



## Culture and World Heritage in Cambodia and Laos

December 9-20<sup>th</sup> , 2020

### **December 9th: Siem Reap (D)**

Upon arrival, you will be transferred and accompanied to your hotel. Enjoy time to rest or for swimming in the Pool. We will arrange one group transfer around 3pm or when the majority of you arrive.

6:00 PM Orientation Meeting with our AltruVistas program director, Boreth.

7:30 PM Enjoy a Welcome Dinner

### **December 10<sup>th</sup> Siem Reap (B,L)**

10:00AM Leave for a **City Tour of Siem Reap and visit to** Our highlight is a visit **Artisans D'Angkor** a store created to help young people find work in their home villages by teaching them different types of crafts.

1:00pm Lunch at **Butterflies Garden Restaurant** , a wonderful restaurant and vocational training project.

Later in the afternoon tour of the city and visit the **War Museum in Cambodia**. Then we return to our hotel for time to swim in the pool and journal.

### **December 11th Siem Reap & Angkor Wat (B,L)**

9:00AM "World of Gods" that includes South Gate, the famous Bayon and Elephant terrace. Lots of time to break off hike and explore and see the many Apsara dancers etched in stone. Enjoy group time to rest, restore and absorb the incredible archeology of this place.

3:00PM In the afternoon, we will continue our **Khmer Dance Lesson and Exchange** and learn other forms of social dancing including the Khmer Coconut dance, or perhaps the Tep Monorom Dance.

Dinner and evening are free tonight to explore on your own.

### **December 12th Angkor Wat (B, L, D)**

9:00AM **Banteay Srei** is the only major temple at Angkor not built for a king, instead it was constructed by one of king Rajendravarman's counselors,

Yajnyavahara. This temple is known as the “Citadel of Women” or the pink temple and considered a sacred space where you will find depictions of Viradha who abducts Sita, a scene from the Indian epic Ramayana. Others show Indra riding the three headed elephant Airavata, Varuna, the God of the oceans, Vishnu, Shiva, Uma and Nandi, the sacred bull.

Lunch Followed by a visit to the **Cambodian Landmine Museum** as an important place to realize the impacts of war and genocide in this nation’s recent past.

4:00PM In the afternoon, we’ll visit the **Wat Bo Pagoda**. Then we will wander **The Old Market** in the centre of Siem Reap town opposite the Siem Reap river. Most visitors have heard of the Old Market and they have it on their list of attractions to see in Siem Reap.

For Dinner tonight we will enjoy as we part take in a **Traditional Cambodian Cooking Class**.

### **December 13th Siem Reap/ Tonle Sap Lake (B,L)**

9:00AM This morning we leave early in the morning for a boat trip on **the Tonle Sap Lake**, an ecological wonder. See the fishing activity, visit floating village of Kompong Khleang and an **environmental center**. In the afternoon, visit to **the Angkor Hospital for Children**, and then we have free time to explore microenterprise and local craft markets.

Dinner and evening are free tonight to explore on your own.

### **December 14th Siem Reap- (B, D)**

9:30AM Our day starts exploring a local silk farm and learn about Cambodian text tiles, **Les Chantiers Écoles**. They produce some of the best work in the country, including clothing, interior-design products and accessories. All stages of the production process can be seen here, from the cultivation of mulberry trees through the nurturing of silk worms to the dyeing and weaving of silk.

After we will visit **Artisans D’Angkor** was created to help young people find work in their home villages by teaching them different types of crafts.

7:00PM Farewell Dinner together **that features Apsara Dancing** with a buffet meal. After you might enjoy a night market and have a Fish “foot massage”.

### **December 15th Siem Reap – Luang Prabang (B, D)**

This morning we will check out of our hotel after breakfast. If time permits we will visit the **Cambodian Children’s House of Peace** is a residential home for 30 children between the ages of 7 and 18, and which provides shelter, food, clothing, education, health care, recreation, arts, moral development and all the other things children need to grow and develop into proper citizens. We will have lunch and then transfer to the airport for our afternoon flight to Luang Prabang, Laos. After checking in we will have time to rest. We will have a speaker share

with us about the *History of Laos, and Buddhism today* then we will have our **Welcome to Laos Dinner.**

**December 16th** **Luang Prabang** **(B, L)**

9:00AM Today enjoy a full leisurely day spin around Luang Prabang and you will understand why it deserves the World Heritage title. Visit **Wat Visoun**, the site of impressive Thad Makmo stupa. The rounded dome is stylistically more Sinhalese than Lao. **Phou Sii** hill stands right in the center of this small city. Climb its 350 steps to enjoy commanding views for many miles in each direction. Wat Phu Sii sits atop the mountain, along side the skeletons of Indochina war anti-aircraft guns. Then continue on to visit **Wat Mai**. Built in 1796, the five-tiered roof of the wood.

Lastly we will visit the **National Museum**, once a king's palace, where displayed inside is a lovely collection of personal artifacts of the royal family, including photos, musical instruments, and many gifts received from the dignitaries of foreign countries.

Dinner and evening are free to explore local options, or enjoy a massage.

**December 17th** **Luang Prabang** **(B,D)**

9:00AM Our highlight this morning is a hike at the **Khuang Sii Waterfall**. The falls cascade over many calcified tiers and down several hundred feet into a series of cool, turquoise pools. The water here has a clear blue-green tint due to the high mineral content. You can climb the stairs and look down from various high viewpoints on the way to the top! Bring a bathing suit if you'd like to swim. Enjoy a picnic lunch in the beautiful setting.

PM After lunch we learn about biodiversity in the area and visit to a **Sunbear refuge and rescue center**

(<http://www.freethebears.org.au/web/Projects/Laos/>) This sanctuary is situated within the beautiful **Tat Kuang Si Park, a Provincial Protected Area** approximately 30 Km from the UNESCO World Heritage listed city of Luang Prabang. We are also fortunate enough to be just minutes from one of Laos most famous waterfalls - this location has helped us to become an extremely popular destination with both locals and international tourists. Visitors to the rescue centre are able to enjoy seeing one of Laos' most endangered species and also learn about the threats to bears and how they can help to protect Laos' precious wildlife.

Dinner and evening are free to explore local options, or enjoy a massage

**December 18th** **Luang Prabang** **(B, D)**

10:AM This morning we start off with a visit to the **Land Mine Museum** to learn about the impacts of the American War in Laos. The secret bombing of Laos is often a surprise to Americans, it is said over 3 million ordinances are still unexploded.

Then are off to enjoy a 'hands-on' experience with Lao textiles through learning

the weaving and natural dye techniques at **OckPopTok textile gallery** and weaving center, Situated on the bank of the Mekong River in Luang Prabang it offers the perfect setting to create some unforgettable memories. OckPopTok textile business provides sustainable employment to rural residents through the production and marketing of high quality textiles. Here we will have interactive learning experiences and practice our own hands at dying. Working alongside development agencies and the **Lao Women's Union OckPopTok** has trained artisans from remote areas in product design and other textile business related skills.

Dinner and in the evening we have an invited speaker in hotel to discuss the *History and Culture of Buddhism in Laos today*.

**December 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Luang Prabang**

**(B,D)**

9:00AM This morning we will visit the **Elephant Park Project**. The Elephant Park Project is located in the middle of a wonderful mountainous surrounding. Its mission is the protection of the Asian Elephant. We will gain a better perspective of the amazing nature and creatures.

We will also visit a local farm and learn about the importance of agriculture in rural development. Spend the rest of the relaxing and enjoying exploring the town on your own, before our **Farewell dinner**.

**December 20<sup>th</sup> : Depart for USA**

**(B)**

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