

## Cambodia Encounters

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**Country(ies):** Cambodia

**Tour type:** Small Group

**Transport:** A/C minibus/car

**Group size:** Min: 2 | Max: 12

**Days:** 6 Days

**Start location:** Phnom Penh, Cambodia

**End location:** Phnom Penh, Cambodia

**Departs On:** Tuesday

**Meals:** Breakfasts - 5, Lunches - 1, Dinners - 1

**Highlights:** Phnomh Penh - Toul Sleng Museum, Choeung Ek Killing Fields, Royal Palace & Silver Pagoda, Skonn district market, Kulen Mountain walks & homestay, Siem Reap - Angkor Watt temples, Ta Prohm, street food walk

**Places Visited:** Phnom Penh, Kulen Mountain, Siem Reap, Angkor Wat & Ta Prohm



# Itinerary

## Day 1: Your Cambodia adventure begins, transfers included

Once you arrive in Cambodia, one of our staff members will meet you at the airport and transfer you to your hotel for the evening. Once you're settled in, we'll brief you on what you can expect over the next few days, before arranging a time to collect you tomorrow.

**OVERNIGHT:** Phnom Penh hotel

**MEALS:** None

**EXTRAS:** Single Room Supplement (CATMCC) || Extra day in Phnom Penh - pre-tour

## Day 2: Exploring Phnom Penh

After breakfast, we'll visit the Toul Sleng Prison Museum and the Killing Fields of Choeung Ek-both - grim reminders of Cambodia's bloody past but an important piece of this country's historical and cultural puzzle.

This afternoon, we'll visit the Royal Palace, built by King Norodom in 1866 on the site of the old town, and the Silver Pagoda. Located within the grounds of the Royal Palace, the Silver Pagoda is so named because of its floor, which is made up of 5,000 silver tiles. The treasures found inside include a solid gold Buddha encrusted and weighing 90 kilograms and a small 17th century emerald and baccarat crystal Buddha.

We'll also visit the National Museum, also called Musee des Beaux-Arts. A French archaeologist and painter, Georges Groslier, designed it in Khmer style in 1917. The museum contains a collection of Khmer art - notably sculptures - throughout the ages. We'll spend the night in Phnom Penh.

**OVERNIGHT:** Phnom Penh hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** None

## Day 3: A journey to the wonders of Siem Reap

After breakfast, we'll make our way to Siem Reap which is the gateway to the ruins of Angkor, the seat of the Khmer kingdom from the 9th to 15th centuries.

On our way there, we'll stop at the Skoun District to visit a spider market, where you can try to eat fried spiders (this is optional!). Skoun's residents are famous for their hunting and eating of spiders. We'll also stop at the Santuk District to see a stone carving workshop, before visiting the ancient Naga Bridge.

Once we arrive in Siem Reap, we'll visit the statue of Yeay Teap and the Preah Ang Chek and Preah Ang Chorm Shrine, which is dedicated to two Buddhas. The locals believe that Preah Ang Chek and the Preah Ang Chorm Shrines protect the entire town of Siem Reap.

We'll then make our way to one of the city's lively Psar Chars, also called the "Old Market", where anything and everything is for sale. Finally we head up into the hills to the beautiful scenery and forests of Kulen Mountain where we have a short walk to our home-stay accommodation for the night in a local village.

**OVERNIGHT:** Kulen Mountain homestay

**MEALS:** Breakfast, Dinner

**EXTRAS:** None

## Day 4: Exploring Kulen Mountain's forest, statues & waterfalls

Today starts with breakfast before we head on a forest trail to the life-size elephant statue, which represents the mountain's guardian, and the smaller statues of lions, a cow and a frog.

We'll picnic near a beautiful waterfall on Kulen Mountain, before we continue through the forest to a statue of the reclining Buddha in Wat Preah Ang Thom. The statue is carved into a huge sandstone boulder. Preah Ang Thom is the sacred and worshipping God for Phnom Kulen. Finally, we'll reach a rock plateau, providing us with great scenic views over Kulen Mountain and the plains below, before we stop at a waterfall for a refreshing swim.

