CH>RITY
CH>LLENGE

TRIP NOTES

BELIEVE ACHIEVE INSPIRE

SAIGON TO ANGKOR WAT BIKE RIDE
VIETNAM

Sat 24 Oct - Tue 03 Nov 2020

In aid of your choice of charity

24 Oct - 03 Nov 2020

11 DAYS | VIETNAM & CAMBODIA | MODERATE

This is a challenge for those who love the tropical vibes of South East Asia, cycling the open road, and exploring ancient history. Follow the road less cycled from Saigon to Angkor Wat, venturing into the heart of the Vietnam's Mekong Delta. Ride the quiet backwater roads, stopping to explore ancient temples and bustling markets full of glorious street food. As you make your way to Siem Reap, admire the beautiful and varied rural landscapes from your saddle. Then, enjoy the fruits of your pedalling by exploring the incredible architecture of the Royal Temples of Angkor Wat.
Covering 450km across seven days, this challenge is moderate, designed to enjoy the stunning scenery of South East Asia. Expert guides will be with you every pedal of the journey, ensuring your comfort and safety.

- Marvel at the Royal Temples of Angkor Wat
- Cycle 450kms through the Mekong Delta to Cambodia
- Follow endless miles of beautiful backwater roads
- Pass ancient temples, pagodas, and colourful villages
- Embrace the freedom of life on a bike

YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

DAY 1 *Sat 24 Oct*

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International departure from London

The day has finally arrived! Any last-minute nerves will turn to excitement as the plane touches down in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) after an overnight flight from London.

DAY 2 *Sun 25 Oct*

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Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon)

On arrival, a local Charity Challenge representative will accompany your group to a centrally-located hotel. Lunch will be served after check-in, followed by a full trip briefing and bike fitting. In the evening, you will be able to enjoy a welcome dinner at a local restaurant, providing you with the perfect opportunity to get to know your fellow team mates.

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 3 *Mon 26 Oct*

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My Tho to Tra Vinh (approximately 52kms)

After breakfast you will transfer to My Tho, the gateway to the Mekong Delta. Your cycling adventure begins after a ferry journey across the Tien Giang river. A varied section of biking follows - off-road, gravel and dirt lanes, weaving around hamlets, across water channels and through dense vegetation. The final ferry of the day sees you cross the Co Chien river to the tree-lined town of Tra Vinh, which will be your home for the night.

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 4 *Tue 27 Oct*

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Can Tho (approximately 82kms)

The road may be long, but the atmosphere is calm and peaceful as you head along narrow and pretty roads to Can Tho. There's plenty to see along the way, including the magnificent lotus flowers floating on Ba Om Pond. The route also takes in the contrasting architectural styles of ethnic Khmer homes and Khmer temples, as well as fascinating river scenes as you cycle across countless wooden bridges. You will be offered the unique chance to learn about the life of students at a local Khmer Temple School before you reach your final destination for the day. Get a good night's sleep in Can Tho in preparation for tomorrow's early start.
Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 5 *Wed 28 Oct*

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Long Xuyen (approximately 90kms)

After an early breakfast, take a ride along the narrow-paved road beside the river and enjoy the hustle and bustle

of the Cai Rang floating market. Weave through the morning traders, and absorb the sights of everyday morning life – from the coconut shredders to the timber merchants. After visiting the An Binh Market, you will continue on to Phong Dien Village and stop for lunch. There's a 30-minute transfer to the town of Long Xuyen where you will spend the evening.

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 6 *Thu 29 Oct*

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Chau Doc (approximately 80kms+)

After a short, early morning transfer to Tri Ton, the cycling starts to undulate as you ride closer to Chau Doc and Cambodia. The afternoon is spent at the killing fields of Vietnam at Ba Chuc, where Pol Pot's regime massacred an entire village in 1978. The haunting, 'skull pagoda' and small museum stand as a memorial to the villages 3,000 victims and its one, solitary survivor. The route then loops around to Chau Doc and along the border where you will spend your final night in Vietnam.

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 7 *Fri 30 Oct*

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Chau Doc to Phnom Penh

It's time to leave Vietnam behind and continue your expedition by heading into Cambodia. Rise early to take a boat journey up the Mekong River to Phnom Penh. It's five hours upstream to the Cambodian capital, where you'll meet your Cambodian guides and be fitted with your new bike. Lunch will be spent soaking in the town's colonial atmosphere and buzzing local life. After lunch, you will travel to Cambodia's harrowing killing fields and the Tuoel Sleng prison. In the evening, you will be welcomed to Cambodia with a delicious Khmer dinner at a local restaurant.

