

Guest: Lotos Rallye Mekong Edition
Quotation ID: 2024-002620-MEKONGEDIT
Travel Date: 11 January 2025 - 25 January 2025

Lotos rallye Andre

Day 1: 11-01-2025 (SAT)
Siem Reap Airport SAI - Siem Reap

Welcome to Cambodia

Welcome to the magical land of Cambodia – the Kingdom of Wonder. Our team will meet you at the airport and transfer you directly to your hotel. Here you can check in and enjoy the facilities getting used to your new environment before you start an unforgettable journey. In the late afternoon you will have an orientation briefing (traffic rules, introduction of the staff, road explanation book, Jeep instruction, etc) In the evening, visit Phare, the Cambodian Circus, which uses modern circus arts and high-energy music to tell uniquely Cambodian stories, exploring themes rooted in Cambodian traditions, ethos and spirit. The performances mix theater, music, dance, acrobatics, juggling, aerial acrobatics, fire and contortion with an explosion of virtuosity and sensitivity. During the hour-long shows, the Phare performers share their emotions and enthusiasm, sweeping the audience away with their integrity and power.


 Included today: D

Day 2: 12-01-2025 (SUN)
Siem Reap

Explore mystery temples

This morning, you will depart by jeep to the magnificent World Heritage Site UNESCO, the ancient temples of Angkor Wat. We have scouted out some back roads to the temples that still exist so you can get away from the tuk-tuks and busses for a much nicer and more relaxing drive to the temples. With a little imagination, today's trip will give you a picture of the lost temples as they have lain for thousands of years. An English-speaking guide will lead you through the historic park, where you can see majestic structures and admire the splendor of the ancient kingdom. Most of the temples date back to the 12th century and house some of the most anticipated bas-reliefs and beautiful sculptures such as Garudas and Apsara dancers. First, visit the temple of Angkor Wat, the largest of all temples that

has survived the sands of time and is in excellent condition. Here you can admire its dominating towers and sheer presence while taking the time to walk around inside. Continue on to Angkor Thom with its spectacular Bayon Temple. Here, a tour of the superbly preserved temple will allow you to admire 54 intricate and visually stunning four-headed Buddha statues - truly one of the most impressive sights of the temple complex. Lunch will be taken near the man-made lake of East Baray, which was created to supply water to the temple complex. After lunch and a short rest, you will visit Ta Phrom Temple. Made famous by the hit movie "Tomb Raider" starring Angelina Jolie, the temple's iconic trees with their gigantic roots hugging the walls have slowly taken over, creating a visually stunning and unique backdrop that makes a breathtaking end to your "templing" day".


 Included today: B L D



Day 3: 13-01-2025 (MON) Siem Reap - Kampong Thom

The floatiang village of Kampong Kleang

Today we leave Siem Reap and drive to the city of Kampong Thom. First stop is at Kampong Kleang, the largest floating village in Cambodia. In the dry season, we drive our jeep between the stilts on which the houses are built, rising up to 10 meters in the air. In the rainy season, the water level reaches its peak and can rise up to 1 or 2 meters above the houses. We will offer you a boat ride through the village and have the opportunity to meet the locals. Afterwards we continue our journey and make a short stop in Kampong Kdei. Here you will see one of the most beautiful and best preserved bridges built by the Khmer kings. This bridge dates back to the 10th century. In the late afternoon we will reach our hotel.


 Included today: B L D



Day 4: 14-01-2025 (TUE) Kampong Thom - Chloulung

The Mighty Mekong River

After a delicious breakfast, we will drive our jeeps through the beautiful Cambodian countryside to our first stop of the day. We will stop to see some truly impressive carvings. From huge blocks of stone, sometimes up to 8 meters tall, the stonemason chisels and carves some extremely impressive sculptures. The sheer amount of detail that goes into some of his work is extraordinary and you will have plenty of time to admire his work. Not far from the mainroad we will have a break at the Santuk silkfarm. This little project gives work to women and you will learn all about silk and how they make the silk products. We continue our scenic drive to our 3th stop for the day and visit a local rubber plantation. Here you will learn more about the workings of the local rubber industry, how the latex is collected, cleaned and dried before being shipped to an outside rubber factory. After this excursion, we will take a ferry north of Stung Trong and cross the mighty Mekong River. It is the twelfth longest river in the world and flows from the heights of the Tibetan Plateau to the South China Sea, some 4,500 km from its source. It is the lifeblood of many people, and its impressive size and power can only be experienced firsthand. On the east side of the Mekong is the old French colonial town of Chloulung. In this peaceful and traditional town, we will spend the night in the former governor's mansion built in 1916, where we can experience Cambodia's colonial past first hand.

