



Ubun Ratchatani naar Siem Reap internationaal gezelschap + individueel

14 Days/13 Nights
Departure Dates:

2011

16 Jan - 29 Jan

3 July - 16 July

13 Nov - 26 Nov

Prices

US\$1,995 Tour

US\$375 Single Supplement

US\$170 Bike Hire

**De prijzen in Euro vindt u
op de website
www.flyandbike.be**

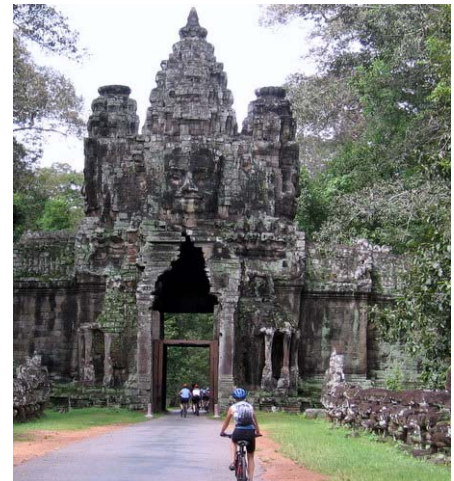
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dagelijks vertrek
prijzen zie website**

The Emerald Triangle

This unique cycling tour traces some of the far reaches of the Khmer empire while also following the Mekong River from Thailand, through Southern Laos and into Cambodia, providing a perfect setting to experience the cultural heritage and scenic highlights of these three countries.

Our tour begins in northeastern Thailand where we visit Pha Taem National Park and view the well-preserved prehistoric rock paintings. We cross into Laos and first head up to the Bolaven Plateau, the coffee growing area of Laos, before heading south, where we go island hopping and take the time to observe the daily lives of the farmers in the paddy fields and the fishermen on the river. We visit Wat Phu, a Khmer Hindu temple complex, and then spend some time dolphin spotting and relaxing on an island in the middle of the Mekong.

Crossing into Cambodia we keep a lookout for the elusive Irrawaddy dolphins as our path crisscrosses over the Mekong. As we wind our way to Siem Reap we stop en route to visit the pre-Angkorian site of Sambor Prei Kuk before spending three days exploring by bike the Khmer's empire's greatest legacy, the amazing Angkor complex. Angkor bears testimony to the Khmer empire's immense power and wealth, as well as the variety of belief systems that it patronized over time - Hinduism, Mahayana Buddhism and Theravada Buddhism.



Trip Profile

Our bicycle journey will be on quiet back roads where you'll have to look out for dogs and ducks more often than cars. We cover more than 750 kilometers in 11 cycling days and much, if not most, of the terrain is quite flat. There are some great natural attractions, including the chance to spot the endangered Irrawaddy dolphin. For archaeology and history buffs there is plenty to delve into, making this one tour that has absolutely something for everyone.

Biking Conditions: The road surfaces are mixed: most days we ride on reasonably good quality asphalt roads, but there are enough sections on very badly broken or dirt tracks that you will need a mountain bike, and preferably one with front shocks. However, there is nothing technical involved on this tour and anyone, assuming they are fit enough, will be able to join no matter how little cycling experience they have. A support truck is always available to help.

Meer info: info@flyandbike.be of 09 226 23 54
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Suitability: This ride is a great ride for novices and experts alike. The majority of this ride is flat with a few small climbs. The road surfaces are generally very good and so make for easier riding. Anyone who has moderate fitness will enjoy this tour. If you are in doubt please contact us for advice or a list of references.

Day to Day

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

Biking Difficulty



(out of five)

Good quality tarmac or dirt roads with some long days. No technical experience required.

Day 1 - Arrival in Ubon Ratchathani

Arrive in Ubon Ratchathani where you will be met by your guide at the airport. We drive just under two hours to Pha Taem National Park. Here we'll take a stroll along the cliff where you'll get your first view of Laos on the other side of the Mekong River. A trail leads to below the cliff where you'll see prehistoric rock paintings depicting fish traps, giant catfish, elephants, human hands and geometric designs. We then transfer to our hotel on the banks of the Mekong River.