At the end of the day, we'll return to Siem Reap and check in at our hotel for the night.

**OVERNIGHT:** Siem Reap hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast, Lunch

**EXTRAS:** None

## Day 5: A tour of Siem Reap and an evening street food walk

After breakfast, we'll head out on a sightseeing tour of Angkor, spending a full day exploring its wondrous ancient ruins such as the South Gate of Angkor Thom, famous for its series of colossal human faces carved in stone, the impressive Bayon Temple, the Royal Enclosure, Phimeanakas, the Elephant Terrace, the Terrace of the Leper King and the largest as well as the most complete temple of Angkor Wat, built in the 12th century.

Walking around this massive edifice is an incredible experience, with its galleries with columns, libraries, pavilions, courtyards and ponds full of water reflecting the towering temple. We'll also visit the jungle covered temple of Ta Prohm, which is an incredible sight with huge tree roots embracing the ruins.

In the evening we'll visit Pub Street Siem Reap - the definitive nightlife hub of the town, featuring rows of backpacker-friendly bars and pubs, cafes and many different styles of restaurants to choose from. We'll overnight in Siem Reap.

**OVERNIGHT:** Siem Reap hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** None

## Day 6: Bon Voyage! Airport transfer included

We hope that you had an amazing time in Cambodia! We'll transfer you to the airport to board your flight home. If you have a late afternoon or evening flight, or would like to add some extra nights in Siem Reap, then a range of additional half day tours are available, including a cooking class, cycling tour of some temples you've not visited yet, and a visit to the floating houses on Tonle Sap lake.

**OVERNIGHT:** N/A

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** Extra day in Siem Reap - post-tour || Half-day local village tour & cooking class || Half-day silk farm tour || Half-day remote temples tour || Half day cycling tour of the temples || Half-day tour to Tonle Sap Lake

## Included

- 4-nights accommodation in 4-star hotels
- 1 night in a local homestay on Kulen Mountain
- All transport and transfers in private AC car/minibus
- 24-hour airport arrival & departure transfer service

- Services of a local tour guide during sightseeing and activities
- Admission fees, with instruction where necessary
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (5 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 1 dinner)

## **Excluded**

- International Flights (available on request)
- Visas fees
- Travel Insurance (compulsory, available on request)
- Single room supplements
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Optional tours
- Tips for tour guides and drivers
- Any other items not mentioned above

# Options

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Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting.

However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements.

Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements - full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

## Extra day in Phnom Penh - pre-tour

**Min numbers:** 1 person

**Price:** \$60.00

This option adds an extra day to the start of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport arrival transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

**Note:** Single room and peak season supplements apply.

## Extra day in Siem Reap - post-tour

**Min numbers:** 1 person

**Price:** \$35.00

This option adds an extra day to the end of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport departure transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

**Note:** Single room and peak season supplements apply.

## Single Room Supplement (CASGCE)

**Min numbers:**

**Price:** \$200.00

This option books a single room in all the accommodation throughout the tour. Room shares are not available on this tour, so if you are single traveller then you will need to add this option to your booking.

**Note:** The price shown is a low season price. Slightly higher prices may apply during high and peak seasons - the exact price for your dates will be shown on the online booking form and is always available on request.

## Half-day local village tour & cooking class

**Min numbers:** 1 person

**Price:** \$95.00

If you're looking to learn more about Cambodia's unique cuisine, then this half-day cooking class is perfect for you.

Taking place approximately 25 kilometres away from Siem Reap, you'll board an ox-cart, exploring the surrounding villages, crossing a rice paddy through the largest crocodile farm in the region to witness the lifestyle of the locals who call these rural villages home.