 Included today: B L D



Day 5: 15-01-2025 (WED)

Chloung - Koh Trong

Spot the dolphins

We drive our jeeps along the banks of the Mekong River and pass some of the Muslim Cham villages. These were formed when the Cham fled the Vietnamese conquest and stayed in their new homeland, adding a new dimension to the area. At Kampi, 12 km north of Kratie, we board the boat to try to spot the Irrawaddy Dolphins. These rare, endangered freshwater dolphins live in a beautiful section of the Mekong River near a small rapids. The chance of seeing them playing in the rapids is very high, so have your camera ready. After Kampi, we will head back to Kratie where we will take a ferry to Koh Trong Island. With a local guide, you will explore this island paradise by bike and get explanations about the way of life of the inhabitants and the products that are grown there. Back on the mainland we drive back to Chloung with our jeeps.



Included today: B L D



Day 6: 16-01-2025 (THU)

Koh Trong - Sen Monorom

On the way to Highlands

After Chloung, we continue our way to the breathtaking province of Monduliri. The landscape changes from the plains of the Mekong up to the highlands. We drive through forest and hilly landscapes and reach our destination for the next few days in the afternoon. Sen Monorom, the provincial capital of Monduliri, is actually an overgrown village, a charming community at the point where the hills that give the province its name meet. The village is inhabited by the indigenous Bunong people, whose tribesmen are frequently encountered in the town. The area around Sen Monorom is dotted with minority villages and picturesque waterfalls. Many Bunong from nearby villages come here to trade: They are easily distinguished from the migrant lowlanders by the characteristic baskets they carry on their backs. Sen Monorom is located at an altitude of 800 meters, and when the wind blows, it is much cooler here than in the rest of Cambodia. After getting used to the town and new surroundings, we rest to recharge our batteries for tomorrow's adventure.



Included today: B L D



Day 7: 17-01-2025 (FRI)

Sen Monorom

Meet the elephant

We drive through small villages and over a mountain pass before we have the opportunity to see how the beautiful Asian elephant lives in its natural environment. There are many elephant projects in Monduliri, but the Elephant Community Program is one of the smaller ones working towards a sustainable future for the local community. A large portion of the trip price stays in this community, allowing the mahouts to make a living to support their families and keeping the elephants out of the hard labor of the forest. You will learn how the elephants live, what they eat, and how they have integrated into the local community. Since the focus of the program is on caring for the elephants, riding the elephants is not allowed. However, you will have the opportunity to feed them bananas or bamboo before saying goodbye to these magnificent animals. In the afternoon we will drive through minority villages and discover more of the Monduliri Outback. On the way back to Sen Monorom you will be accompanied by the memories of a unique and unforgettable trip.




Included today: B L D



Day 8: 18-01-2025 (SAT) Sen Monorom - Banlung

Largest waterfall in Cambodia

In the morning we drive north, 30 km outside Sen Monorom and stop at the largest waterfall in Cambodia. The Bou Sra Waterfall is a magnificent sight, tumbling through a gorge in the jungle near the Bunong town of Bou Sra. The three-tiered waterfall has an upper tier of 12 meters and a stunning lower tier with a massive drop of 20 meters, before a final drop of 4 meters makes for a beautiful sight and a rushing sound. We then continue our journey into the beautiful province of Ratanakiri with its rugged, breathtaking landscape. Until recently this was a tough, grueling drive, but now there is a good new road that makes the journey through this wonderful place much smoother. About 20 km after Lumphat, we leave the paved road and turn onto a small, windy dirt road that takes us to Banlung, the capital of Ratanakiri. This town has a bustling market teeming with products from local ethnic villages. Yeak Laom Lake outside the town is home to some of the rarest and most exotic birds in the region. It is one of the few crater lakes in Cambodia and dates back to about 4000 years ago. The lake is almost 50 meters deep and ensures that the water is very clean and clear. You can cool off on one of the wooden platforms and swim with the local people or just sit back and enjoy the peaceful and natural environment.


 Included today: B L D



Day 9: 19-01-2025 (SUN) Banlung

Step into the heart of Ratanakiri's hidden gem

The word "Ratanakiri" itself is a derivation from two Cambodian words that together mean the place of gems and mountains. These are the two characteristics for which this Cambodian province of Ratanakiri is best known. After a week of exploring, take a relaxing day to discover the hidden treasures of Ratanakiri. We'll embark on a morning expedition to a traditional gemstone mining field, where you'll witness the process firsthand. Gaze down a 10 to 20 meter-deep pit as a local miner descends, carefully sifting sand for precious gems like sapphires and zircons. Feel the thrill of discovery as they haul the bucket up, revealing the day's bounty. And who knows, you might even find your own gem to purchase directly from the source! In the afternoon, we'll trade dusty pits for the crystal-clear waters of Yaklom Crater Lake. Dive into this volcanic oasis, surrounded by lush greenery, and refresh yourself with a swim in its invigorating waters. As the sun sets, we'll hop back into our jeeps and cruise back to the hotel, carrying the memories (and maybe even a gem!) of this unique experience.