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 8 *Sat 31 Oct*

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Kampong Thom (approximately 65 kms)

Starting with an early morning bus transfer to Kampong Cham, you group will head north via the ancient Japanese bridge, to visit the famous Cambodian town of Skun. Feel free to try the local cuisine here of fried tarantula! Departing Skun, you'll Transfer to Thnong village, from where you'll commence a 65km cycle through the stunning tropical countryside. Once you arrive at Kampong Thmor, it's another 38km to the final stop of Kampong Thom, on the banks of the Stung Saen river. A well-deserved evening meal awaits you, giving you the opportunity to rest your legs before your final day of cycling.

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 9 *Sun 01 Nov*

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Kampong Thom to Siem Reap (approximately 66kms)

It's the final day! After a transfer to the village of Domdek, you will begin your 66km ride to the incredible Angkor Wat. The route into the site is lined with temples, creating a truly spectacular final leg of your journey. You will reach the finish line as the sun sets over the Angkor temples, providing the perfect finish to a successful challenge. The celebrations continue tonight at your traditional Khymer dinner.

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 10 *Mon 02 Nov*

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Full day in Angkor Wat, then depart Siem Reap

Shake off the heavy legs by watching an incredible sunrise over Angkor Wat (optional). With plenty of time to explore the entire complex, it is well worth taking the time to climb the steep and narrow steps of the central spire of Angkor Wat. From the top, you will be rewarded with remarkable views over the temples and the surrounding jungle. Be sure to spend some time at Angkor Thom, the last capital of the Great Khmer Empire under the reign of Jayavarman VII. Another highlight is Ta Prohm, a site that has been reclaimed by nature and features tree routes breaking through the stone carvings and walls. After a long day of exploring, it will be time to head to the airport for your overnight flight back to the UK.

Accommodation: In the air

DAY 11 *Tue 03 Nov*

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Arrive home

Armed with a sense of achievement, you can feel proud as you touch down into the UK. Don't forget to exchange contact details with your fellow cyclists before heading home to share your journey with family and friends.

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.

HOW TO FUND YOUR CHALLENGE

This page provides you details of the costs of your challenge.
The costs below are per person.

SELF FUNDER

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Pay a registration fee of £475.00 when you book
Then a balance of £1823.00 (10 weeks before your challenge)
Raise as much as you can for your charity.

MINIMUM SPONSORSHIP

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Registration fee of £475.00 when you book
Raise a minimum of £3720.00 for your charity.

FLEXI

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Registration fee of £475.00 when you book
Then £475.00 towards challenge costs (10 weeks before your challenge)
Raise a minimum of £2750.00 for your charity.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

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- 12.5% off Cotswold Outdoor, Snow + Rock, and Runners Need
- Access to your own password protected account including support materials and training schedules

On your challenge

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- International flights to and from the UK (including all known UK air taxes, and fuel surcharges, at the time of costing)
- A Charity Challenge T-Shirt
- Activity equipment such as bikes, tents and rafts as per the challenge activity
- Accommodation during the challenge (usually in twin share)
- All internal transfers
- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- Entrance fees to national parks or other places of interest visited on the itinerary
- All ground staff including English speaking guide, drivers, cooks, and porters
- Full back-up support including first-aid qualified staff and first-aid supplies

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Before you go

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- Travel to and from the UK airport of departure
- Visa
- Vaccinations (please check Trip Notes for requirements)
- Travel Insurance (you can buy at time of booking or in your Account Area, or provide your own

On your challenge

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- Tips
- Departure Tax (if applicable)

policy details)

THE DETAILS

Fundraising deadlines	You will need to send your sponsorship money to the charity as you raise it. At least 80% of the minimum sponsorship required must be sent to the charity 12 weeks before departure (by 01/08/2020), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 01/12/2020). If you have raised the necessary funds, the charity will then pay the balance of your challenge costs. The charity benefits by keeping the remaining sponsorship money and every pound over and above that you raise.
Prices include all known air taxes	We include ALL known air taxes (including fuel) at the time of costing. Many companies do not include air taxes at all, and clients are therefore hit with a surcharge of three or four hundreds of pounds just before departure. Our aim is to provide you with transparent pricing and clear instructions as to what is included in our prices and if applicable what isn't.
Typical group size	The typical group size is 16 - 32 participants
Small group supplement	The costs and sponsorship levels on our website are based on a minimum of 16 participants. We can run this trip with 10-15 people, but there will be a small group supplement of £95. This is payable by your charity if you book under the Minimum Sponsorship or Flexi options, and by yourself if you choose the Self Funder option. We will notify you 12 weeks before departure if this is necessary.
Optional extras	Extensions at end of trip* Single room supplements* Business class upgrades* (*subject to availability)

