

PHNOM PENH

122008
ISSUE24

ASIALIFEguide

LIFE in the PENH

perspectives from
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Editorial

THE YEAR 2008 HAS BEEN a momentous one. The election of the first Afro-American President of the United States has filled the world with renewed optimism – not least in Cambodia’s expat community, as Virginie Noel’s photos of the celebrations at FCC Phnom Penh reveal. This, at a time when the world is engulfed in a financial crisis that may alter the way that we do business in the future.

This month we ask several expats from different walks in life exactly what living as an expat in Cambodia is like. Many have lived in other countries before – some are career expats. Why have we chosen to settle in this fair city? How is it changing?

Most of us have few if any ties with the country before we settle here. We are brought by a sense of adventure or a great career opportunity. Others have Cambodia within their bones. Marcus Burrows talks with six returnees. Again their reasons for returning are varied. Some were born here and spent years in refugee camps on the Thai border, others got out before the Khmer Rouge seized power, still others found themselves on the wrong end of the law and had no choice about whether they returned to their homeland or not. Invariably they found that settling in the country of their birth was not a bed of roses.

It’s that time of the year again. Be prepared for Christmas carols, mistletoe and a lot of ho ho ho-ing. Sometimes in Cambodia it’s easy to forget that the festive season is just around the corner. For many of us, life in the Penh is an all-year-round festive season. To help you avoid that last minute shopping frenzy, Michelle Gilkes has

surveyed the city’s shops and stores to give some tips on where to buy that present for the one you love. She also gives the low-down on where to get your Christmas decorations, including a giant Santa – Christmas just wouldn’t be the same without him.

We also give the low-down on what is going on over the festive period in the bars, restaurants and hotels around town for both Christmas and New Year.

Another tradition about this time of year is that people tend to move on. That is as true for AsiaLIFE as elsewhere. Over the last year Julian Grant has reviewed albums for us and provided details of the most popular records both here and overseas. I’d like to thank Julian for all his efforts in 2008.

Many of our regular readers will have followed Mike and Lotta’s motorcycle journey from Saigon, through Cambodia and back to Europe. This month is the final episode in their saga, as they arrive back in Lotta’s native Finland. Once again I’d like to thank them for their contributions to the magazine over the year. The pair are now safely back in Europe and living in the south of Spain.

As always we trust that you enjoy this issue. Please give us feedback on anything contained within this or any other issue of AsiaLIFE. We are currently in the process of updating our website to make it much more interactive with you, our readers. It should be going live this month, so log on to www.asialifeguide.com and give us your feedback there. If however, the internet gremlins are playing up, you can always send an email to:

