



TRIP NOTES

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THE MOST EXOTIC CHALLENGE  
CAMBODIA

Sat 04 Nov - Thu 09 Nov 2017







## In aid of British Asian Trust

04 Nov - 09 Nov 2017



### 6 DAYS | CAMBODIA | CHALLENGING

A challenge of great contrasts, this cycling route covers 250kms past plantations, across waterways and through villages in the heart of Cambodia. Siem Reap is the overall destination from where we explore the famous ancient city of Angkor, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Built from 879-1191AD by the Khmer civilization, Angkor represents one of humankind's most astonishing architectural achievements and in 1992 was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

- Cycle over 250kms through heart of Cambodia
- Endless miles of quiet backwaters and country roads
- Ancient temples and countless colourful pagodas
- Angkor Wat, masterpiece of Khmer architecture
- Visit Phnom Penh, Kampong Thom and Angkor

## YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

### DAY 1 Sat 04 Nov

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#### Arrival into Phnom Penh

As you are booking your own flights you should aim to arrive into Phnom Penh by midday. See flight recommendations in the Flights section.

You will be met at the Hotel Sofitel Phokeethra Phnom Penh by your Charity Challenge leader.

You will meet early evening for a briefing and group meal at Malis.

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### DAY 2 Sun 05 Nov

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#### Project visit - CHOICE (approx 50kms)

Today you will cycle to the outskirts of Phnom Penh to visit the project of an International NGO, CHOICE. The cycle will be a great warm up for your legs as you cycle through the city and out into the countryside. The project helps impoverished Cambodian families and provides a safe haven for the children.

In the evening you will be eating at the VANS restaurant which serves the finest French cuisine in the capital. Based around both a modern and a classic interpretation of French gastronomy, by a talented Michelin Star trained chef, this incredible restaurant offers an amazing setting, not only to enjoy a delicious meal, but also to be transported back to Cambodia's colonial past. Overnight Sofitel Phokeethra Phnom Penh

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### DAY 3 Mon 06 Nov

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#### Kampong Thom (approx 70kms)

You'll depart early for a short transfer away from traffic across the Japanese Bridge to the starting point. You'll start cycling along the Mekong River at first on a road through orchards and villages passing many friendly locals for a most enjoyable ride. The road then becomes a little rougher providing a bit more of a challenge for you but it is still very much enjoyable because of the great scenery of the Mekong River. There are plenty of photo opportunities along this stretch. After lunch you'll be happy to be back on the tarmac and the route takes you west once again until you meet with main road and shortly after at your finish point, Totoeng Village. The final leg will be done by bus to Kampong Thom, and to the Glorious Hotel.

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### DAY 4 Tue 07 Nov

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#### Kampong Thom to Siem Reap (approx 65kms)

Today you'll be heading for Siem Reap, the gateway to the Angkor region. In order to avoid the poorer roads you'll be transferred via the 800 year old bridge at Kampong Kdei and then on to rejoin the crew at Domdek village. You'll start your bike ride from Domdek through the historic highway reaching the finish line as the sun sets over Angkor Wat.

Tonight, enjoy a Khmer dinner at Nest, a stylish restaurant very close to the famous Pub Street and Night Market. Nest is leading the way as one of Siem Reap's premier fine dining restaurants. It's a large contemporary designed space,

with a menu that combines both eastern and western flavours. It also has an extensive wine and cocktail list, and their comfy lounges make it a great place not only for a restaurant, but also to relax with a drink after your day of cycling. Overnight Sofitel Phokeethra Siem Reap.

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#### DAY 5 Wed 08 Nov

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##### **Tonle Sap Floating Village (approx 60kms)**

Today will be your last day of cycling as you head to Cambodia's most unique natural feature, Tonle Sap. At the small village of Kampong Phluk, strike out on boats to see the unique stilted villages and floating villages that epitomise Tonle Sap. Along the way back, visit the ancient Rolous Group, a series of temples predating Angkor Wat.

Overnight at Sofitel Phokeethra Siem Reap. Dinner location to be confirmed.