 Included today: B L D




Day 10: 20-01-2025 (MON) Banlung - Stung Treng

Conquer Untamed Cambodia

Prepare for the tour's thrilling climax: a Jeep expedition carving through Cambodia's wild heart. Three rivers stand as our gatekeepers – two we conquer by ferry, but one demands an audacious water crossing. Google Maps won't guide us here; our path is a whisper on the wind, a ribbon of dirt snaking through vast, silent landscapes. Brace yourself for bone-jarring dirt tracks, rickety wooden bridges clinging to existence (fingers crossed!), and unforeseen challenges met with resourceful improvisation. This isn't just a drive; it's a baptism by dust and determination, a test of your spirit rewarded with unparalleled adventure. Our accommodation for tonight is located on a high bank of the Mekong River. All bungalows have a balcony overlooking the river. It is a relaxing place overlooking the Mekong River. Wash away the

dust, share stories of daring exploits, and let the quiet pride of pushing your boundaries settle in. This adventure, etched in your memory forever, is more than just a tour; it's a testament to your spirit's wild resilience.


 Included today: B L D



Day 11: 21-01-2025 (TUE) Stung Treng - Sra Em

Breakfast on a sandy island in the Mekong

After yesterday's thrilling jeep adventure, we're switching gears for a gentler journey. In the morning, we will take you on a relaxing boat ride over to a small island in the middle of the Mekong. Umbrellas and tables will be set up for your special breakfast on the beach. The area is home to some delightful birds which might fascinate you while you are enjoying your breakfast. Dust settles on our jeeps as we climb back in, our bodies pleasantly sore from yesterday's adventure on rugged dirt roads. Today, the smooth satisfaction of asphalt stretches before us, a welcome change. By afternoon, we'll arrive at our hotel - your chance to unwind or take a refreshing dip in the pool. Tomorrow awaits a thrilling discovery: Preah Vihear temple, a hidden gem visited by only a lucky few.

 Included today: B L D



Day 12: 22-01-2025 (WED) Sra Em - Ko Ker

The most beautifully located temple in Cambodia

The first 25 km we will drive in our jeeps and on the foot of the mountain we will change our jeep for a another transportation. A local pick-up will take you up the steep mountain. You will reach the Preah Vihear Temple. This breathtaking spectacle is a sight not many get to see. Combine the most beautifully situated temple in Cambodia with an unforgettable view and you will experience something you will remember for the rest of your life. Together with our guide we will explore the temple. The temple is a great place for beautiful photos. Then we will descend and return to the hotel. At the hotel, you can freshen up and have lunch before heading to Koh Ker. We will make a few stops along the way before we check in the hotel for tonight.

 Included today: B L D




Day 13: 23-01-2025 (THU) Ko Ker - Siem Reap

Feel like Indiana Jones

After breakfast you will go to Koh Ker. It is a stunning and unique pyramid-shaped temple built in 931 AD. When you enter it, you almost feel like you are approaching a Central American Mayan sight like Chichen Itza. Koh Ker also has a unique political history, having been established by Jayavarman IV as a "new" capital outside the Angkor area. Its importance was short-lived, however; after the king's death, power reverted to the Angkor area around 944 AD. The arduous climb up wooden steps to the top of the pyramid is quickly forgotten when viewing the breathtaking view from the top. We continue our way and have a short drive to another amazing destination. Leaving the familiar comfort of the paved road, we embark on a thrilling detour into the unexplored. Our destination? Peung Kom Nou, a secret

treasure trove of rock carvings dating back to the 11th century. Whispers say even local archaeologists haven't fully unraveled its mysteries. With cameras in hand, we'll delve into this hidden gem, marveling at the intricate carvings and soaking in the breathtaking vistas that stretch across the countryside. Refreshed by a delicious lunch amidst this ancient wonder, we'll retrace our steps, eventually rejoining the main road and cruising back to Siem Reap. After 13 days of exhilarating adventures, we're back in Siem Reap, the city where it all began. And what better way to celebrate than with a shower of bubbly? As soon as we step foot in the hotel, the champagne corks will be popping, marking the joyous end to an unforgettable journey.

 Included today: B L D



Day 14: 24-01-2025 (FRI) Siem Reap

Stunning Sunset and farewell party

A day off to do as much or as little as you like - a day of shopping in town, a massage, or a little local excursion. But we will end this unforgettable self-drive jeep tour with a grand bouncer. At 4pm, we will drive the jeeps into the countryside of Siem Reap for a breathtaking sunset. Explore and experience the colours, smells and magnificent views of Cambodia at its best. We will also drive through vast rice fields and as the sun sets, we will take the jeep to find a beautiful spot in the middle of the rice fields. Here we open a bottle of champagne and toast to a beautiful sunset. Later in the evening we have a farewell dinner in beautiful surroundings.

 Included today: B D



Day 15: 25-01-2025 (SAT) Siem Reap - Siem Reap Airport SAI

Time to say goodbye...

Unfortunately, all good things come to an end, and this year's Lotus Rally is no exception. Today it is time to say goodbye to Cambodia. Enjoy the ride to the airport and take one last look at the wonderful country you have been privileged to enjoy over the past 14 days. We are sure that you have had a fantastic adventure here that you will remember for a long time. We hope you will come back very soon and we can show you more of Cambodia. Bon Voyage! If after this exciting jeep adventure you would like to relax for a few days on a beautiful white sand beach with turquoise sea, we can offer you a package deal. Ask for the possibilities.

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