



LAOS AND CAMBODIA UNVEILED

Classic Tour | 18 Days | Physical Level 2

Vientiane – Vang Vieng – Luang Prabang – Siem Reap – Battambang –
Phnom Penh

This epic dual-destination adventure takes you from the lush mountain landscapes of untouched Laos to the treasures of historic Cambodia. En route, swim in turquoise waterfalls, meet local families and explore Angkor's extraordinary temples.

- Be charmed by quaint Vientiane
- Admire scenic Vang Vieng
- Witness the Takbat alms ceremony
- Be captivated by Angkor
- See local life on Tonle Sap
- Visit colonial Battambang
- Explore Phnom Penh by rickshaw

TOUR MAP



LAOS AND CAMBODIA UNVEILED TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers) or local tour guides
- Visa fees for Australian passport holders (please see visa section below for further information)
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides

The only things you may have to pay for are personal expenditures e.g., drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary.

CLASSIC TOURS:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of South-east Asia on an excellent value group tour whilst travelling with like-minded people. The tours are on a fully inclusive basis so you will travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts and local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

PHYSICAL LEVEL 2:

All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights.

'Laos and Cambodia Unveiled' is rated as a **physical level 2** tour. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it is more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You will be getting on and off coaches and boats, walking around the sights and climbing some steps.

- On several days there will be sightseeing on foot for extended periods of time
- You will be required to get on and off varying sizes of boats, often without assistance

Of course, our National Escorts and local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

JOINING YOUR TOUR:

The tour is 18 days in duration including international flights.

Travellers booked on a 'Land Only' package, the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to our reservations team.

Join the tour on Day 2 in Vientiane and end the tour on Day 17 in Phnom Penh. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

ITINERARY CHANGES:

We intend to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours, or as dictated by local conditions. In these circumstances, we will endeavour to make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

DETAILED ITINERARY**Days 1-2: Fly overnight to Vientiane**

Meals: D

You will be met at Vientiane airport in the arrivals hall by your Local Guide and/or National Escort from Wendy Wu Tours. Together with all other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, travel to your hotel for check in.

Early check-in is not included. Additional nights before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.

**Destination Information**

Vientiane - Vientiane, Laos' laid-back capital, mixes French colonial architecture with Buddhist temples such as the golden, 16th-century Pha That Luang, a national symbol. Along broad boulevards and tree-lined streets are notable shrines including Wat Si Saket, which features thousands of Buddha images, and Wat Si Muang, built on a Hindu shrine. Many bakeries, cafés and villas seem straight out of 19th-century Paris.

Day 3: Vientiane

Meals: B, L, D

Nestled in a languid bend in the Mekong, Vientiane is a delightfully quaint city, more a friendlier backwater than the chaotic capital. Spend your day exploring the Buddha Park, an open-air sculpture park with giant sculptures of Buddha and Hindu deities, Wat Si Saket, and Wat Phrakeo before visiting COPE – an organisation helping survivors of land mines.

Continue your sightseeing at That Luang Stupa and the Patuxai Victory Monument, resembling Paris' Arc de Triomphe. Sightseeing today involves around 2 to 3 hours on foot. Tonight, enjoy dinner at a local restaurant.

**Destination Information**

Wat Si Saket - Wat Si Saket is a Buddhist wat built in 1818 on the order of King Anouvong (Sethathirath V.) Wat Si Saket was built in the 'Siamese style' of architecture, with a surrounding terrace and an ornate five-tiered roof, rather than in the Lao style. This may have kept it safe, since the armies of Siam that sacked Vientiane following Anouvong's rebellion in 1827 used the compound as their headquarters and lodging. Wat Si Saket features a cloister wall with more than 2,000 ceramic and silver Buddha images.

COPE - Cooperative Orthotic & Prosthetic Enterprise is a non-profit organisation sourcing walking aids and prosthetic limbs for survivors of land mines.

That Luang Stupa - A gold-covered large Buddhist stupa in the centre of Vientiane. Since its initial establishment, suggested to be in the 3rd century, the stupa has undergone several reconstructions.