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#### DAY 6 Thu 09 Nov

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##### **Angkor Complex – Departure (Sightseeing)**

After breakfast at your hotel, we set out to explore the mysterious temples of Angkor for the first time, as you'll transfer to the famous Angkor Wat.

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#### NB

The itinerary and distance approximations are there as a guide and may change due to unusual weather, road conditions, the strength of the group, and so on. We will do our best to keep to the itinerary, however we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes. In all such circumstances, your expedition leader will have the final say.

### SELF FUNDER

Pay a registration fee of £595.00 when you book.

Then a balance of £2,061.00  
(8 weeks before your challenge).

Raise a minimum of £2,500.00 for The British Asian Trust.

### THIS IS A GROUND ONLY CHALLENGE

This challenge is ground only. This means you will need to organise travel to arrive at the starting point of the itinerary in the host country and to return home at the end of the challenge. You will be provided with details of where and when to arrive and depart but please do budget for the appropriate travel arrangements.

### WHAT'S INCLUDED?

#### BEFORE YOU GO

- Access to your own password protected account
- Risk assessment and emergency management planning
- Public liability insurance
- Discount on personal equipment from Outdoorhire, Cotswold Outdoor and Nomad Travel Stores
- Bike training schedule
- A-Z of fundraising ideas
- Fundraising advice

#### ON YOUR CHALLENGE

- Internal road and air transfers as per the itinerary (from first to last hotel)
- Bike hire
- An English speaking first aid trained challenge leader and full local support team (assistant, drivers, mechanic and first aid trained cycle guides)
- All challenge management before, during and post event
- A Charity Challenge T-Shirt
- Entrance fees to national parks or other places of interest visited on the itinerary
- Drinking water on challenge days
- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- Accommodation during the challenge (single rooms)

### WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED?

#### BEFORE YOU GO

- Visa (on arrival with a British Passport)
- Vaccinations (please check Trip Notes for requirements)
- Clothing and equipment listed on your Kit List

## ON YOUR CHALLENGE

- International flights
- Airport transfer on arrival/departure
- Dinner on 8 November 2017
- Helmet
- Specialist comprehensive travel insurance
- Personal spending money
- Any other specific items listed as not included in your Trip Notes

## THE DETAILS

### FUNDRAISING DEADLINES

You will need to send your sponsorship money to the charity as you raise it.

### TYPICAL GROUP SIZE

The typical group size is 20 - 30 participants

### TRAVEL INSURANCE

We can provide a comprehensive travel insurance policy for this challenge which provides cover for medical (emergency, evacuation and repatriation), cancellation and curtailment and specifically covers the activities undertaken during the challenge. You can take this out when booking. The cost is £76.00.

## The British Asian Trust

**Transforming lives together: We want to see a South Asia that maximises the potential of its people and that is free from inequality and injustice.**

We unlock the potential of disadvantaged people in South Asia, where over 500 million survive on less than \$2 a day. We do this by maximising the impact of support from the Asian diaspora and beyond.

We were founded by HRH The Prince of Wales and visionary British Asian business leaders to work across traditional boundaries and have already touched the lives of more than three million people.

## OUR VALUES

**We are trustworthy:** While every good cause should be trustworthy, it is especially important for us. We pride ourselves on being able to show exactly how and where supporters' money has had an impact.

**We are entrepreneurial:** We draw on the spirit and innovation of our founder supporters. We take their approach of fresh business thinking and original solutions, and apply it to our mission of transforming lives.

**We convene:** We bring together diverse groups from across boundaries of nations, faith, gender and opinion. We act as a catalyst for the conversations that will create change in new and exciting ways.

## OUR APPROACH

We invest in local, high-impact organisations in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka that work in the areas of education, livelihoods, anti-trafficking and mental health / disability. We support these organisations in a range of ways including grants, social finance, capacity building, and monitoring and evaluation.

**Education:** We facilitate access to quality education and transform learning to ensure children are given the building blocks for a brighter future.

**Anti-trafficking:** Our work focuses on the welfare and protection of children and adolescents vulnerable to trafficking, as well as the rehabilitation and reintegration of survivors.

**Livelihoods:** We support access to enterprise development skills for women and small holder farmers, as well as vocational skills for young people.