Travel insurance	Your safety when travelling with Charity Challenge is our main concern, which is why it is a booking condition that you have a suitable travel insurance policy, which covers you for the adventurous nature of your challenge, the activities you are undertaking, and the altitudes. We have chosen to partner with specialist travel insurance providers Campbell Irvine, who offer cover for an extensive number of adventurous activities. Cover is available directly from Campbell Irvine for most European residents and includes cover for emergency medical and repatriation and for your cancellation or curtailment of the challenge. Full details including costs may be found at http://www.campbellirvinedirect.com/charitychallenge.

HIDDEN ANGKOR WAT (FOR SAIGON TO ANGKOR WAT BIKE RIDE) – £375.0

Spend an extra three nights in Siem Reap and discover what the city has to offer. You will have time to explore a little known section of the Angkor Park, before enjoying a traditional Cambodian show. The following day, visit the Tonle Sap Lake and have lunch on one of the floating villages. This extension is the perfect ending to your challenge, an opportunity to head off the beaten track and immerse yourself in Cambodian culture.

- Registration fee £95.0
- Balance £280.0

- Single Room £100.0

Level of Difficulty

The Saigon to Angkor Wat cycle challenge is graded as moderate. A "moderate" trip is the perfect challenge for someone who has perhaps never taken on a challenge event before, and is looking to test themselves on an active physical challenge. Although a moderate challenge might be culturally challenging, you will usually be staying in hotels/lodges rather than camping, and there will be no altitude involved. Training is necessary for all challenges to ensure you are fully prepared.

You can tell your supporters that on your Saigon to Angkor Wat cycle Challenge you will be:

- Cycling for around 6-8 hours per day, covering approximately 450kms over 7 days.
- Battling the heat and humidity. Temperatures can reach the 30s.
- Cycling across waterways, plantations and on unpaved and dusty roads.

Typical Day

During your cycling days, you will wake at around 7am, have breakfast and start cycling for 6-8 hours. You will stop in the shade every 15–20 km so you can rest and regroup. Here you will be able to re-energise with fruit and snacks and fill water bottles. For lunch, you will stop at a local restaurant or beauty spot for a picnic lunch. Occasionally you will need to take public ferries to cross the Mekong; these stops need to be taken in a timely manner to keep to the schedule. In the evening, there is usually an hour of free time before we meet to discuss the next day's adventure. Dinner follows the briefing.

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, an advanced and thorough safety management system. 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 Saigon to Angkor Wat 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 sun cream and a cap (which can be worn under your helmet) and be 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.
- Vietnam and Cambodia still have a high number of unexploded land mines being found every day. Don't wander off well-trodden paths. You could encounter forgotten land mines and undetonated munitions. Never touch a leftover grenade or mine!
- You will be cycling on the opposite side of the road. Occasionally, you will be cycling on main roads frequented by many vehicles. Take the first day slowly until you become accustomed to your surroundings.

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.

Extensions

Hidden Angkor Wat and Tonle Sap Lake Extension

Day 11 - Explore the best of Angkor Park and Phare Circus
After waving farewell to your fellow trekkers, it will be time to head back to Angkor Wat for further exploration. You will arrive at the gates of Angkor Thom, the original capital of the Khmer Empire. Upon arrival, there will be bikes waiting for you so you can hop on and pedal your way around the temple walls before heading to the centre to marvel at the Bayon Temple.

You will then head off the normal tourist trail and onto a 3km trek behind the Elephant Terrace. Finally, you can walk along the path where mighty Kings once oversaw fighting elephants and other ceremonial activities. After lunch, you will have the option to spend more time at the temples or head back to the hotel to relax.

In the evening, you will have dinner at the Phare Cafe before attending a performance of 'Phare, the Cambodian Circus.' This troupe of professional acrobats and artists have played an influential role in promoting and developing Khmer culture following the Khmer Rouge genocide. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Hotel

Day 12 - Roluos Temples and Tonle Sap Lake
This morning, you will head off on a 25km cycle to the Roluos Temples and Tonle Sap Lake. The short 25km ride will pass through many small villages that skirt the city of Siem Reap. When you arrive at the Rolous Group, a series of Pre-Angkor temples, you will be able to observe their clear differences from the temples of Angkor Wat.