asialifephnompenh@gmail.com

in the penh

calendar

storyboard

coverstory

food corner

contents

10

12

20

26

36

50

58

60

66

72

scrapbook

kaleidoscope

leisure & wellness

next generation

bar stool

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shopping

74

unplugged

96

[40](#) Restaurant Guide

[40](#) Best Kept Secret

[43](#) Bargain Bucket

[44](#) Recipe Corner

[46](#) Review

[52](#) Bar Guide

[54](#) Grapevine

[62](#) On the Shelf

[63](#) Arts Diary

[64](#) Billboard

[65](#) Culture Guide

[65](#) Top of the Bops

[67](#) Leisure & Wellness Guide

[68](#) Beauty Spot

[69](#) Sam Moffett

[70](#) Laura Watson

[73](#) Next Gen Guide

[75](#) Shopping Guide

[79](#) Business Guide

[80](#) Trevor Keidan

[87](#) Getaway Guide

[88](#) Motorbike Diaries

[102](#) Quiz

[102](#) Sudoku

business

78

getaways

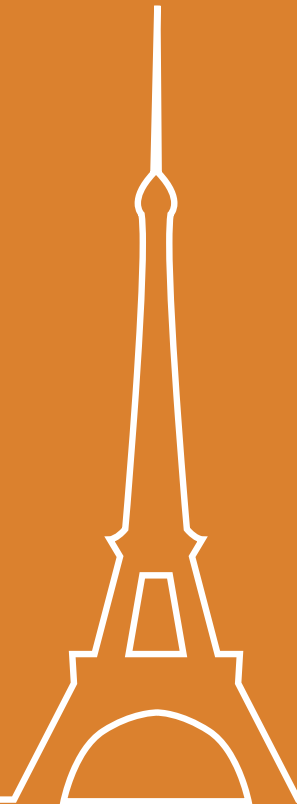
84

map

94

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in the penh

The Month That Was

obama, green, rugby, tunes

■ FCC ELECTION PARTY >>

Not only Americans but other nationalities too were celebrating and exhilarated with Barack Obama's victory during FCC's vibrant election party. Apart from cold beer and champagne, tears of joy started flowing. Towards the evening, the Democrats Abroad stand was still going strong and many people's faces betrayed that they couldn't yet quite believe their favourite candidate had secured his victory. Considering that most had been up since the early hours to watch CNN's coverage of the election – and that many a glass was raised upon Obama's victory announcement – to many red-eyed party-goers it came as a relief that it will be another four years before the next U.S. elections will take place.



■ BAROQUE MUSIC FESTIVAL

Phnom Penh's fifth international music festival kicked off with a gala opening at Chaktomouk Theatre, followed by a number of concerts at St. Joseph's Chapel on National Route 5. This year's theme was western baroque music with a focus on the Bach family, and many Phnom Penh music enthusiasts showed up at the free performances. At one event at the chapel, a Balinese dancer beautifully blended his graceful movements with the music played on the violin. The acoustics in the chapel came out better than in the

Chaktomouk Theatre where it took a while to get used to the somewhat subdued sound. However, it didn't impact much on the delight of hearing live classical music being played in the capital. Performed by international and local artists alike, the series of concerts were welcomed both by Cambodians and foreign residents whose reaction, especially among music amateurs, was one of great appreciation.

■ ANZ ROYAL ANGKOR 10S

The eighth annual Angkor 10s rugby competition took place at the Old Stadium, Phnom

Penh on Dec. 7. (See page 66 for details), attracting teams from Dubai, Australia, France and around the region. The ANZ Royal Bank Cup was won by all-Cambodian team Les Piliers d'Angkor, who beat the Billabong Sharks in the final. French Asia Barbarians 'A' won the Phnom Penh Plate, defeating the Bedok Kings. The Bowl was won by the Dubai Exiles and Stade Khmer won the Dan Meats Golden Cow trophy. The previous day, AOCOUS from Toulouse won the Sharky Old Boys Trophy.

■ GREEN BIRTHDAY

Popular riverside pub, the Green Vespa celebrated its fourth birthday party in time-honoured tradition on Nov. 22. Guests were treated to lashings of traditional English pub fare such as steak and kidney pies, sausages and smoked salmon and then invited to join in some even more traditional party games, including downing a yard of ale with prizes given to the winners. All this set to the soundtrack of owner Alan's mix of hits from the 70s and 80s. No doubt there are many more to come. ■



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calendar

December

photo phnom penh, human rights week, xmas, bad neighbour, carols, salsa, champagne