**Mental health / Disability:** We seek to improve access to services and promote the rights of disabled people and people with mental health related issues.

For more information, please visit [www.britishasiantrust.org](http://www.britishasiantrust.org)

### Level of Difficulty

The Most Exotic Challenge - Cambodia is graded as challenging and is perfect for participants who are of an adventurous spirit and an open mind. You can tell your supporters on the cycle challenge you will be:

- Cycling for around 5 hours per day, covering approximately 250kms over 4 days.
- Battling the heat and humidity. Temperatures can reach high 30s centigrade.
- Cycling across waterways, plantations and on unpaved and dusty roads.

### Visa

All nationalities must obtain a visa for entering Cambodia but this can be done on arrival. You must hold a full ten-year passport with at least six months to run from the end of your challenge, and at least two blank pages for your visas and entry/exit stamps. . It costs US\$30 with a \$5 handling fee at the border and allows a stay of up to 30 days and one entry only. You must pay in USD cash. You will need 2 passport photos. If you are a British national and plan to stay for an extended period in Cambodia you are strongly advised to register with the British Embassy in Phnom Penh upon arrival. You can register online at [www.britishembassy.gov.uk/cambodia](http://www.britishembassy.gov.uk/cambodia).

### Climate

The best time to visit Cambodia is between November and April (dry season) this is when there is the least rain. The first half of the dry season is also the cooler part of the season to travel; good for exploration but not too humid and hot like the latter half of the dry season in March to April.

The rainy season is generally from June to October and can cause some travel issues with water logged roads, however it is when the countryside is at its greenest with lush foliage. The rain tends to fall in short sharp bursts and mainly in the afternoons.

### Terrain

Please do not underestimate the length of the days as some days you will be covering as much as 70kms a day. Some areas of the cycle will be very exposed and with extreme heat and humidity which will be a challenge in itself. The cycle paths will be narrow and you will be navigating a variety of paths and bridges and so good use of gears is recommended.

### Phone and WiFi

Your accommodation will have limited WiFi which you will be able to use, but please do not rely upon this. Cambodian internet connections are not always reliable. You will have phone signal in almost all places on the challenge.

### Toilets



These range from very basic during the cycling route to normal western standards in the accommodation. There will be en-suite toilet and washing facilities at the hotels.

### Clothing and equipment

Good quality, durable kit could mean the difference between a fantastic challenge experience and an uncomfortable one. For this challenge, a helmet is compulsory, and comfortable footwear for your cycle will be indispensable, particularly coupled with some good quality padded cycling shorts. The benefits of a comfortable day sack cannot be underestimated, so make sure that you train with this. Other essentials are a high quality gore-tex waterproof jacket and technical/Dry fit t-shirts rather than cotton shirts. Cycling gloves, and a cotton scarf or buff are also highly recommended, to protect you from the dust. A full kit list for this challenge can be found [here](#), and once you book you will have access to kit discounts with our partners, Outdoorhire and Cotswold Outdoor.

### What are the bikes like?

The bikes are good quality lightweight Trek 4300, 4500 & 4700 – 24 & 27 speed Mountain bikes with Shimano Deore components, V Brakes and front suspension. All bikes have water bottle carriers & quickly detachable wheels. On arrival you will be asked to sign a waiver issued by our local ground handler on arrival in case of incident caused by yourselves. Please indicate your height on your booking form so that we can aim to book the correct size well in advance.

### Food and Drink

Cambodian meals are based on fish, poultry, pork, vegetables and rice. The dishes are all very tasty and different and for the most part not too spicy. Food is usually prepared with a minimum of oil and served with ubiquitous fish sauce called nuoc mam. Saigon/Hanoi/Angkor Beer are the local brews. Wines are very expensive unless you want to sample locally made rice wine – 'Roau' (pronounced zeeo). Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies. Please inform Charity Challenge of your dietary requirements if you do not eat seafood so we can accommodate you the best we can.

### Accommodation

All rooms are single occupancy with en-suite at the Sofitel 5 star hotels, 2 nights in Phnom Penh and 2 nights in Siem Reap, with one night in Kampong Thom is at a local 4 star hotel. If you are travelling with a friend or partner and wish to share please ensure that you note this where appropriate when booking or email [challenges@charitychallenge.com](mailto:challenges@charitychallenge.com).