Patuxai Victory Monument - Patuxai means Victory Gate or Gate of Triumph, and is a war monument in the centre of Vientiane. It was built between 1957 and 1968. The Patuxai is dedicated to those who fought in the struggle for independence from France.

Day 4: Vientiane – Vang Vieng

Meals: B, L, D

After breakfast, visit the Contemporary Art Museum displaying many art works of Laos. After lunch transfer 3.5 hours to Vang Vieng.

This evening enjoy dinner at your hotel and soak up the atmosphere on the Song riverbanks.

**Destination Information**

Vang Vieng - A town in Vientiane Province about a 4 hour bus ride north of the capital. The town lies on the Nam Song River. The most notable feature of the area is the karst hill landscape surrounding the town.

Day 5: Vang Vieng

Meals: B, L, D

Today venture across the Nam Song river to visit the Tham Chang cave, used as a bunker during the Chinese-Ho invasion in the early nineteenth century. Sightseeing here involves approximately 1 hour on foot over uneven surfaces and climbing steps to get up to the cave. Later, enjoy an easy walking tour on the banks of the Nam Song River.

**Destination Information**

Tham Chang Cave - Tham Jang is a cave just to the southwest of Vang Vieng, Laos. The cave is reached by crossing a bridge that spans across the Nam Song River. You will need to then climb a long flight of steps to the entrance. A spring is located about 50 metres inside the cave.

Day 6: Vang Vieng – Luang Prabang

Meals: B, L, D

After breakfast, return to Vientiane for lunch and travel to the airport for your 45-minute flight to Luang Prabang. On arrival, check in to your hotel before dinner at a local restaurant.

**Destination Information**

Luang Prabang - The capital of Luang Prabang Province in northern Laos, lies in a valley at the confluence of the Mekong and Nam Khan rivers. It is known for its many Buddhist temples, including the gilded Wat Xieng Thong, dating to the 16th century, and Wat Mai, once the residence of the head of Laotian Buddhism.

Day 7: Luang Prabang

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, visit Wat Xieng Thong and Wat Visoun. Later, board a boat to cruise the mighty Mekong up to the sacred caves of Pak Ou, known for the hundreds of miniature Buddha sculptures that reside within. Return to Luang Prabang, visiting local villages to witness the daily life of the local people and their cottage industries.

**Destination Information**

Wat Xieng Thong - A Buddhist temple (wat), located on the northern tip of the peninsula of Luang Prabang, Laos. Wat Xieng Thong is one of the most important of Lao monasteries and remains a significant monument to the spirit of religion, royalty and traditional art. There are over twenty structures on the grounds including a sim, shrines, pavilions and residences, in addition to its gardens of various flowers, ornamental shrubs and trees.

Wat Visoun – Rebuilt in 1898 following fire due to Black Flag Haw raiders, restoration commenced to rebuild the once oldest wooden temple in Luang Prabang from more sturdy bricks and stucco. The highlight here is a 34.5-metre-tall Lotus Stupa.

Pak Ou Caves – Near Pak Ou (mouth of the Ou river) the Tham Ting (lower cave) and the Tham Theung (upper cave) are caves overlooking the Mekong River, 25 kilometres to the north of Luang Prabang, Laos. They are a group of two caves on the west side of the Mekong River, about two hours upstream from the centre of Luang Prabang. The caves are noted for their miniature Buddha sculptures. Hundreds of very small and mostly damaged wooden Buddhist figures are laid out over the wall shelves. They take many different positions, including meditation, teaching, peace, rain, and reclining (nirvana).

Day 8: Luang Prabang

Meals: B, L, D

Visit the National Museum this morning. Drive 1 hour to Kuang Si Waterfall and the Bear Rescue Centre. En route, stop at Ock Pop Tok weaving centre for a visit. Sightseeing at the waterfall will involve around 1 hour of light walking. On the way up to the waterfall you follow a bush walking track which has a slight upward gradient.