You'll have the opportunity to assist the local school, pagoda or community, before we learn the intricacies of Khmer's gastronomic customs and learn how to cook as the locals.

This tour includes a private English speaking guide, AC transport, entry fees where applicable, and drinking water. Prices shown are based on a minimum of 2 people travelling, with solo traveller supplements applying if you choose the option on your own.

## Half-day silk farm tour

**Min numbers:** 1 person

**Price:** \$50.00

This half-day silk farm tour takes place in the Pouk district, situated 15 kilometres west of Siem Reap.

Here, you'll see a fascinating silk-making workshop, where you'll learn how silk is made, how the silkworms are fed and bred, extracting and refining the silk and the traditional pattern dyeing and looming process. You'll also have the chance to browse through a retail silk and souvenir shop, giving you the chance to take some home to your loved ones.

As we make our way back to our hotel, we'll make one more stop at the Western Baray - a massive reservoir situated just west of Angkor Thom, which provides water to cultivate the lands around Angkor.

This tour includes a private English speaking guide, AC transport, entry fees where applicable, and drinking water. Prices shown are based on a minimum of 2 people travelling, with solo traveller supplements applying if you choose the option on your own.

## Half-day remote temples tour

**Min numbers:** 1 person

**Price:** \$95.00

This half-day tour starts after breakfast at your hotel, as we make our way to Banteay Srei, a 10th century old temple dedicated to the Hindu God, Shiva. This is one of Cambodia's most well preserved temples and boasts some of the finest stone carvings on the planet.

We'll also head to the Preah Dark Village, a popular place to pick up a few souvenirs for your journey back home, before we head to the impressive Banteay Samre Temple, built in the early 12th century. You'll be mesmerised by its distinctive Angkor Wat-style architecture, artistry and reliefs which depict scenes of Vishnu as well as Krishna legends.

This tour includes a private English speaking guide, AC transport, entry fees where applicable, and drinking water. Prices shown are based on a minimum of 2 people travelling, with solo traveller supplements applying if you choose the option on your own.

## Half day cycling tour of the temples

**Min numbers:** 1 person

**Price:** \$110.00

After breakfast at your hotel, we'll hop on a bicycle as we make our way to Pre Rup - the ancient state temple of Khmer king Rajendravarmān II built in 961 AD or 962 AD. The temple was built to commemorate the Hindu God, Shiva and it's believed that it was used as a cremation temple.

We'll then cycle to East Mebon, Ta Som and Neak Pean, before stopping for a visit to the Preah Khan Temple, which was built in the 12th century, with its name directly translating to 'sacred sword'. The Preah Khan temple is also the location where the Khmer soldiers defeated the Siam military. We'll spend the night in Siem Reap.

This tour includes a bicycle and helmet, private English speaking guide, AC transport, entry fees where applicable, and drinking water. Prices shown are based on a minimum of 2 people travelling, with solo traveller supplements applying if you choose the option on your own.

## Half-day tour to Tonle Sap Lake

**Min numbers:** 1 person

**Price:** \$70.00

This half-day tour takes you to the floating village of Chong Khneas, situated 10 kilometres south of Siem Reap. Once we arrive, we'll head out on a traditional wooden boat on the waters of the seasonal Tonle Sap Lake. It's the largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia at the end of the wet season, but shrinks to a fraction of its size in the dry season.

Five provinces border the Tonle Sap Lake, namely, Siem Reap, Battambang, Pursat, Kampong Cham, and Kampong Thom. Approximately one million Cambodians depend on this lake, with 90% of these people staying in houses built around the lake and 10% living in its floating villages.

This tour includes a private English speaking guide, AC transport, entry fees where applicable, and drinking water. Prices shown are based on a minimum of 2 people travelling, with solo traveller supplements applying if you choose the option on your own.