sunday

monday

tuesday

wednesday

thursday

	<p>Monday Night Football</p> <p>Photo Phnom Penh</p> <p>Malt Monday</p> <p>Looking Forward Opens at New Art Gallery at 5.30pm</p> <p>Tensions Exhibition by Thomas Wanhoff opens at Art Café at 7pm</p>	<p>Gym Bar Quiz</p> <p>Photo Phnom Penh</p> <p>Alley Cat Rib Night</p> <p>Frederick Lecloux Opens at Meta House at 6pm</p> <p>Talkin Head Trivia Pit your brains against the Quiz-Master at Talkin to a Stranger</p>	<p>03</p> <p>Photo Phnom Penh</p> <p>The Yi in the Wild Opens at The Chinese House at 7.30pm</p> <p>Wine Wednesday Buy one bottle of wine and get another for free at the Green Vespa</p>	<p>04</p> <p>Photo Phnom Penh Exhibitions throughout town, for details see page 14</p> <p>Images / Party At La Croisette from 9pm</p> <p>Gender Filmfest Films screened at Meta House until Dec. 7 (see Arts Diary)</p>
<p>07</p> <p>Salsa Sundays</p> <p>Sunday Brunch Free-flowing Moët & Chandon Champagne every Sunday from 11.30am to 3pm at the InterContinental Hotel</p> <p>Photo Phnom Penh</p> <p>Angkor Wat Half-Marathon</p>	<p>08</p> <p>Christmas carols Victorian Surimoun Choir sings at the InterContinental Hotel from 8pm</p> <p>Human Rights Week Festival celebrating human rights (for details see page 18)</p> <p>Monday Night Football</p> <p>Malt Monday</p>	<p>09</p> <p>Carols by candlelight Bella Voce choir performs at the Café Living Room from 6.30pm</p> <p>Human Rights Week</p> <p>Gym Bar Quiz</p> <p>Alley Cat Rib Night</p>	<p>10</p> <p>International Human Rights Day</p> <p>Wine Wednesday</p> <p>Kids Create Kids arts classes with Leah Newman at Café Living Room from 3.30-5pm Tel: 012242301</p> <p>Human Rights Week</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Johnnie Walker Cambodian Open Tees off at the #Phokeethra County Club, Siem Reap, ends Sunday</p> <p>Human Rights Week</p> <p>Book Reading Novelist Angela Savage reads from Behind the Night Bazaar at Café Living Room at 7pm</p>
<p>14</p> <p>Salsa Sundays Dance at the rooftop FCC Phnom Penh every Sunday from 5.30pm</p> <p>Sunday Brunch</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Monday Night Football NFL games shown at Gym Bar at 7pm every Monday</p> <p>Malt Monday Four single malts for only US\$15 at the Green Vespa</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Gym Bar Quiz Test your knowledge against Randal at the Gym Bar every Tuesday night from 9pm – US\$30 bar tab for the winners</p> <p>Alley Cat Rib Night Full-rack for US\$8, half-rack US\$5.50 at Alley Cat Café, every Tuesday</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Wine and Cheese Night Taste both at the InterContinental Hotel from 7pm to 9.30pm</p> <p>Wine Wednesday</p>	<p>18</p> <p>AsiaLIFE Xmas Party at Java Café Start off the countdown in style from 6pm</p>
<p>21</p> <p>Salsa Sundays</p> <p>Sunday Brunch</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Monday Night Football</p> <p>Malt Monday</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Gym Bar Quiz</p> <p>Alley Cat Rib Night</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Christmas Eve (see pages 49 & 53 for info)</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Christmas Day (see pages 49 & 53 for info)</p>
<p>28</p> <p>Salsa Sundays</p> <p>Sunday Brunch</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Monday Night Football</p> <p>Malt Monday</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Gym Bar Quiz</p> <p>Alley Cat Rib Night</p>	<p>31</p> <p>New Years Eve (see pages 49 & 53 for info)</p>	

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friday

05
Heng Ravuth
Opens at Java Café at 6pm
Where Elephants Weep
Rock opera plays at Chenla Theatre
Velkommen Inn Hellhounds
Visual Makers
Opens at Equinox at 8pm
Bodies
Opens at 2 Fish Gallery at 6.30pm

12
Winking Frog Image Band
Play the Winking Frog every Friday
Human Rights Week
Velkommen Inn Hellhounds
Play the Velkommen Inn
Alley Cat Friday Devious Dice
US\$1 roll wins drinks and prizes at the Alley Cat Café

19
Winking Frog Image Band
Pontoon Christmas Party
Rubies Secret Santa Party
Primitive Souls, Celebrity Santa, Bring a US\$3 gift
Alley Cat Friday Devious Dice

26
Boxing Day
(see pages 49 & 53 for info)

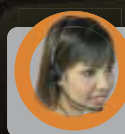
saturday

06
Red Corner
Opens at Café Living Room at 5pm
IBC Ball
At the InterContinental Hotel
Photo Phnom Penh
Friends Flea Market
From 8am to 12pm at 215 Street 13
Sound of Berlin
DJ Nico plays La Croisette

18
ISPP International Day
Performances by students from 11am till 2.30pm
Tschautze
Opens at Meta House at 6pm
Human Rights Week
Flamenco
Band plays the FCC Phnom Penh
Winking Frog DJ Paul Stewart

20
Bad Neighbour & DJ Felipe
Party in the colonial mansion (across from National Museum)
Winking Frog DJ Paul Stewart
UK DJ plays the Winking Frog every Saturday night