Next, you'll head to a small market before boarding a boat to take you to Kampong Phluk. The inhabitants of this incredible floating village have learned to adapt to the rise and fall of Tonle Sap - in some cases up to 9 metres throughout the year! You will have lunch at a local home where you will get a real sense of life on the lake.

After transferring back to the hotel, you will have dinner at Malis, providing you with the perfect opportunity to sit and reflect on your incredible journey. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Hotel

Day 13 - Departure to UK

After breakfast in your hotel, it will be time to head back to Siem Reap International Airport for your flight back to the UK. (B)

Flights

You will be flying from London Heathrow to Ho Chi Minh. The flying time is approx. 14-15 hours indirect. Your flight tickets will be e-mailed to you before departure. If you choose to book your own flights, please confirm with the Charity Challenge office first, otherwise you may be liable for your included group flights (please contact flights@charitychallenge.com for further assistance). For more general flights questions, please refer to our main FAQs page.

Visa

We will upload a Visa Application Advice document into your account area 3 months prior to your departure. The visa info is per the FCO website where a link will be provided together with a link to the visa office for that country.

The approximate cost of visas for this itinerary is $35.

Insurance

It is a condition of travelling with Charity Challenge that you have a suitable travel insurance policy which covers you for your entire 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.

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 must complete and return to Charity Challenge prior to travel.

On Day 7 of your Great Wall Discovery itinerary there is the opportunity to ride on a toboggan run at the end of your day's trek. Please note that, if you choose to ride the toboggan, you do so at your own risk and you will be not covered if you have taken out Endsleigh Travel Insurance as recommended by Charity Challenge. We strongly discourage using the toboggan run and cannot vouch for its safety. Your decision to ride the toboggan should take this into account.

For more travel insurance questions, please refer to our main FAQs page or for any specific queries, please contact us at bookings@charitychallenge.com.

Vaccinations

For up to date vaccination information please check the Travel pro health page: https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/43/medicines-abroad.

Charity Challenge team 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, and as such it may be useful to take a copy of your itinerary with you.

Medication
Carry medicines (including those bought over the counter) in their correctly labelled original packaging, as issued by the pharmacist. These should be carried in your hand luggage.
Consider packing a spare supply of medication in the hold luggage in case of loss of hand luggage
A letter from the prescriber detailing the medicines with the generic names for the medications can be helpful for border control checks, and in case medicines have to be replaced or medical help is required
Carry a note from the prescribing physician on letterhead stationery for controlled substances and injection medications
Take out an appropriate level of travel health insurance including repatriation and specific cover for any pre-existing illnesses

N.B. Some medications are banned abroad so please check. You can find further information at https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/43/medicines-abroad

Climate & Terrain

While hot and often humid, Vietnam has a tropical climate, and so you may experience tropical rain and very occasionally storms. During the wet season it can be very humid. Cambodia has 2 seasons. The dry season is from December to May, with temperatures of over 40c. The rainy season is from June to early November, during which the temperature is around 25c but with a high humidity level.

As your cycle route is along the Mekong Delta the terrain will be fairly flat for the whole cycle, however please do not underestimate the length of the days as some days you will be covering 80 km - 90 km. Some areas of the cycle will be very exposed and with extreme heat and humidity which will be a challenge in itself. Please ensure you drink plenty of fluids and protect yourself from the sun. The cycle paths will be narrow and you will be navigating a variety of paths and bridges so make good use of the bike's gears.

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 distance will be your biggest challenge. You need to be able to sustain around 6-8 hours of cycling for 7 continuous days. Replicating this over a weekend would be fantastic training. In your member's area, you will find more comprehensive Fitness Training Notes in your account.

Challenge Training

If you would like to get a feel for our challenges ahead of your departure, why not consider booking on a 1 or 2 day UK Challenge?

We have a variety of challenges, covering all levels of difficulty, taking place in stunning National Parks across the UK that are led by highly qualified and experienced expedition and mountain leaders. These challenges will give you the perfect opportunity to monitor fitness levels, test out your kit, meet people in the great outdoors, share fundraising stories and gain valuable advice and support for the challenge ahead. We encourage participants to make use of our highly knowledgeable leaders and ask them any questions you may have about clothing and equipment, expedition health and wellbeing, trekking skills, walking techniques and teamwork!