It is possible to take a swim in the river near the falls; if you wish to do this, please remember to bring along your swimsuit and a towel. Changing rooms are available on site.

Destination Information

National Museum - Built in 1904 in the French colonial era, the original building was the Royal Palace but was later converted into a museum.

Kuang Si Waterfalls - A three-tier waterfall approximately 29 kilometres south of Luang Prabang. The falls begin in shallow pools atop a steep hillside. These lead to the main fall with a 60 metre cascade. The falls are accessed via a trail to a left of the falls. Water collects in numerous turquoise blue pools as it flows downstream. The many cascades that result are typical of travertine waterfalls. There are walkways and bridges for your enjoyment. Most of the pools are open for swimming.

Day 9: Luang Prabang – Siem Reap

Meals: B, L, D

Rise early this morning to view Takbat, a Buddhist ceremony, before visiting the impressive Wat Mai and climbing the Phousi Hill for panoramic views of the city. Continue to visit the impressive Wat Mai and local market. Later fly 1 and a half hours to the fascinating city of Siem Reap and wander the Angkor Night Market.

**Destination Information**

Phousi Hill - A 100 metre high hill in the centre of the old town of Luang Prabang. It lies in the heart of the old town peninsula and is bordered on one side by the Mekong River and on the other side by the Nam Khan River. The hill is a local religious site, and houses several Buddhist shrines. Halfway up the hill, overlooking the Nam Khan is Wat Tham Phou Si, a Buddhist temple. At the summit of the hill, overlooking the town and surrounding countryside, is Wat Chom Si, which is also a Buddhist temple and is a tourist highlight of Luang Prabang.

Siem Reap - Siem Reap is a bustling tourist destination due to its proximity to both Tonle Sap Lake and the ancient Khmer national capital city of Angkor. Angkor Wat, the spiritual and cultural icon of Cambodia, is one of the main attractions and is the world's largest religious monument.

Day 10: Siem Reap

Meals: B, L, D

Spanning from the 9th to 15th century, the Angkor complex with over 1,000 temples was the seat of the thriving Khmer Empire. The complex is managed by UNESCO, and to enter, your group will drive approximately 6 kilometres out of town to the main entrance gate to get your entrance passes, which you must carry with you. If you choose to climb at any site, you must be able to climb and descend without assistance.



Begin at the city of Angkor Thom and the enigmatic Bayon, the Elephant Terrace and the Terrace of the Leper King, before continuing to the temple of Ta Prohm, enveloped in a labyrinth of jungle. This afternoon is devoted to the fascinating and awe-inspiring Angkor Wat, before enjoying a sunset cruise around the moat of Angkor Thom.

Please note: The Central Tower of the Angkor Wat is closed on Buddhist holidays and on all other days the complex has a limited number of visitors allowed at any given time, under regulations from UNESCO. If you wish to visit this tower, you will be required to wait in the queue alongside all other visitors. The ability to do this will be determined upon the group's schedule.

Destination Information

Angkor Thom - This fortified city is flanked by a row of 54 stone figures on each side, which leads you through a 23-metre imposing stone entrance gate to the various temples inside.

Bayon - Beautifully crafted central towers, decorated with four opposing faces representing King Jayavarman VII. Bayon's stone galleries display extraordinary bas-reliefs incorporating over 11,000 figures.

Elephant Terrace and Terrace of the Leper King - Giant viewing platforms used for public ceremonies, which served as a base for the King's grand audience hall.

Ta Prohm - Swallowed by the jungle where Strangler Figs and Kapok Trees have entwined themselves around the ruins. Undoubtedly, the most atmospheric ruin at Angkor with several towers, closed courtyards and narrow corridors to explore.

Angkor Wat - Surrounded by a 190-metre moat and taking 30 years to build, Angkor Wat represents the Khmer civilisation at its grandest. With its fascinating decorative flourishes, extensive bas-relief and multiple tiers, it is the best-preserved temple within the complex.

