and fields below. We head west across the mountain, taking undulating tracks through the forests and villages. We stop for lunch in Anlong Thom, a small village of stilted thatched houses. Our trek continues to the 'Big Buddha', which overlooks the central plain; a short distance on is a very picturesque waterfall. We may have time to bathe in the 'River of 1000 Lingas' and admire the elaborate carvings in the riverbed itself. Night homestay.

Trek approx. 7-8 hours; 19km

Day 7: Phnom Kulen – School Village

After a hearty breakfast, we set off on an old trail, now little-used since the recent construction of a road. We may meet a few local people who still use the path for hunting, cutting lianas and to get to work on the farms higher in the hills. Our trek continues south-east on a small jungly trail down the mountain. Back on the flat plains, we continue our trek on sandy, sometimes muddy tracks. There is little shade as we pass a few villages, local schools and an abundance of pagodas. We will be hot and tired by the time we reach our evening's accommodation, our final goal nearly within reach. Night homestay.

Trek approx. 6-7 hours; 20km



CHALLENGE GRADING

Our trips are graded from Challenging (Grade 1) to Extreme (Grade 5).

This trek is graded **Challenging (1)**. Main challenges lie in the long, hot trekking days, and the relatively basic living conditions.

Many factors influence the Challenge Grading, such as terrain, distances, climate, altitude, living conditions, etc. The grade reflects the overall trip; some sections will feel more challenging than others. Unusual weather conditions also have a significant impact, and not all people are tested by the same aspects.

Our grading levels are intended as a guide, but span a broad spectrum; trips within the same grade will still vary in the level of challenge provided.



DETAILED ITINERARY (cont.)

Day 8: School Village – Angkor Thom – Angkor Wat

Our last day of trekking today, and after a hearty breakfast we set off on the final 10km of our trek to Angkor Wat. The first section of our trek is on a tarmac road; we then return to cow-cart tracks which lead us towards the Angkor temple complex. We reach Prasat Ta Som, the first of our Angkor temples, and then load up into the local mode of transport and journey in style to Angkor Wat in a colourful procession of tuk tuks. We pass many temples and ruins as we near our goal – the spectacular walled city of Angkor Thom and the famous Bayon, standing in the exact heart of the city. Adorned with fabulous wall carvings and mysterious giant faces, the Bayon is a real highlight of our challenge. We then continue to the magnificent 12th Century Angkor Wat. It is worth climbing the remarkably steep and narrow steps of the central spire for the unparalleled view over the whole temple. We are free to explore the temple complex until sunset, when we transfer to our hotel by bus. After a refreshing shower, we celebrate our huge achievement with a celebration dinner at a local restaurant, where we'll be able to enjoy a traditional dance show. Night hotel.

Trek approx. 2-3 hours; 10-12km

Day 9: Siem Reap; Flight departs

Free time to explore Siem Reap and visit more of the Temples of Angkor at your leisure. The temple of Ta Prohm is well worth exploring; left to be reclaimed by nature, it features incredible tree roots breaking through the stone carvings and walls – a fascinating tribute to the power of nature over man and an experience reminiscent of 'Indiana Jones' and 'Tomb Raider.' Save a little time for some last-minute shopping or a relaxing Cambodian-style massage before transferring to the airport in time for our flight home.

(Lunch and Dinner not included)

Day 10: Arrive London

Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

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