Tohsang Khong Jiam Hotel. D

Day 2 - Khong Jiam – Tad Fane

After breakfast it's a short drive to the Laos border at Chongmek. Once visa formalities have been completed we start the ride to Pakse. We ride on a flat tarmac road, passing villages, steering clear of cows crossing the road and rice paddies. We cross the mighty Mekong and ride directly to a restaurant for lunch. After lunch we'll transfer a short distance to beat the afternoon heat and avoid a busy road section. When we start cycling it will be a gradual climb up into the coffee growing area of Laos: the Bolaven Plateau. The temperate coffee growing area is renowned for its Arabica and Robusta beans. We will take a break at a tea plantation bucking the trend of all the surrounding coffee plantations. We'll finish riding early afternoon at the wonderful Tad Fane resort which overlooks the very impressive 200 m Tad Fane Falls. If you are still feeling energetic you can take the short, but steep, walk down to the top of the falls for a dip. Alternatively, you can relax in the restaurant and take in the wonderful view.

Tad E-Tu Resort. 68 km. B L D



Cycling Distance

750 kilometers

Cycling Days

9 full, 2 half

Day 3 – Tad Fane – Don Daeng

Today we'll start with an easy cycle of 30 km back down the hill and when we head south the road starts to undulate. We pass many small villages, cross over creeks feeding into the Mekong, before we meet up with the mighty river. We'll take a car ferry across and ride through the old colonial town of Champasak. It's a flat and easy cycle of 8 km to Wat Phu, a Khmer Hindu temple complex dating back to the 5th Century. Here we'll have a picnic lunch and have time to explore this fascinating place before we ride back to Champasak and transfer to a small ferry that will take us to our eco-friendly hotel on Don Daeng Island. You'll have time to enjoy the pool, go for a walk on the beach or just relax. In the late afternoon you can join in an optional 14 km ride around the island and be back in time for sundowners.

LaFolie Lodge. Ride 87 km. B L D

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We have carefully chosen accommodation that is the best available for the location and offer a good mix, from home stays to luxurious lodges, on our tours.

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We love Asian cuisine, well-known for being hot and spicy and for its use of fresh ingredients, and will make sure you get to sample lots of it.

RESERVEREN

Stuur ons een mailtje met uw reisdata of maak even een afspraak op kantoor om de verschillende zaken te bespreken. Wij hechten veel belang aan een persoonlijk contact om samen uw reisdroom in te vullen.

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Day 4 - Don Daeng - Don Khong

We start the day with a ferry ride to the other side of the river and ride to the village of Ban Niet Ngong. Once we reach the village we can opt to ride or walk up to see Phu Asa, a curious site of stone towers. We have lunch here and then ride back down to the main junction before we load up the vans for a transfer to Ban Nakasan where we cross back over to the Mekong to one of the biggest of the islands in this mighty river, Don Khong. Arriving in the late afternoon will give you time to walk along the river and watch as the locals make full use of the river. Feel the calmness and serenity of your surroundings and absorb the atmosphere.

Senesothxeune Hotel. Ride 34 km. B L D

Day 5 - Don Khong - Don Khone

Today is a day to savor! We once again cross the river and head south where we ride to the Khan Phapeng waterfalls. This natural phenomenon splits the Mekong and is referred to as above and below the falls. We rest for a while before retracing our steps part of the way through the labyrinth of smaller islands. We take a short boat journey to the middle of Don Det and follow the old French Railway down to a beach where we head off into Cambodian waters in search of the nearly extinct Irrawaddy dolphins. We then head towards the impressive Leepi falls. We finish cycling for the day with a short ride to our hotel on Don Khone Island.

Seng Arun. Ride 55 km. B L D

Day 6 - Don Khone

A well deserved rest day to give you a chance to enjoy this tranquil island. Wander through the peaceful village, discover typical Buddhist temples, or remnants left behind by the French - the old pier, a decayed railway bridge and colonial villas. Or spend the day swimming, sunbathing and perhaps spotting the elusive Irrawaddy dolphins.

Seng Arun. B

Day 7 - Don Khone – Stung Treng

We depart Don Khone by boat and transfer to the Laos-Cambodian border. After crossing the border we meet our Cambodian guide and start riding south on a quiet road through green fields and forests. The scenery is very different from Laos and the quietness of the area will give you an “alone on the planet” feeling. We will have two picnics before we reach Stung Treng. We cross the Sekong River via a newly built bridge to reach Stung Treng, a bustling trading town at the confluence of the Sekong and Mekong rivers. Dinner is at a restaurant where youth are learning hospitality skills to gain experience in the industry.