# Tour Notes

## 1. Accommodation

We use good quality hotels rated at the local 4-star level on this tour, together with a basic but comfortable local homestay in the Kulen Mountain area. Hotel rooms all have air-conditioning and en-suite bathrooms. Facilities at the homestay are simple but with all beds & bedding provided, and shared bathrooms.

All couples will be given a private double room. If you are a single traveller who would like to share, let us know and we will see if we can pair you up. If we don't have anyone to pair you up with when you book, then a single room supplement will be due, but we will remove this or provide a refund if/when we can pair you up later. Check with us for guaranteed no single supplement offers on some tours and departures.

## 2. Transport

Our trips aim to feature a mix of different transport options. We want you to feel like you're really experiencing the country you're travelling through, but at the same time we want you to finish journeys refreshed enough to enjoy the next stage of the tour. As this tour through Cambodia covers a relatively short distance and we want to be flexible with our stops between Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, we only use private vehicles (minivan/minibus depending on the number of travellers).

## 3. Transfers

Our South East Asia tours all include a 24-hour arrival and departure airport-hotel transfer service, and all other transfers throughout the tour. If you are already in the country then we will provide you with your first hotel details, contact numbers for our local representatives, and details of your first meeting time.

## 4. International Flights

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don't include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we'll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included on the first and last days of the tour.

Most of our Cambodia tours start and finish in either Phnom Penh airport (PNH) or Siem Reap airport (REP). If you are booking a tour that combines Cambodia with Vietnam we may not include connecting flights between the two countries in the tour price (see the inclusions/exclusions or extension option sections for details). This flight can often be built into your main international flight ticket, or we may be able to book this flight for you separately if you prefer - please contact us and we will advise you on available airlines, times and prices.

## 5. Group Size/Tour Leaders/Guides

We are committed to making sure our small-group tours in South East Asia have low maximum numbers as we feel this gives everyone in the group the best chance to get to know their fellow travellers and to hear and make the most



of their guide. Having a smaller group also allows us to be a bit more creative with the places you stay and activities you do, which may simply not be possible with larger numbers. The group size for this tour is therefore a minimum of 2 and maximum of 12.

At Encounters Travel we aim to only use local guides and reps. We feel this gives you the best experience of the country and the sites you are seeing.

## 6. Entrance Fees

The tour price includes entrance fees to all the tourist sites mentioned in the itinerary. You will need to cover the cost of entrance to any other extra sites that you may wish to visit.

## 7. Tipping

Tipping is not part of culture in South East Asia in the same way that it is standard practice in other parts of the world. However it has become more customary but not compulsory in the tourist and service industry. Tipping is always optional, and any amounts paid should reflect excellent service. You may therefore wish to tip your guide and driver at the end of the tour. You should not feel obliged to tip any particular amount, and should consider your personal budget. We are often asked to provide a guide however, and can suggest that approx. USD 5-10 per person per day would be appropriate for your guide(s).

## 8. Health and Vaccinations

You should ensure you are fully insured for medical emergencies including emergency evacuation and repatriation.

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to the country you are visiting and where you are travelling from. We recommend you contact your GP/medical practitioner or a travel clinic for current information on vaccinations needed for your destination. You should ensure that you are up to date with vaccines and boosters recommended for your normal life at home, including for example, vaccines required for occupational risk of exposure, lifestyle risks and underlying medical conditions. In addition, additional courses or boosters normally recommended for the countries in this region are:

**Thailand:** Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

**Vietnam:** Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from an infected area.

**Cambodia:** Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

**Laos:** Additional vaccinations: Diptheria, Poliomyelitis, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from an infected area.

The above information can change at short notice. For up to date health information & vaccination requirements we recommend that you contact your medical practitioner or a travel clinic.

**Malaria:** Vaccinations are not available against Malaria, which is a disease transmitted by mosquitoes that can be very serious and sometimes fatal. You should avoid mosquito bites by covering up bare skin with clothing such as long sleeves and long trousers and applying insect repellents to exposed skin. When necessary, sleep under a mosquito net. Mosquitoes are most active during and after sunset. You should consult with your GP/medical practitioner/travel clinic about the most appropriate malaria prophylactic medication to take for the regions you are visiting.

