

Cambodia & Vietnam

Cambodia & The Mekong Delta

10 days Phnom Penh to Saigon

Cycle from Phnom Penh to Saigon, through southern Cambodia, Phu Quoc and the Mekong Delta.

This ride starts in Phnom Penh, a city that has endured much but remains a vibrant, friendly and intriguing place. We will ride from the capital into the picturesque south of the country and explore this area before crossing the border into the Mekong Delta in Vietnam. We will spend a night in Phu Quoc, the last frontier of southern Indochina's beaches and then head through the Delta to the city of Saigon, a prosperous city with a lot of style.

This is an achievable ride for anyone with a reasonable fitness level and some pre-trip training.

A note on travel plans: This ride starts out on the bike immediately on day 1. If you have not visited Phnom Penh before you may wish to spend a couple of days here before the tour. You may like to participate in one of our day tours or just explore the city. We will happily discuss this further with you when it is time to make these plans.



Itinerary

Day 1 | Takeo | Cycle

We leave Phnom Penh early in the morning as farmers are bringing their produce in and factory workers are making their way to work. We cycle a network of small roads and at times larger highways to reach Takeo, a small provincial capital.

Meals included: L,D
Distance cycled: 75km

Day 2 | Kep | Cycle

We cycle on a lightly used highway today and at times on smaller, unsealed shortcuts. We pass limestone hills and orchards as we travel to the coast. We arrive in the beachside town of Kep where we spend two nights. This evening we will try the fresh seafood that this area is known for.

Meals included: B,L,D
Distance cycled: 106km

Day 3 | Phu Quoc | Cycle and boat

We make an early start to get over a sleepy border crossing and onto the town of Ha Tien. Here we take a boat to Phu Quoc, a much larger island which, although geographically seems to fit with Cambodia, is Vietnamese sovereign territory. The afternoon is yours to explore or laze by the beach.

Meals included: B
Distance cycled: 45km

Day 4 | Phu Quoc | Rest day

Today it's time for a well earned rest. There are massages, cool drinks, great food and lightly populated beaches for you to enjoy. There is a small night market and various organised activities available in town.

Meals included: B

Day 5 | Phu Quoc | Explore the North West by bike

Today we cycle first into town to explore the fresh markets. After a strong Vietnamese coffee, we ride up to the north of the island. The territory here is hillier and the forests more widely spread. We stop at various, generally deserted beaches and small fishing villages. We ride back down the middle of the island in the afternoon and return to the hotel in time to enjoy just a little bit more down time.

Meals included: B,L
Distance cycled: 80km

Day 6 | Chau Doc

After taking the boat back to the mainland, we trace the Vietnamese/Cambodian border northwards today, through marshlands and back up to the Mekong River. We will be on quieter roads most of the day, although some of these will carry some traffic. We spend this evening in the popular riverside town of Chau Doc, famous for its fish sauces and as being a border trade town.

Meals included: B,L,D
Distance cycled: 40km



Day 7 | Long Xuyen

We cycle into the Delta in earnest today, along small canal paths and through little villages. We pass a great deal of farming activity as the soil here is some of the most fertile in the region. We find ourselves in Long Xuyen tonight, a larger delta city that is a trade point for much of the surrounding areas agricultural produce.

Meals included: B,L,D
Distance cycled: 90km

Day 8 | Can Tho

We will continue our ride along some fantastic tracks, following canals with very little traffic. We will reach our destination of Can Tho in the late afternoon. Can Tho at the convergence of two main sections of the Mekong is an exciting town that will seem like a city after the backwaters of the far south.

Meals included: B,L,D
Distance cycled: 75km

Day 9 | Saigon

Today we will start with a boat ride around the famous floating markets. Here we see the produce of the Delta up for sale and being tossed from boat to boat. The mobile cafe will likely sidle up to our boat so you can enjoy your morning brew. We then return to the hotel for breakfast before driving up to Saigon. Time permitting, we will then take a walking tour of the French Quarter and Ben Than Market before enjoying our final meal together.

Meals included: B,L,D

Day 10 | Saigon | Finish

Today the tour concludes. Time to bid farewell to all your new friends and head off on your next adventure.

Meals included: B

Tour Details

Style

Fully supported cycling tour

Inclusions

Accommodation, air conditioned support vehicles, English speaking cycling guides, quality bikes, most meals, snacks and water while cycling, boat tickets and entrance fees where applicable.

Group Size

Minimum 2, maximum 14.

Accommodation

8 nights comfortable hotel, 1 night in local guesthouse, all with ensuite and airconditioning.

Due the nature of cycling trips we stay in some towns where the general standard of accommodation is quite low. In these places we have chosen the best possible place to stay - trust us there's nothing better!