27
Royal CNVLD Wheelie Grand Prix
The first race of the year will be in Kompong Som
Winking Frog DJ Paul Stewart



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News & Events

PPP, Thai art, volleyball gets wheels, MTV, world wonders

■ PHOTO PHNOM PENH

Following the Angkor Photography Festival, Photo Phnom Penh will present a series of exhibitions by international artists at the main cultural venues of the capital. In an atmosphere of discovery and festivity, Photo Phnom Penh will also organise outdoor screenings culminating in the "Nuit de l'Année" at Wat Bothum Gardens on Dec. 6-7.

PPP's December programme:
Dec. 1 at 6.30pm – Opening:
L. Carème at XEM la Galerie.

Dec. 1 at 7pm – Portraits:
Henri Cartier Bresson, William Klein at the cinema of the French Cultural Centre (CCF).

Dec. 2 at 12.30pm – Ange Leccia: Aze at the CCF's cinema.

Dec. 2 at 6pm – Opening: F. Lecloux at Meta House.

Dec. 2 at 8pm – New Photography from Thailand at CCF.

Dec. 3 at 12.30pm – Willy Ronis: Self-portrait of a photographer at CCF's cinema.

Dec. 3 at 6.30pm – Straight from the Heart at CCF.



Heng Ravuth

Dec. 3 at 7.30pm – Opening: Wang Gang at The Chinese House.

Dec. 4 at 12.30pm – Agnès Varda: Ulysses and one minute for one image, at CCF's cinema.

Dec. 4 at 6:30pm – Françoise Hugier: My Life, My Work! at CCF.

Dec. 5 at 6.30pm – Opening: Heng Ravuth at Java Café.

Dec. 5 at 7pm – Michelangelo Antonioni: Blow up at CCF's cinema.

Dec. 6 at 3pm – Meeting with Khmer photographers Chhin Taingchhea & Khvay Samnang at Bophana Institute.

Dec. 6 / 7 at 6pm – The Night of the Year: 12 open air screenings, at Wat Bothum Gardens.

There will also be a series of parties and fringe exhibitions that will run alongside the main festival. See Arts Diary and Calendar for more details, or contact the French Cultural Centre.

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CONTEMPORARY THAI ART

The new Bangkok Art and Culture Centre (BACC), currently hosting its first international art exhibition, aims “to give contemporary art the right physical infrastructure and to enhance the role of art in the city’s cultural life.” It certainly has succeeded in that dual role. The eleven floor facility with galleries, performance spaces, a library and meeting rooms is pretty impressive on its own, but its current exhibition titled *Traces of Siamese Smile: Art + Faith + Politics + Love*, easily measures up to the more established contemporary art shows of Europe and North America.

Three hundred works are brought together by 108 Thai and international artists, including paintings, photographs, sculptures, videos, animation, installations and performance, resulting in an eclectic show that is inspiring, innovative and captivating. The BACC Foundation, who administers the centre, want it to become a creative hub, an “art junction” where all can cross paths and meet, not only involving art but also theatre, film, writing, music and design. The BACC might well become southeast Asia’s leading contemporary art venue. The next exhibition is called BANGKOK 226 and will run from Jan. 16 till

Feb. 15. If it is as good as *Traces of Siamese Smile*, you better book your plane ticket now. Gallery open 10am-3pm and Art Library 10am-6pm, Tue-Sun.

Bangkok Art and Culture Centre, 939 Rama I Road, Bangkok (opposite MBK shopping center). BTS station: ‘National Stadium’. Tel. 02 214 6630/1, visit www.bac.or.th

STANDING VOLLEYBALL FEDERATION TO BE ESTABLISHED

The Standing Volleyball nations of Germany, Slovakia and Cambodia – ranked 1, 2, and 3 in the world respectively – have agreed to form the world’s newest international disability sports federation, The International Standing Volleyball Federation (ISVF), severing their ties with the World Organisation of Volleyball for the Disabled (WOVD)

A press release by the Cambodian National Volleyball League (CNVLD) said that the joint decision was due to the “long-term and ongoing lack of support for standing volleyball and its development within the WOVD.” The CNVLD further claims that the WOVD favours sitting volleyball over standing volleyball “The re-instatement of Standing Volleyball back into the Paralympic Games will be a key objective of the ISVF,” the press release continues.