**Yellow Fever:** This disease is spread by infected mosquitoes that bite during the day. A Yellow Fever Certificate of vaccination may be required as a condition of entry depending on which country you are arriving from, or that you have travelled or transitted through recently (including connecting flights with stopovers of over 12 hours). You can view a [World Health Organisation map](#) of areas where the virus is present in monkeys and therefore a potential risk to humans. Please ensure you have this certificate with you and to hand if necessary.

Please inform us of any pre-existing conditions such as diabetes or asthma and any prescription medicine you may be taking. We also need to know about any food allergies or physical disabilities that you may have.

## 9. Passports and Visas - Cambodia

Passports should be valid for at least six months after your departure from the country. Please do not bring an almost full or almost expired passport. Visa arrangements are the responsibility of the traveller, and requirements are subject to change by the local authorities.

Many nationalities (including British, EU, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand amongst many others) can obtain a 30-day tourist visa on arrival in Phnom Penh or Siem Reap Airport (and some land borders). At the time of publishing the visa fee is \$30.00. You'll need to make sure you have a passport sized photograph for the visa. If you are arriving via Phnom Penh or Siem Reap Airports then you can obtain an e-visa prior to arrival at - [www.evisa.gov.kh/](http://www.evisa.gov.kh/) (these are not accepted at land borders).

As visa regulations often change we recommend that you check this information with your nearest consulate. Obtaining the correct visa is the responsibility of the traveller.

## 10. Time

The time in Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos is GMT plus 7 hours. Daylight saving adjustments are not observed.

## 11. Voltage

Sockets are two round or flat pronged and 220 volts (Type A, B, C). Universal adaptors are available in most airport shops if you don't have one already. Standard European adapters will work fine, though sometimes they may feel a little loose in the sockets. All hotel rooms have electrical sockets where you can re-charge cameras, phones etc. Hair dryers are normally available on request from the hotel reception if not in your room already. If you have US appliances (110 volts) you will need a voltage converter as well as a plug adapter.

## 12. Money - Cambodia

The Cambodia currency is the 'Riel' (KHR). US\$ are widely accepted in the country and more or less work as a second currency. Because of its location so close to Thailand, you will find that Thai baht is also accepted in most places. Bear in mind that if paying in US\$ or Thai baht, your change will be given back in riels.

It's also possible to change Thai baht or US\$ with local private moneychangers, at some shops and markets or as usual, any banks that you may come across. These banks will also change most other currencies such as Sterling,

Euros etc. The banks tend to open from 7.30am to 2.30pm.

If you have travellers cheques in major currencies then the banks will accept these although it is likely that a commission will be charged.

In Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, banks and even some travel agents will allow you to draw cash against most major credit cards but you can expect a surcharge of around 3-4%. These days, more and more shops, restaurants and hotels in the major tourist destinations will accept payment with credit cards. Until recently, Cambodia had no ATM's whatsoever but this is changing fast and it's now possible to withdraw money from ATM's located in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap. Most credit cards and some debit cards are accepted but its best not to rely on this as a way of accessing your funds while in the country.

## 13. What to take

**Luggage:** Suitcases, rucksacks or fabric holdalls are all fine to bring with you to Cambodia, though if your itinerary has many stops and different travel included within it, we recommend packing light and not bring any large cases. You should also bring a small daypack/bag to take out during the day. Your main luggage will normally be left in the hotel during your sightseeing trips - you will not need to carry it far, and there are nearly always hotel porters to assist.

**Luggage limits:** There is no luggage limit for this tour. However, most airlines restrict you to between 20kg and 25kg for your hold luggage and between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage. Please check with your airline before travelling to the airport.