Single Room

On Grasshopper Adventures tours single travellers do not have to pay any extra to join our trips - we will match you up with another same sex, single traveller. However, should you wish to choose to take a single room we are happy to book rooms for you for an extra charge. This single supplement is completely voluntary and only applies to hotel accommodation, on overnight train trips there are no single rooms available. We should point out that on occasion single rooms may not be available and in these instances you may need to share for a night or two - we will refund part of your single supplement in these cases.

Extra accommodation

We can book additional accommodation before the tour in Phnom Penh or after the tour in Saigon at our partner hotels. Please book extra nights when you book your tour.

Hotel Castle Phnom Penh - Comfortable 3 star hotel located in the vibrant riverside area. \$65 per room, per night, including breakfast.

Elios Hotel Saigon - Comfortable 3 star hotel in Pham Ngu Lao, an area popular with backpackers and mid-range travelers. \$75 per room, per night, including breakfast.

Arrival Details

Your guide will meet you at your hotel in Phnom Penh at a pre-arranged time, between 7 and 8am on the start day. Should you need a hotel for the night preceding the tour, please inquire with us at the time of booking.

Food

Included meals: 9 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 6 dinners

Cycling Days & Distance

7 days - 510km

Difficulty

Moderate - this trip involves some riding on unsealed roads, but it is mostly quite easy riding. There are no days in excess of 100km. Anyone with a reasonable level of fitness and some pre-trip training should consider this ride.

Cycling Conditions

75% sealed roads, 25% dirt roads. Road conditions in Cambodia have improved considerably over the past few years. This trip is mainly on recently made sealed roads with some stages on dirt roads. Road maintenance, however, is not always the best so you must expect random potholes, short sections of terrible surface and road works. In general this is a very flat ride. Traffic is generally light but care must be taken with all those unexpected surprises like chickens, children and dogs running out in front of you. Stay alert.

Bikes

Bikes are not included in the price for this trip, but are available for rent. Should you wish to bring your own, then you may find the following useful. The best bike for conditions in Cambodia would be a good working mountain or hybrid bike with 21 gears or more and hybrid tyres to cope with the varying conditions. You should have your bike serviced by a professional bike mechanic before travelling to ensure that it is in good working order. While we do provide mechanical assistance and carry some spare parts during the trip you will need to bring spare parts (including tubes) for your bike as different bikes use different parts and we cannot guarantee that we will have a part to suit your bike.

Bike Hire

Bike rental for this tour is \$90. We provide Trek 4400 or 4300 mountain bikes, or Merida Matts 40 Mountain bikes.

Helmets



For safe cycling we strongly recommend wearing a helmet whilst cycling on our trips.

Transporting Your Bike

Most international airlines consider bicycles as part of your regular luggage weight allowance, so you will need to pack light. The best way to transport a bicycle is to package it in a bike box. Most bicycle stores are happy to give away boxes for free. You will need to remove the front wheel (and sometimes the rear wheel), handle bars, pedals and seat post. Tape any loose parts to the bike frame and pack a few extras in the box such as your helmet. You can keep your box until the end of the trip to pack it for the trip home.

Support Vehicles

For the cycling days (except on Phu Quoc) we will have the backup support of a small bus that will carry our luggage, snacks, water, and anybody not cycling. You can use the support vehicle whenever you feel like no longer cycling.

Travel Details

Visas

One month single entry visas can be easily obtained upon entry to Cambodia. Visas at the airport cost US\$20 and require one passport photo. You can obtain a visa in your own country if you wish. Before you travel check your passport to ensure that there is room for a visa and entry/exit stamps (at least 3 pages) and that it has at least 6 months validation remaining.

Vietnamese Visas need to be pre-arranged. You can apply for a Vietnamese visa at any of their embassies. The cost should be around \$35USD.

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of participating in a Grasshopper Adventure that you hold travel insurance for the duration of the trip. Insurance must include comprehensive medical and emergency evacuation. Your travel insurance details will be checked by your group leader on arrival at the starting point hotel.

If you are looking for an insurer we can recommend World Nomads. [Click to see more details.](#)

Flights

International flights to the starting point and from the finish point are not included in the price of this tour. We can assist with the purchase of inter-Asia flights and/or provide advice if you are considering overland travel. All domestic flights as per itinerary are included.

Money

The official currency of Cambodia is the Riel, however, the US dollar serves as a second currency and can be used in all situations. When going to Cambodia it is best to bring small denomination US dollars cash along with travellers cheques as your main form of money. Around Siem Reap Thai Baht can also be used. Credit cards can be used in a few major centres, however, they should not be relied on as the main way you will access your money. There are now ATMs in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Sihanoukville which dispense US dollars, however, this should not be relied on as your sole source of money.

The official currency for Vietnam is the Vietnamese Dong. You can change dollars into Dong when you are in Vietnam. Additionally, there are now ATMs in most major towns and cities, so you can withdraw using debit and credit cards.