We are offering all participants **50% off** the registration fee when you book on one of the UK challenges listed via the link below. Just use the code **TRAINING** when booking. T&C's – you must have an active booking on a challenge to avail of this offer. Discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Find out more here

Luggage Allowance & 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 approximately 20kg.

Each cycling day, your personal kit will be transported to the next stop by a support vehicle. You will carry a daypack for your daily needs such as sun cream, lunch, water, camera and lightweight waterproofs.

We will do everything to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions. The general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Carry your passport with you and make sure you have a photocopy of your documents (travel insurance, passport, visa etc.) in case they get lost or damaged.

We advise that you wear your cycling footwear on the plane and take a set of cycling clothing (especially your jacket) in your hand luggage. In the unlikely event that your hold bag should go missing, you will be able to begin the challenge until you are reunited with your luggage.

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 guides and 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

Each group is intended to be 16 people minimum in order to run and a maximum of approx. 30 people. We will be able to run this challenge for 10 to 15 people by charging a small group supplement of £95 which will be added to your final balance invoice (self funders) or charged to your charity (minimum sponsorship or flexi).

What are the bikes like?

The bikes are good quality, lightweight Trek 4300, 4500 & 4700 – 24 & 27 spd 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 in case of an 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.

Clothing & 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 an 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 The Outdoor Shop, Cycle Surgery, Outdoorhire and Cotswold Outdoor.

Accommodation & Toilets

Accommodation

The standard of accommodation in Vietnam and Cambodia is generally very high. All rooms are en-suite and have facilities for charging batteries and wifi connection. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with, please ensure that you note this where appropriate when booking or email challenges@charitychallenge.com

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. Remember to bring some toilet paper with you as it may be difficult to find during your cycling day.

Food & Drink

Dietary Requirements

Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies. You will need to be as flexible as possible with your eating habits when travelling in SE Asia, as some diets are hard to cater for! Please note that you may encounter a large amount of seafood on this challenge, so please inform Charity Challenge if you do not eat seafood so we can accommodate you the best we can.

Water will be supplied while you cycle.

Vietnam

Food in Vietnam is a delight. It is a blend of Thai and Chinese food, and is always freshly cooked with plenty of vegetables. Typical Vietnamese dishes include pho - a type of rice noodle soup eaten for breakfast, cha gio, deep fried spring rolls, and goi ngo sen - a delicious salad made with lotus stems, shrimps and peanuts.

Cambodia

Cambodian meals are based on fish, poultry, pork, vegetables and rice. The dishes are all very tasty 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).

Money

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 of about £15 a day. Bring more if you intend to buy souvenirs and take up the opportunity of the additional things you can do during your time in Vietnam and Cambodia. You may have the opportunity of enjoying a relaxing post-cycle massage (about £30) in Siem Reap at the end of your challenge. There are plenty of great craft souvenirs, silk clothing and silver jewellers in Vietnam and Cambodia. Keep in mind that it is useful to have notes in small demoninations.

Vietnam

The local currency is Vietnam Dong (VND), but US dollars are also accepted. It is almost impossible to change VND into US dollars without a flight ticket showing your onward destination. Only change money at official money exchange counters with a clear sign showing this status. Changing money elsewhere is illegal and, while a higher rate may be on offer, you may risk losing your money. Credit cards are becoming more widely accepted, but outside main centres you may find cash the only acceptable currency. It also may be difficult to cash travellers' cheques. ATMs are widely available in major cities and tourist areas. You can have funds transferred to Vietnam via international money transfer companies like Western Union or Moneygram.

Cambodia

The US dollar is the main currency used in Cambodia. Prices in hotels, shops and restaurants are quoted in US dollars. Cambodian Riels are used only as small change at a rate of around 4000 Riels/US$1. ATMs are available in Phnom Penh, Sihanoukville, Siem Reap and in some other major towns. Take care when withdrawing cash and be aware of your surroundings. Not all ATMs and banks accept foreign debit and credit cards so check with your bank before you travel. Credit cards aren't widely accepted, but some hotels and businesses in larger cities will accept

them. Travellers cheques can be exchanged at some banks and bureaux de change.

Credit Cards

Visacard and Mastercard are now accepted in many hotels and shops, but the preferred currency is dollars, cash.