Day 11: Siem Reap

Meals: B, L, D

Today, explore the less visited Beng Mealea, a mysterious temple completely overrun by the jungle where you will explore on foot for approximately an hour and a half. In the high-water season, you will also visit the unique stilt-village of Kompong Khleang; in the lower water season, you will visit Chong Kneas floating village.



Return to Siem Reap with a visit to SATCHA, an organisation working alongside local craftsmen to create high-end and traditional Cambodian arts and crafts. This evening, enjoy a traditional Apsara dance performance at dinner.

Destination Information

Beng Mealea - Dating from the 11th century, this sprawling temple covers over one square kilometre. Largely overrun by vegetation and constructed in a distinctly Angkor Wat-style, Beng Mealea precedes and may even have served as a 'prototype' for Angkor Wat.

Tonle Sap - The Tonle Sap is the largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia. During the rainy season, it can swell from 3,000 square kilometres to 7,500 square kilometres. Locals have built floating villages on the Tonle Sap, which include schools, restaurants, markets, and even a medical clinic.

The SATCHA Handicraft Centre - A social enterprise showcasing traditional and high-end Cambodian art. Local creators are supported with materials and training to produce their crafts such as silk weaving and wood carvings, with many of the handicrafts available to purchase.

Day 12: Siem Reap

Meals: B, L, D

Start your morning by visiting a local silk farm and then spend the rest of the day temple-hopping around Siem Reap. Travel to Preah Khan Temple, Banteay Srei and explore the 12th century wonder of Banteay Samre. Freshen up at your hotel before transferring to a local restaurant for dinner.

**Destination Information**

Banteay Srei - A Hindu temple dedicated to Shiva and considered by many to be the 'Jewel in the Crown' of Angkorian art. The temple is cut from stone of a pinkish hue and contains some of the finest stone carvings in the world.

Banteay Samre - Built approximately halfway through the 12th century, Banteay Samre is decorated with many intricate and well-preserved carvings of Hindu and Buddhist stories and lore.

Day 13: Siem Reap - Battambang

Meals: B, L, D

Depart your hotel shortly after breakfast and travel approximately 3 hours to the city of Battambang. After lunch, enjoy a walking tour of the city where you'll see the contrasting blend of traditional Khmer and French colonial architecture.

**Destination Information**

Battambang - Cambodia's second largest city. Situated on the banks of the Stung Sangke River, Battambang possesses some of the grandest and best-preserved colonial architecture and scenic countryside.

Day 14: Battambang

Meals: B, L, D

Begin your day by experiencing traditional rice paper making, rice wine crafting, and dried banana production with a countryside family. Next, step back in time with a visit to the Ancient Khmer House. After lunch, continue your journey with a trip to the majestic Banan Hill Temple. Conclude the day at Phnom Sampov, where you'll witness the unforgettable spectacle of millions of bats emerging from their cave at dusk.



Please note rice paper making is seasonal; when this is not available you will still see the rice paper, as well as visiting an orphanage school and a tailors' workshop.

Destination Information

Prasat Banan Temple - Located on the top of a small hill, the temple was built in the 11th century and consists of 5 towers.

Phnom Sampov - A small but unique mountain just outside of Battambang containing a hilltop temple, killing caves used by the Khmer Rouge, and most famously, the home of millions of bats that depart their cave each evening.

Day 15: Battambang – Phnom Penh

Meals: B, L, D

Today drive approximately 4 to 5 hours to the capital, Phnom Penh, stopping en route for a couple of hours to explore Udong and Kampong Chhnang Province to see traditional handmade pottery and climb Touch Hill to admire the surroundings. There are approximately 415 steps to climb to reach the top of Touch Hill.

**Destination Information**

Phnom Penh - The capital of the Kingdom of Cambodia is built around four river arms, formed by a sharp curve in the Mekong River near the junctions of the Bassac and the Tonle Sap tributaries. This charming city has a pleasant blend of oriental and colonial architecture, but reminders of a troubled past are also evident.