For current exchange rates visit:

www.oanda.com

Costs

We recommend that you allow approximately US\$20 for food and general living costs per day.



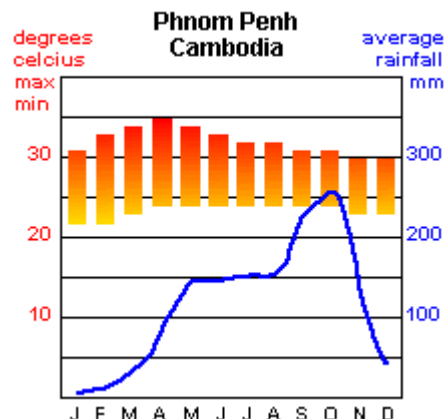
Shopping money should be considered extra to this amount. It is customary to tip the guides and drivers in Asia. You should allow approximately US\$30 for tips. Note: this is a guide only, feel free to tip more or less (or nothing) depending on your satisfaction. If you think your tour leader has done a good job you may also tip him/her. Again this is completely up to you.

Health

There are no specific health requirements for travelling in Cambodia, however, we recommend that you visit a travel medicine doctor before travelling. You should carry a well stocked first aid kit with you when you travel. All Grasshopper Adventures Group Leaders are first aid trained, however, they are not permitted to distribute any medications.

Climate

Cambodia and southern Vietnam are classic tropical climates with generally warm to hot days and warm nights. You won't need any warm clothing on this tour. The coolest months are November to January. During the wet season (May-Oct) it does rain most days but the rain generally falls in the late afternoon or night - after we have finished our cycling. The wet season is actually a fantastic time to visit Cambodia as the rain brings the fields and country to life. Endless green rice fields are a feature of this time of year.



Electricity

Cambodia & Vietnam work on a 220 volt system and uses American/Asian 2 flat pin plugs. For more on plug types visit the [World Electric Guide](#). You can easily buy an adapter in Cambodia for much cheaper than in your home country.

Packing

You should consider bringing the following items:

<p>Personal Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backpack or small sized wheelee bag (some of the guesthouses we have do not have lifts so you may need to carry your luggage up some flights of stairs) • Long trousers • Shorts • Shirts • Hat • Sandles/light shoes • Swimming costume • Sunglasses • Light rain jacket • Toiletries • Small towel • Sunscreen • First Aid Kit • Mosquito repellent • Camera • Alarm Clock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passport with 6 months validity and spare pages • Passport photo • Travel insurance details • Flight tickets • Money - cash/credit cards/travellers cheques • Phrase book <p>Cycling Gear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycle • <i>if renting</i> - your own seat & pedals (optional) • Something to carry your personal belongings in while cycling, eg. day pack, bum bag, handlebar bag • Helmet • Cycling gloves • Bicycle water bottle • Bike shorts with something to put on over the top while off the bike
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Positive Impact

An integral part of traveling is to have a positive impact on the country that you are visiting. On this trip there are a number of things you can do to have a positive impact on the communities that we



visit.

Dress

Cambodia and Vietnam are still quite conservative countries. In rural areas and temples overly revealing clothing is considered offensive. You should make an effort to dress more conservatively in these situations. Walking around a village in bike shorts is not appropriate so if you wish to cycle in just bike shorts you should have something with you on the bike to put on over the top such as long loose shorts or a skirt/sarong. A good solution to this is 'shy shorts' which combine cycling shorts with loose long shorts over the top. When visiting temples shorts are acceptable providing they cover the knee. Sleeveless tops are not acceptable in temples.

Phrase Book

A highly memorable part of your travels will be the local people that you meet. In the tourist areas some people will speak English but away from these areas it is great to learn a few words of Khmer and Vietnamese. We will teach you some of the basics but if you want to really interact we recommend bringing a phrase book.

Donations

Often when coming on trips overseas people like to bring items such as sweets, pens and books for children or old clothing for families. While this is a fantastic idea, if distributed in the wrong way it can actually create more problems. Giving items away to local people can create an expectation that a visiting foreigner equals free give away's. In some communities in Asia this has created whole villages where the only interaction is the locals asking for things. If you would like to donate anything to the communities that we visit we suggest that you give the items to Grasshopper Adventures which we will then pass on to development organisations, schools or whole communities. In this way items are distributed by those working in the communities who understand better the local needs.

Poverty

There is an enormous amount of poverty in Cambodia and to a lesser extent in Vietnam which you will see, particularly in tourist areas. If you choose to give something to a beggar you must bear in mind the value of money in the country you are visiting. Many beggars can earn more than those who work unskilled jobs. There are organisations in Cambodia who are working to alleviate this poverty issue and may be able to do more good with donations that you might like to make. Your Tour Leader will be able to provide more information about this.

Important

All information in these tour notes is researched with care and provided in good faith. The information subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and Grasshopper Adventures.