**Climate and Clothing:** The best time to visit and enjoy Cambodia's famous temples, Wat's and pagoda's are during the cooler months of December and January when humidity is low and there is little rainfall. Please be aware that though these areas are more exposed to the elements and the cooler temperatures of this time of year are a blessing they are also the busier tourist months of the year and main sights can be crowded. Though Cambodia can be visited at any time of year it is best to avoid April with its extreme temperatures in the 40's and May, June when the south western monsoon brings rain and high humidity. You may wish to coordinate your trip with one of the annual festivals, such as Bon Om Tuk, a three-day Water Festival, in October or November, marking the changing of the flow of the Tonle Sap River and is also seen as thanksgiving to the Mekong River for providing the country with fertile land and abundant fish or Khmer New Year which usually falls on April 13th or 14th. Take light clothes with something warmer for the winter nights if you are travelling to the north. Some light raingear would be useful in the wet season.

**Other items:** We recommend you also bring:

- Cool footwear (sandals are ideal). If you are interested in exploring the reefs, a pair of reef shoes is recommended to avoid injuries. If you are trekking, then bring comfortable and sturdy walking shoes or light walking boots.
- Swimming costumes - rash-guards/t-shirts are recommended for snorkelling to avoid sunburn.
- Sunscreens, after sun lotions and personal hygiene products - Please adhere to 100ml restrictions for anything you wish to carry on hand-luggage on flights.
- Prescription medications (if required) - please bring supporting documents.
- Power adapter for phones, laptops etc
- Sunglasses and hats
- Basic first aid kit and toiletries
- Money belt
- Small torch
- Dive certification card and log book if you intend to participate in SCUBA diving.
- Sleeping bag if your tour includes any hill-tribe or village trekking

## 14. Dates & Prices

We run regular small-group departures on this tour throughout the year starting on Mondays. All departures are guaranteed to run with a minimum of 2 people. Departure dates and prices are listed on our website and on a separate dates & prices sheet available on request. Extra nights can be added to the start and/or finish of the tour if you would like to extend your time.

The tour can also be run privately on any other dates for any number of people. An additional supplement will be due for private departures, the amount depending on your dates and the number of people in your party.

## 15. Booking & Payment

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website (via the Dates & Prices tab on the tour page). You may make a deposit or full payment online, or just hold a reservation if you prefer (full payments are due 8 weeks before departure). We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking. Payments may be made by debit or credit card (subject to a card processing fee), or by making a bank transfer, or posting us a cheque/bank draft. Full details will be provided in your booking confirmation email. Please [contact us](#) if you would like any more information or have any questions before making a booking.

## 16. Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all of our tours and needs to cover personal accident & liability, medical expenses and repatriation, travel delay & abandonment. We also strongly recommend that you take out cover against cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Personal medical insurance does not normally provide sufficient cover and is generally not suitable for travel on our tours. You will not be able to join your tour if you have not provided us with details of your insurance or if you arrive without cover in place (no refunds will be due in this event). [More information...](#)

You may arrange your own insurance, or you can take advantage of a comprehensive policy that we can arrange for you through Endsleigh Insurance which has been designed to be suitable for our tours. The policy is available to travellers of all nationalities and you do not need to live in the UK to take out the policy. For full details of cover provided, prices and to apply for one of our policies, please complete [travel insurance application form](#).

Note: Any country that borders the Mediterranean is considered as 'Europe' for the purposes of travel insurance (including Turkey, Israel, Egypt and Morocco). If you are doing a tour that visits one country in 'Europe' and one that is 'Worldwide' (for example, an Egypt and Jordan tour), then you need a 'Worldwide' policy. When completing the form you should enter your travel dates including any extra days involved in overnight flights or connecting travel between your home and the tour. Our policies are not able to cover any extra time or activities other than your tour and options booked with us and your travel to & from home.

Note - to comply with insurance sales regulations, our travel insurance policies are only available to customers booking directly with us. If you have booked through a travel agent you will need to arrange your own insurance.