Day 16: Phnom Penh

Meals: B, L, D

Enjoy a unique sightseeing tour of Phnom Penh today, travelling by cyclo-ride to the magnificent Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda before scaling the small hill topped by Wat Phnom. Later, explore the fascinating exhibits of the National Museum, set within a stunning Khmer-style building. Then, delve into Cambodia's tragic history under the Khmer Rouge with a visit to the sobering Tuol Sleng Museum.

**Destination Information**

The Royal Palace - Built in 1866 by the French these ornate buildings are the official residence of the reigning Cambodian royal family and King Sihamoni. View the Throne Hall and Silver Pagoda.

Silver Pagoda - This concrete and marble structure includes a floor with over 5,000 silver tiles each weighing 1 kilogram. Famous artefacts include a 90 kilogram solid gold Buddha made in 1907 and an Emerald Buddha said to be made of baccarat crystal.

Wat Phnom - Home to a hilltop temple that carries the cities namesake. Locals flock here to pray for good luck and success.

Tuol Sleng Museum - This former school was used by the Khmer Rouge as a detention and torture centre in the late 1970s. Today this building houses paintings and photographs of the victims. You can see the crude cells built in the classrooms and the torture devices used to extract confessions by the regime.

Days 17-18: Depart Phnom Penh

Meals: B

Today, if time permits before your flight, there will be an optional tour to the Killing Fields (to be paid for locally; approximately US\$20pp depending on the group size).

This particular killing field is the site of the brutal executions of more than 17,000 men, women and children. Many who had first suffered interrogation and torture at S21 and buried in mass graves. The now peaceful fields and a stupa remain here as a permanent memorial.

Transfer to the airport to board your flight back to Australia arriving the next day.

Check out is usually at noon – please contact our Reservations team if you would like to prebook Late Checkout. Please note: Only breakfast is provided on the group's day of departure.

LAOS & CAMBODIA UNVEILED TRAVEL INFORMATION

VISAS:

Laos & Cambodia: Entry visas are required by all visitors and Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

Cambodia Entry Requirement: all guests travelling to Cambodia must complete a mandatory online e-immigration application within 7 days prior to their arrival. You may complete the form via the mobile phone app called Cambodia e-Arrival (CeA), or the form can be completed online at <https://arrival.gov.kh/>

The app and the registration process are free of charge. Please see our website for more information including links to the mobile apps and web platform: <https://help.wendywutours.com.au/knowledge/cambodia-e-arrival-card>

Laos Entry Requirement: All guests travelling to Laos must complete a mandatory digital arrival and departure registration within three days prior to their arrival, as well as before leaving Laos. The form can be completed online at: <https://www.immigration.gov.la/en/home>

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate, Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa.

Wendy Wu Tours does not accept responsibility for lost or undelivered items.

All information with regards to visas will be updated regularly on our website as we find visas process' are changing on regular basis. For the latest information on visa procedures, processing times and requirements, please kindly refer to our website <https://www.wendywutours.com.au/help-and-advice/passports-and-visas/>

INSURANCE:

It is a condition of your booking that you are insured for the duration of your trip. We recommend comprehensive travel insurance to cover cancellation, medical requirements, luggage, repatriations and additional expenses. At a minimum, the policy is required to cover medical requirements including medical evacuations / repatriations. The choice of insurer is yours.

We strongly suggest you purchase insurance at the time you pay your deposit. This is because cancellation fees and charges are payable from that time. We may request you to provide evidence that you have taken out and paid for a policy to comply with this condition. If you fail to provide a certificate of currency of insurance within a reasonable time after our request, then this will be deemed a cancellation by you and standard cancellation fees will apply.

EATING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA:

Southeast Asia is home to an incredibly rich food history. The local cuisine is known for its intense flavours, spices and some of the freshest ingredients you can find. In general, meals include either rice or noodles and are packed full of flavour. Lemongrass, ginger, lime leaves, coriander, fish sauce and soy sauce are used in many local dishes. Whilst Southeast Asian food has a reputation for being hot and spicy, each region actually has its own distinct characteristics. Vietnam, for example, is perhaps best known for its fresh and aromatic dishes – relying heavily on flavours from fresh herbs such as mint, basil and dill.