Tipping

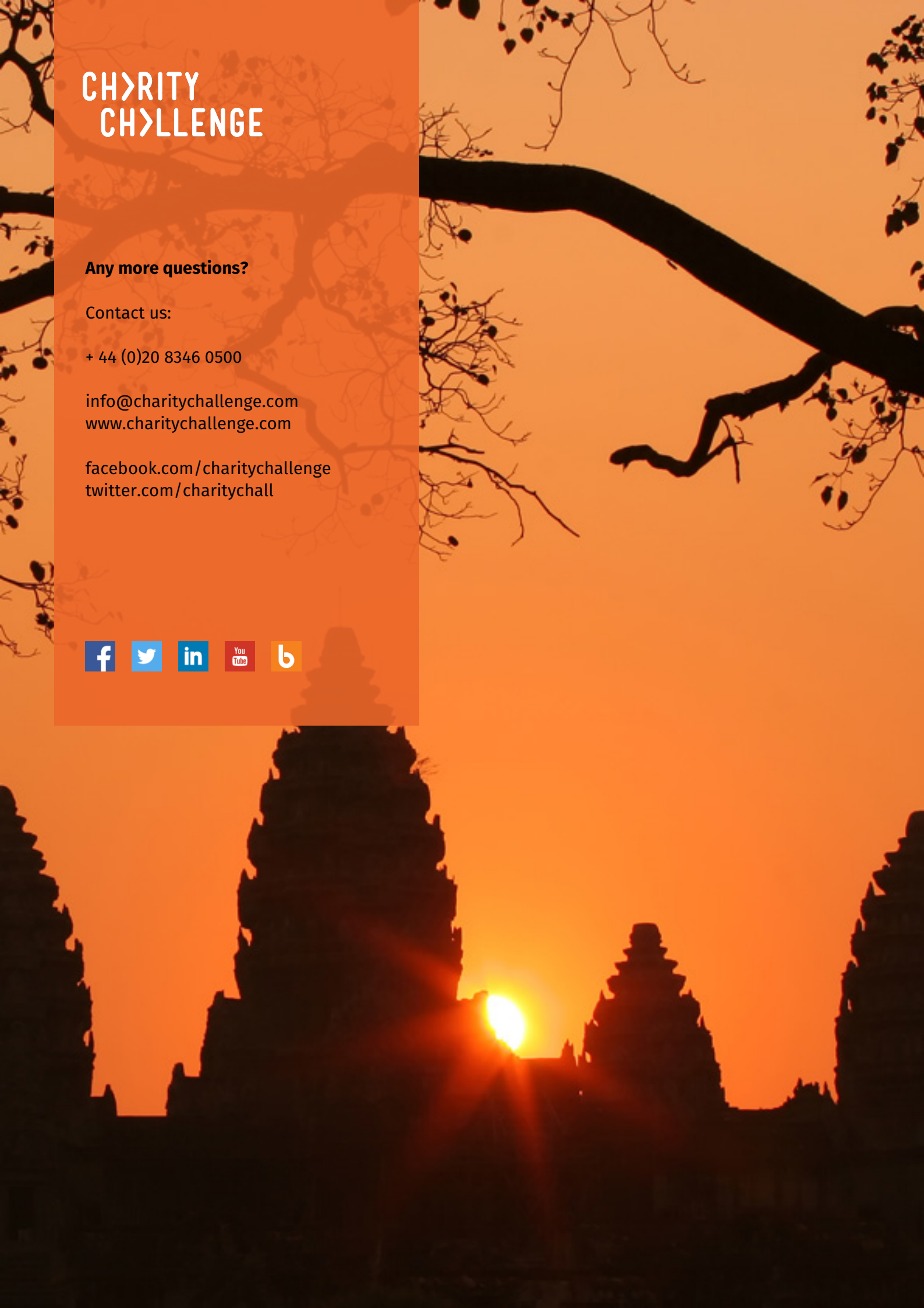
Tipping is personal and at your sole discretion. We recommend approx. US$10 per person per challenge-day. This should be given to the challenge leader who will distribute it among the support team, including guides, assistant guides, cooks and porters.

Phone & Wi-Fi

Most of your accommodation will have limited Wi-Fi which you will be able to use, but please do not rely upon this, particularly while in Cambodia as internet connections are not always reliable. You will have phone signal in almost all places on the challenge.

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. In the event of an emergency, all guides and leaders are maintaining contact via radio, and the backup vehicle will not be far away. If somebody is unable to cycle at all, then the guides will arrange evacuation to a vehicle.



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Any more questions?

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