Gold River Hotel. Ride 57 km. B L D

Day 8 - Stung Treng - Kratie

Today we rise early and after breakfast head to Kratie province. The first leg of the trip we ride along the Mekong for about 40 km over dirt roads with amazing views of the river. We eventually arrive on Highway 7 close to a small community-based ecotourism site called O’Russey Kandal. Here we enjoy a picnic along a cool stream with six rapids. We transfer the next 60 km and start riding again at the junction where old and new Highway 7 merge. Highways in Cambodia don’t necessarily mean lots of traffic but you had better watch out for chickens, cows, dogs and ducks.

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Just 14 km short of Kratie we board a boat and enjoy an afternoon cruise to see the Irrawaddy dolphins. Once back on land you can choose to cycle the last 14 km along the river to Kratie or transfer in the bus. Enjoy the views of the Mekong from the roof terrace of your hotel.

Santepheap Hotel. Ride 80 km. B L D

Day 9 - Kratie - Kampong Cham

We breakfast at a riverside restaurant then ride 4 km south and take a ferry to cross the Mekong. Quiet roads through small rural villages take us to Chhlong before we again take a ferry to cross the river. Now the villages we pass are primarily Muslim and mosques are interspersed with Buddhist temples and pagodas. After a small hill climb we stop for lunch at a scenic spot that overlooks the Mekong. If the ride is too long in total we will transfer the final stretch to Kampong Cham.

7 Makara Hotel. Ride 138 km or 72 km with transfer. B L D

Day 10 - Kampong Cham - Kampong Thom

We leave Kampong Cham over dirt and tarmac roads along the Mekong and eventually head for a quiet secondary highway towards Kampong Thom. You will be flanked by rubber plantations, paddy fields and typical Khmer Villages on today's ride. Again there is the option to transfer the final 40 km if the ride is too long. Kampong Thom is a picturesque town on the banks of the Stung Saen River, which hosts the magnificent Khmer temple site Sambor Prei Kuk.

Kampong Thom Village Hotel. Ride 120 km. B L D

Day 11 - Kampong Thom – Sambor Prei Kuk – Siem Reap

We depart in the early morning on our bikes to Sambor Prei Kuk, built in the Chenla period between the 6th and 7th Century and hosts a number of well preserved temples scattered around the jungle. Small and sandy tracks link the three main temples sites in a loop of around 8 km. Morning is a great time to explore this site as it is still cool. We are very likely to have the temples to ourselves as Sambor Prei Kuk is off the beaten tourist track. After a picnic lunch we transfer 2.5 hours to Siem Reap and you'll have time for a dip in the pool.

Steung Siem Reap Hotel. Ride 36 km. B L D

Day 12 - Siem Reap – Angkor – Siem Reap

This morning we start our bike ride to the entrance of Angkor Wat and head to Ta Prohm, famous from the film Tomb Raider, and deliberately left by French conservationists in the same condition as it was discovered; overgrown by strangler fig and silk-cotton trees, giving the temple a mystical and romantic appeal. We continue to Angkor Thom, Bayon temple and the Terrace of the Elephants. We enjoy lunch at the Angkor Café before we explore the biggest religious Hindu edifice in the world - Angkor Wat. Considered the masterpiece of Khmer architecture, this Vishnuite temple is the King's funerary temple, which is why the temple is orientated to the West. Inside the temple the walls are covered by carvings and bas-reliefs depicting Hindu mythology and the wars Suryavarman II fought during his reign. After these magnificent temples and intensive visits we cycle back to Siem.

Steung Siem Reap Hotel. Ride 25 km. B L



The Mekong River is estimated to be 4,350 km long from its source in the highlands of Tibet and flows through the Yunnan province in China and Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam.

Day 13 - Siem Reap - Banteay Srei - Kbal Spean

After breakfast we will head onwards to Banteay Srei. We cycle through rural countryside to this famous temple which has the best preserved bas-reliefs and other stone carvings in Cambodia. The temple is small in size but of huge significance in understanding the Angkorian Era. From here we continue cycling on rural roads, taking a break for a picnic lunch before we reach Kbal Spean, also known as the Valley of 1000 Lingas. We put the bikes aside for a 3 km moderate trek uphill through jungle to a river bed with submersed carvings and a beautiful waterfall (in rainy season only). After our visit we return to Siem Reap by vehicle or we can cycle back. After time to refresh we meet for our farewell dinner.