If you plan to arrange a hot air balloon flight locally, or do some scuba diving during your tour, you should check the small print in your policy to make sure these are covered (these are covered in our policy). Please also check the maximum altitude that you will be reaching and that full cover including emergency evacuation is provided up to this altitude.

If you are taking expensive camera gear or other electronic equipment with you then please check the coverage and the fine print of your policy to ensure that you have sufficient cover.

**IMPORTANT:** *We must have your travel insurance details (policy number and type of insurance) before you depart or you may not be allowed to join the tour. If you haven't told us already, please let us know the details when you can. You should take a paper copy of your insurance policy with you as you may be asked to show this at the start of*

*the tour.*

## 17. Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and an ABTA Member (Y4447) and you can be confident when booking with us that your money is safe and protected.

Financial failure insurance is also provided through Affirma to protect all customers for the land portion of your tour.

Please see [our website](#) or [booking conditions](#) for more information.

## 18. Responsible Tourism

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However, it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.

The following are a few simple tips that require very little effort on your part but which will help ensure that any effect you have on the locations you visit is positive rather than negative.

- Don't prejudge: Things in different countries will almost certainly be different. That doesn't make them worse or inferior, just different.
- Communicate: Don't expect locals to speak your language. Take the trouble to learn a few words or phrases of the local language. Don't worry about sounding silly. Most locals are patient and accommodating and appreciate you making the effort to communicate in their language.
- Conserve energy: Be careful not to waste valuable resources. Use local resources sparingly. Switch off lights, air-conditioning and fans when you leave the hotel room and don't waste water. Remove superfluous packaging. Many countries have far less efficient waste disposal systems than ours. Remove packaging from newly acquired items before leaving home.
- Don't litter: No matter how untidy or dirty the country you're travelling in may look to you, avoid littering, as there is no need to add to the environment's stress. Many of the countries we visit have a tough challenge dealing with rubbish and waste. Please consider taking home as much plastic waste as you can (e.g. water bottles).
- Choose environmentally friendly products: By using environmentally friendly (bio degradable) sun creams, shampoos and detergents you can help reduce pollution.
- Respect local customs and traditions: As you are a guest in these countries, you should also comply with the local customs. If you are friendly and well mannered, the locals will reciprocate and it will only enhance your experience. It's important to follow dress and behaviour guidelines especially when visiting religious or sacred sites (your tour leader will advise you how best to do this).
- If a client commits an illegal act the client may be excluded from the tour and Encounters Travel shall cease to have responsibility to/for them. No refund will be given for any unused services.

All porters are employed and equipped following guidelines set by the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG).

## 19. Follow Us Online

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and information.

[www.facebook.com/encounterstravel](http://www.facebook.com/encounterstravel)

[www.twitter.com/encounterstravl](http://www.twitter.com/encounterstravl) (yes, without the 'e')

## 20. Before you travel

It is important when considering and preparing to travel anywhere in the world that you have a good understanding of the country you are visiting, its laws and customs, and the possible risks and situations that may occur. This includes specific risks related to your itinerary (eg. does it involve water & can you swim, are you fit enough for the activities included), as well as more general risks such as terrorism and natural disasters.

General details and links to more information about health risks, visa requirements, money, and travel insurance are given in these tour notes. We recommend that you re-read all these before your departure as well as the small print of your travel insurance policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not.

You should take copies of your important travel documents with you and ideally also store them online securely as a backup. Make sure that you have given us your emergency contact details and told that person where and when you are travelling. Ensure you take enough money with you and that you have access to emergency funds.

Finally, you should read through and stay updated with the current [official government travel advice](#) for your destination. We are registered partners with the UK Foreign Office's ['Travel Aware' campaign](#) which provides further useful and invaluable information.



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**Printed on:** Friday 23rd of August 2019

**Note:** Please [download an up-to-date copy](#) of these tour notes shortly before you travel as itineraries and information does change from time to time.

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