### Typical day

During your cycling days, you will wake at around 7am, have breakfast and start cycling for 6-8 hours. You will stop at shady rest stops every 15–20 km where you can rest and regroup. Here you will be able to re-energise with fruit snacks and fill water bottles. For lunch you will stop at a local restaurant or beauty spot for a picnic lunch. In the evening you will be taken to carefully selected restaurants.

## Responsible Tourism

At Charity Challenge we are committed to sustainable and responsible tourism, and work closely with bodies such as the [International Porter Protection Group](#) and [Climate Care](#) to ensure that our challenges benefit the local environments and communities in which they take place. We ensure that all rubbish is disposed of responsibly, and following local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection and respect, we aim to limit our impact on the natural environment. In addition to taking these practical steps to ensure that our challenges are sustainable, we also make a contribution each year to a number of local community projects, so as to give something back directly to the communities that we visit. Since 2000 we have donated almost £200,000 to such projects, supporting a range of initiatives, including schooling for children in Africa, shelter for street children in Brazil, and Orang-utan conservation in Indonesia. We recommend that any gifts brought over for children are given to the UK challenge leader and distributed where needed by them and our local Ground Agent. If you wish to do more, you should consider buying drinks, postcards and souvenirs from the local vendors. For many, it is their sole source of income. For more information, please visit our [Responsible Tourism](#) pages, where you will be able to view a list of the projects that we currently support.

## Luggage allowance and valuables

The luggage allowance will depend on the airline we are using for your challenge, but in general it will be one piece of checked baggage at around 23 kg. However, we suggest that for your Most Exotic Challenge in Cambodia you should only need around 15 kg-17 kg. If you don't need it, don't bring it, is a good rule. For any valuables, safe deposit boxes are usually provided to use in the hotels. Use a padlock on your luggage when in transit to reduce any risks. Carry your passport with you and make sure you have a photocopy of your documents (travel insurance etc.) in case they get lost or damaged.

## Leadership

There will be an English-speaking challenge leader who will be responsible for the logistics and co-ordination of your challenge. There will also be numerous local support staff to assist them. The challenge leader will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group.

## Group size

The group is intended to be 20 people minimum in order to run and maximum of approx. 30 people.

## Insurance

It is a condition of booking that you have a suitable travel insurance policy whilst participating on the challenge. We have a special policy which covers among other things, medical (emergency, evacuation and repatriation) arrangements, cancellation and curtailment of the challenge, and more specifically for the adventurous activities undertaken on this challenge. This cost is £76. If you have your own travel insurance policy, you must ensure that it provides at least the same level of cover as our recommended policy, including protecting the charity in the event of your cancellation 56 days or less prior to departure. If you choose not to purchase our recommended policy when you book we will send you a disclaimer which you should complete and return.

For more general travel insurance questions, please refer to our main [FAQs page](#)

### Flights

This is a ground only package so you will need to book your own flights.

Recommended flights are as below

03NOV Flight TG 911 London Heathrow to Bangkok - 1150hrs to 0615hrs+1

04NOV Flight TG 580 Bangkok to Phnom Penh - 0740hrs to 0850hrs

09NOV Flight PG 914 Siem Reap to Bangkok - 1535hrs to 1650hrs

09NOV Flight TG7067 Siem Reap to Bangkok - 2055hrs to 2210hrs

10NOV Flight TG 910 Bangkok to London Heathrow - 0015hrs to 0620

### Vaccinations

For up to date vaccination information please check the NHS 'Fit for Travel' website:

<http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/home.aspx>. Although the Charity Challenge team are travel professionals, they are not medical experts and we would encourage you to visit your GP or travel nurse to discuss vaccination requirements.

Your GP may ask questions about the specific locations that you are visiting in Cambodia, and as such it may be useful to take a copy of your itinerary with you. The main areas will be Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, Kampong Tong and Tonle Sap.