Steung Siem Reap Hotel. Ride 50 km. B L D

Day 14 - Siem Reap – Onward travel

You are free in the morning after breakfast till we transfer you to the airport.

B

Nuts & Bolts

Bikes: The bikes are well-known makes of Hybrid or Mountain bikes (depending on the tour) with lightweight alloy frames, 24- to 27-speed gearing, v-brakes and Shimano components and front suspension.

Subject to Change

In remote destinations abnormal conditions can prevail at any time, and all adventurous holidays can therefore be subject to unexpected change and we will do our best to adhere to the original itinerary and cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes; in order to enjoy them you should be prepared to be flexible when necessary.

Safety: Wearing a helmet is strongly recommended on all our biking adventures and if you choose not to wear one you will be asked to sign a liability waiver. Your guide is trained in first aid and emergency rescue, but to a large degree you must be responsible for your own safety while riding. It is therefore compulsory that you take out travel insurance that will cover you for a mountain biking tour.

Support: We will be supported by an air-conditioned vehicle that has been specially modified for cycle tours. The vehicles follow us the whole time, except for when we are on the islands in the Mekong. It is very easy to get bikes on and off, so you can rest when you are tired and cycle whenever you feel like it.

Guides: You will be led by a local English-speaking guide and if the group is 8 people or more we will add another guide to the tour. All our guides are well informed in the history, culture and religions of the area where you are biking and are skilled at passing that knowledge on to you. Your guide is also medically trained and an experienced cyclist, able to handle most minor repairs en route.

The Nitty Gritty

Arriving and Departing: This tour starts in Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand and ends in Siem Reap, Cambodia. International and domestic flights to and from there are not included in the tour price. Please contact us for advice before arranging flights for the best arrival and departure times.

Passports and Visas: All nationalities require a passport for entry into Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. Please ensure your passport is valid for at least 6 months from date of entry

Thailand Visa: If staying less than 30 days then a visa in advance is not required by European, North American, Australian and many other nationalities. You will need to show proof of an onward flight out of Thailand to be eligible for the visa on arrival. This is strictly enforced.

Laos Visa: Visa's lasting 15 days are available on entry by most nationalities at either border crossings or by air. The cost will vary depending on nationality; Please make sure you have passport photos and USD cash on you when you arrive at the border.

Cambodia Visa: Visas can be obtained easily at any Cambodian Embassy around the world in advance and may avoid potential overcharging at some land crossings. If you do not have time or for some reason it is difficult to get a visa in advance, it is possible to get a visa on arrival at the Thai/Cambodian border at a cost of US\$20 (please also bring two extra passport photos). There may be a small service charge of a few US\$. An e-visa is not valid for overland crossings.

Health: We recommend that you visit a travel medical doctor and ask about the following vaccinations: typhoid, polio, tetanus and hepatitis A. A certificate for Yellow Fever is required when arriving from an infected area within six days.

Weather: Eastern Thailand, Laos and Cambodia share a tropical climate with fairly high humidity. There are three seasons: from March to June it is hot and dry, with temperatures between 27 and 40C, with night temperatures in the 20s. The rainy season is from June to October. The cooler season, is from November to February, with average temperatures between 20 and 30C.

Food: Meals are included as per the itinerary where B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner. Most meals are local and feature noodles, curries and soups. Lao cuisine is very similar to Thai food and we make sure you sample as much variety as possible. Cambodian cuisine is a mixture of Thai, French and Chinese. Any special dietary requirements can also be catered for as well. Please let us know at the time of booking.

Drink: Keeping you completely hydrated is a job we take very seriously. Cold water, some energy-restoring local fruit and soft drinks are included in the tour price while riding. Soft drinks and other beverages during meals are not included. Beer is freely available everywhere, but is NOT included in the price. Extra Expenses: We recommend that you tuck away a few extra dollars, perhaps US\$20, for incidentals.

Money: Thai baht and US dollars are widely used in both Laos and Cambodia, especially in larger cities and towns. In smaller towns and villages, kip is usually preferred in Laos or riel in Cambodia. There are now a few ATMs in Laos, but they are not widespread and are operational only sporadically. There are ATMs in Siem Reap, however, machines dispense US dollars. Spend all your kip and riel before departing the respective countries as no one will exchange them for you once you leave.

The information in this document is given in good faith, and covers the average range of conditions likely to be found on this trip. Where differences exist in the information between this and previous information, this document is the correct version and supersedes the brochure or website.