When dining in Southeast Asia, although some restaurants have adopted a western approach to dining, expect some restaurants to follow the traditional communal style of eating. Typically, this will mean each diner has their own small bowl and may serve themselves from a variety of shared dishes. At some local restaurants, appetizers and main courses might be served when they are ready instead of following a particular order.

Determining when it's appropriate to use chopsticks, forks or spoons can be challenging for some travellers, even other Asians, as each country has different customs. In Vietnam, dishes are normally placed in the centre and people serve food for themselves with their own chopsticks and bowl. Usually, chopsticks or other utensils are provided to scoop the food into your bowl to prevent your own chopsticks from touching the food that remains on the table. Dining in Southeast Asia is fairly casual with not too many rules. Leaving food on the plate is not considered rude.

Those with dietary requirements - just make sure to inform your booking agent of any specific requirements well in advance of your trip. Please read your travel guide, which you will receive with your final documents for more information about eating in Southeast Asia. We recommend that when it comes to Asia food, you stay open minded and try to be adventurous!

GROUP SIZE:

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by a National Escort. There will usually be no more than 28 travellers in a Classic Tour group, although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with local guides only.

ACCOMMODATION:

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between Australia and Vietnam. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort/Local Guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

Solo travellers: If you are a solo traveller and willing to share a room, you will not have to pay a single supplement for any hotel rooms. Willing to share single travellers booking within 75 days of the first day of a group tour will be subject to availability. If no suitable match is available at time of booking you will be required to pay all single supplements.

TRANSPORT:

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are typically used on our group tours for city sightseeing, countryside excursions and longer transfers where necessary. However, minibuses may be used for smaller groups (under 10 passengers). In Laos – where roads are often narrow, steep, or poorly maintained – smaller vans or minibuses are frequently required. Depending on group size, in areas where large coaches cannot operate, the group may be split into separate vehicles. When this happens, your local guide will work closely with the drivers to ensure the group feels supported throughout the journey, maintaining regular communication across all vehicles.

While roads across Southeast Asia have generally improved in recent years, many routes in Laos remain unpaved, and traffic or seasonal weather conditions can significantly extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road - not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, any timings listed in the itinerary are approximations only.

Planes: Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

PORTERAGE:

Please be aware that portering is not included on our tours in Southeast Asia. You will therefore need to be able to handle your own luggage within the hotel and when using transportation like trains and coaches.

LUGGAGE:

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each: a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of 5kg. It is essential that your luggage is lockable.

TIPPING POLICY:

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and Southeast Asia is no exception. However, it is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time. In order to avoid any inconvenience Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount is given to your National Escort at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed to local guides and drivers throughout your tour. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the National Escort.

If you are travelling in a smaller group with local guides only, then tipping is paid in each destination. To be fair to the guides we ask for slightly higher amounts per traveller with small groups.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy but we do recognize that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA:

Although Southeast Asia is developing quickly, it still lacks the international standards of civil infrastructure and tourist facilities. Concepts of personal responsibility are also different to those in Australia. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in Australia; for example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade. All of our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense, refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort or Local Guides.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:

If you are travelling within the below Cambodia and Laos Public Holidays please note that celebrations can last a couple of days and during these times some businesses will be closed and coach, air and train travel may be affected. Tourist attractions will be open but may be crowded. In Laos: International Women's Day - 8th March, Laos New Year Holiday 14th – 16th April. In Cambodia: Khmer New Year is 14th – 16th April every year, the King's birthday is 14th - 15th May, and the Water festival is between 10th – 12th November.

SOUVENIRS:

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs, so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions which demonstrate a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone, so we aim to take you to places, which hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

PERSONAL EXPENSES:

You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of \$300AUD per person, per week should be sufficient; however, for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount.

CLIMBING STEPS:

Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defense against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails. Hindu and Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

People with knee or hip injuries, who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

We recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.travelvax.com.au

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.smartraveller.gov.au as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice including a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

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