



Smiling Albino's

## Slow Boat to Battambang

Siem Reap - Prek Toal - Sangke River - Battambang

Kayaking, nature preserves, cycling,  
river cruising, arts and a colonial past.



## Background - Battambang



This adventure provides for transport options – faster vans rather than romantic motorboats up the river – and day excursion options of biking, kayaking, and hiking. Complemented with the country’s best guides and hosts, a focus on good food, excellent hostmanship and great accommodations, you’ll be pleasantly surprised how enjoyable exploring this remote area of Southeast Asia can be.

Battambang has played important roles through the centuries. Rich in agriculture, it was the rice bowl of the Khmer civilisation. In the early 1900s, French colonists modernised the city, building wide roads and key administrative buildings. Situated by the tranquil Sangkae River, providing a picturesque setting for some of the best remaining French colonial architecture and old wooden Khmer homes in the country. Battambang also enjoys an emerging arts scene with many galleries to browse and is the birthplace of the Phare Circus performance and arts school.

Prek Toel Floating Village is home to many cottage industries and serves as the gateway to the Core Bird Reserve, Southeast Asia’s largest fresh water bird colony.

## Day 1

### Prek Toal Floating Village and Core Bird Reserve



An early morning start in Siem Reap begins a full day of discovery on Tonle Sap Lake and up the Sangkae River to Battambang.

Our private boat will meet you at the pier on Tonle Sap Lake for a morning cruise to the mouth of the Sangkae River and Prek Toal Floating Market where we'll climb to the top of the park rangers' bamboo observation platforms overlooking Core Bird Reserve, Southeast Asia's largest fresh water bird colony.

Lunch will be served back in Prek Toal at the Saray Platform, a community initiative that gives the women in the village employment weaving stems of the invasive water hyacinth into handicrafts.

We'll board our motor launch for an afternoon trip up the meandering Sangkae River to Battambang. We'll break up the journey through stunning scenery of shady jungles, sugar palm plantations, paddy fields with a tea break of champagne and goodies from the top Siem Reap hotels.\*

Our driver will be waiting on the riverside landing at Battambang to deliver us to our hotel, set amidst lush gardens, with a swimming pool to sooth any stiff muscles before dinner.

\*For the truly adventurous, we can arrange a home-stay in Prek Toal for an intimate local experience and more time in the bird reserve.

## Day 2

Cycle to Phnom  
Banan, a visit to a  
Vinery, Kayak back  
to Battambang



Today, we'll jump on bikes and cycle through Battambang, an architectural potpourri of faded French colonial buildings hugging the riverfront mixed in with some of the best preserved traditional Khmer houses in Cambodia.

Following the tranquil Sangke River out of town, we'll head into the countryside and discover the hilltop Angkorian temple of Phnom Banan. After a yummy picnic lunch, we'll jump into kayaks and paddle a stretch of the river back to town.

There's an opportunity to stop in on Cambodia's first and only winery on the way, the Chan Thai Choeung (or Banan) Winery. The end product may not match Western tastes, but it does make for a somewhat unusual attraction.

The day is crowned with sunset drinks and a fabulous dinner at the Jaan Bai Restaurant that serves dishes created by the celebrity chef David Thompson in support of the Cambodian Children's Fund.

## Day 3

### Creative Battambang, Bamboo Trains, Return to Siem Reap



After a hearty breakfast, we'll spend some time getting up-close and personal with the creative side of Battambang. The town is more laid back than sprawling Phnom Penh and bustling Siem Reap, and is home to a burgeoning art scene, with many galleries and craft shops.

Battambang is also the birthplace of a performance and arts school called Phare Ponleu Selpak, a home-grown NGO that grew out of the post-Khmer Rouge-era refugee camps in Thailand. We'll visit the school where there's an exhibition space, music hall and you may even catch sight of the circus performers rehearsing their moves.

We'll enjoy a French or Khmer lunch at one of the many new restaurants that are sprouting up each month before heading out into the lush countryside for a novel 30-minute joyride on the bizarre bamboo train, a mode of transport which needs to be seen to be believed. The adventure ends with our return by comfortable private van to Siem Reap.

Be forewarned there are some legs of extended travel times on this trip, whether by boat (5 hours) or van (2.5 hours). We break up the journeys as best we can, offering opportunities to stretch your legs, and there is plenty to see to keep everyone occupied.

HOTEL: [Maison Wat Kor](#)

#### **PACKAGE DETAILS**

##### **PRICE:**

Approx. \$250 USD Per Person Per Day  
(Minimum 4 persons)

INCLUDING: - All Accommodation with daily  
breakfast

- Touring including hosts,  
indicated meals, admissions, snacks &  
water

- All logistics and costs for activities  
discussed

- All Airport Transfers

EXCLUDING: - Alcohol, visas, souvenirs, laundry  
expenses, meals not outlined in  
itinerary, Cambodia Visa