### Money

**Currency:** The currency in Cambodia is the Cambodian Riel (KHR). For up to date currency exchange, go to [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com). We recommend exchanging currency before you go; however there are ATM's and currency exchanges available at Phnom Penh airport to exchange in to Cambodian Riel. US dollars (small denominations) are preferred and widely accepted in Cambodia for payments. You can also exchange GBP in Siem Reap into local Cambodian Riel currency.

**Credit Cards:** Visa and Mastercard are now accepted in many hotels and shops, but the preferred currency is dollars, cash.

**ATMs:** You will have access to ATMs in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap.

**How much to bring:** All accommodation and meals are included within the price of the trip, as well as water during the days of your cycling challenge. You will not need to carry a lot of money with you during the challenge, but as there are daily opportunities to buy soft drinks, alcohol and snacks on the way we would suggest a maximum amount of about £15 a day (in local currency). Bring more if you intend to buy souvenirs and take up the opportunity of the additional things you can do during your time in Cambodia. You may have the opportunity of enjoying a relaxing post-cycle massage (about £30-£50) in Siem Reap at the end of your challenge. There are plenty of great craft souvenirs, silk clothing and silver jewellery in Cambodia. Keep this in mind!

**Tipping:** Tipping is at your sole discretion and all staff are paid a fair wage. However, tourism has a tipping culture and your Cambodian guides will generally receive a tip at the end of a job well done. If you choose to tip, we would suggest an amount of £60- £80 per participant for the duration of the challenge, which will be distributed to all staff involved

including guides, drivers, mechanics and so on.

### Training

Training is definitely required. It is important that you work specifically on your stamina, leg and joint strength, and balance in order to get as much out of the challenge as possible. Don't forget that the temperature and climate is different to the UK and that you will be exercising constantly for a number of days – the heat and humidity will be your biggest challenge. You need to be able to sustain around 6-8 hours of cycling for 4 continuous days, so if you can then replicating this over a weekend would be fantastic training. In your password protected account area you will find more comprehensive Fitness Training Notes. You can also look to join one of our training weekends.

### Emergencies

The event is not run as a race and there is always a large discrepancy in people's cycling abilities. This is allowed for. There will be a staff member at the back of the group at all times to ensure that you are not left behind and can take things at your own pace. If we find somebody is unable to cycle at all, then we can transport them from one location to the next.

It is policy that participants must wear a helmet – please take your own for comfort reasons. Be aware that cycling can be dangerous and accidents do happen – you must take responsibility for your own safety whilst riding. Throughout the challenge, back-up support will be close by.

If for any reason any injury should occur, a relief vehicle will be made available. The relief vehicle will be a private air-conditioned bus, minibus or jeep that will provide support throughout the tour. It will follow at a discreet distance, and is there for clients who need to rest, to carry the spare bike parts, and will also often contain refreshments such as water, snacks and soft drinks. During transfer sections, the bikes will be carried in the bus. When riding off road on single track trails support will sometimes be by motorbike. The guide will carry water and the first aid kit with him/her until the trail joins the main track where the bus will be waiting.

### Safety

Charity Challenge considers the safety of all of our participants and staff to be a top priority, and as such we have set up Challenge Safe, one of the most advanced and thorough safety management systems in the industry. Challenge Safe formalises our ethos when it comes to safety, and brings together the procedures and risk management strategies that we use to audit all aspects of our challenges, from vehicles to accommodation to the challenge activity itself. Your welfare is absolutely paramount!

In terms of your Most Exotic Challenge, there are a couple of important points that you should be aware of:

- The cycling route is very exposed, with almost no shade, and on sunny days the temperatures can soar. You should ideally be wearing a sun hat, sun cream, and hydrating constantly!
- Smoke alarms are not a legal requirement in Cambodia, and as such some of the hotels we use do not have them in place. Your leader will explain the emergency fire procedures to you.
- Cambodia still has a high number of unexploded land mines in rural areas. Don't wander off well-trodden paths. Never touch a leftover grenade or mine!

- You will be cycling on the opposite side of the road to what you are used to, and occasionally on main roads frequented by many vehicles. Take the first day slowly until you become accustomed to your surroundings.



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## Any more questions?

Contact us:

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