CNVLD athlete Yob Nom

■ CNVLD GOES WHEELIE

All 30 of the ANZ Royal CNVLD Wheelie Grand Prix athletes are in training in preparation for the first race of the year to be held in Kompong Som on Dec. 27. According to the organis-

ers, the event will include the highest ever prize money for the athletes in the 100m race. Both the men's and women's champions will receive US\$200, the runner-up US\$100 and third place US\$50.

As part of the ongoing policy of ensuring financial transparency and encouraging personal financial management, all prize money will be paid into new ANZ Royal bank accounts for the top six athletes.

■ FRIENDS IN HONG KONG

Friends-International's Executive Director and founder, Sebastien Marot has been invited to participate in the inaugural Clinton Global Initiative's Asia event in Hong Kong this month. The event will see President Clinton joining several hundred Asian leaders from a wide variety of backgrounds to examine specific challenges and the solutions to overcome them. Over two days of panel discussions and interactive working sessions, the Hong Kong meeting will focus on education, energy and climate change, and public health. Sebastien will be a panelist in the Education working session entitled, 'Overcoming Disparity and Deprivation' on Tuesday Dec. 2.

■ THE WONDERS OF OUR WORLD

On Dec. 13, ISPP will hold their annual International Day from 11am till 2.30pm. ISPP currently has 36 nationalities of students and will host a variety of stage performances and pavilion activities for children of all ages, including dance, short performances of folktales, fash-



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ion shows, face painting, food sampling, traditional music and games. In addition to restaurant stalls, the international food table boasts over 30 different cuisines to sample. All money raised will go towards NGO and community projects supported by ISPP students across all grades. Tickets are available at the door for US\$2 for adults and US\$1 for children. Gates open from 10.30am
ISPP Secondary Campus, 146 Norodom Boulevard, Phnom Penh.

■ IT'S A BALL

The International Business Club of Cambodia is holding its annual dinner and ball at the InterContinental Hotel on Dec. 6 from 6pm. At US\$110 per person or US\$1,000 per table of ten, tickets are hardly a snip, but this event tends to carry on into the early hours. Tickets are available through the hotel. The dress code is formal wear.

■ ROCK AGAINST TRAFFICKING

The MTV EXIT (End Exploitation and Trafficking) campaign, in collaboration with USAID and the Cambodian government, is organising a

nationwide concert tour to raise awareness and increase prevention of human trafficking. After Sihanoukville and Kampong Cham, the tour will arrive in Siem Reap on Dec. 7 where the U.K. rock band Placebo and other international and national artists will be performing at Angkor Wat, the first-ever rock concert at the temple. The final performance will be held at the Olympic Stadium in Phnom Penh on Dec. 12 with U.S. group The Click Five, Cambodian stars Preap Sovath and Pou Khliang, and other Cambodian artists. The Secretary of State for the Cambodian Ministry of Interior said that more work needs to be done in the fight against human trafficking. "I believe that this kind of event will attract a lot of attention, especially amongst the youth, and that it will have a positive impact on the awareness and reduction of human trafficking," she said at a press conference in Phnom Penh.

■ BOOK READING

Award winning crime novelist and AsiaLIFE columnist Angela Savage will be reading

from her novel, Behind the Night Bazaar, at the Living Room Café, on Dec. 11 from 7 to 9 pm. Rumour has it she will also read from the unpublished manuscript of the sequel, which she has been working on this year in Phnom Penh.

For information contact Louise: 012 385 542.

Angela's author website is www.angelasavage.wordpress.com

Correction

In last month's issue of AsiaLIFE we neglected to credit Daniel de Gruiter for his photographs which appear in the Kampong Thom article on Pg.85. Our sincerest apologies.

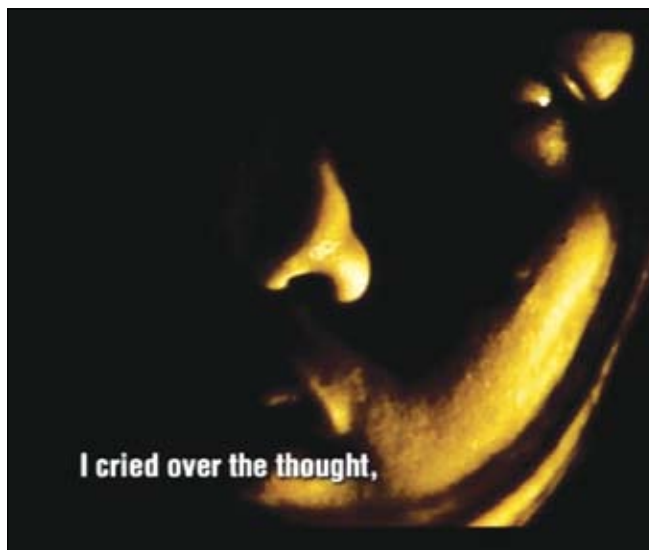


Image from a human trafficking awareness film



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SONG-life.com

Human Rights Week



Semaine des droits de l'homme
9 - 13 décembre

THE FRENCH EMBASSY is organising a week of documentaries, conferences and exhibitions to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The following events take place at the Royal University of Law and Economics, the French Cultural Centre and the Bophana Institute. (See pages 60-61)

Dec. 15 at 4:30pm – Documentary by Alex Clévenot followed by a debate moderated by Hisham Mousar.

Dec. 17 at 6pm – Finishing conference on the State of affairs of the situation of human rights in Cambodia, by Christophe Peschoux, representative of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights in Cambodia.

■ **AT THE ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF LAW AND ECONOMICS**
Nov. 26 at 4pm – Conference and debate on The Promotion of Human Rights in Asia followed by The Defense and the Procedure of the Khmer Rouge Tribunal by François Roux.

Dec. 1 to 17 – The 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, exhibition by students of the Group of French cooperation at URDSE.

Dec. 8 at 5pm – Documentary by Amirul Arham followed by a debate on microcredit moderated by Jean-Jacques Paul.

Dec. 8 at 5pm – Workers of the world, documentary by Marie-France Collard followed by a debate moderated by Jean-Jacques Paul.

Dec. 11 at 2pm – France and the trials of crimes against humanity, conference and debate by Annette Wieworka The Extraordinary Chambers at the Cambodian tribunals, conference and debate.

■ **AT THE FRENCH CULTURAL CENTRE**

Dec. 9 to 13 at 6pm – The world's ordeal, the articles of the Declaration illustrated with pictures by photojournalists from Agence VII.

Dec. 12 at 6:30pm – Night and Fog, film by Alain Resnais, and conference by Sylvie Lindeperg.

■ **SELECTION OF FILM DOCUMENTARIES AT THE CCF**

Dec. 9 at 7pm – Carla's List by Marcel Schüpbach (French, English subtitles).

Additional screening of Khmer version on Dec. 13 at 4pm at the Bophana Institute.

Dec. 11 at 7pm – An Abolitionist by Joel Calmettes (French, English subtitles).

Dec. 13 at 7pm – An Ideal Accused by Jean-Xavier de Lestrade (English version with French subtitles).

NOTE: the conferences, debates and documentaries might be in French. Contact the organisers for further details.

Openings

chinese, jaan, frangipani, ninie, encore

THE CHINESE HOUSE

The Chinese House recently opened its doors on Sisowath Quay opposite the container port. Housed in a distinctive stark yellow 1880 building with a unique combination of French and Chinese architecture, this lounge bar is open only to members and guests of The Pavilion. The good news is membership is free and easy. Just send them an email and you're in. The feel of the first floor lounge is that of an old Chinese den, "but without the opium," assures owner Alexis. Pleasantly away from the usual crowd on the riverside, The Chinese House is still within easy moto distance. Inside, the long sofa beds and subdued lighting makes for an intimate and sensual ambience. Cocktails, wine, fresh juices and finger food are served by experienced staff trained at Elsewhere and The Pavilion. The ground floor will be hosting art exhibitions. If you want to make use of the available space, they'd love to hear it. Open 6pm till late, except Tuesdays.

The Chinese House, 45 Sisowath Quay, Phnom Penh, Tel: 023 222 280. Email: reservations@thepavilion.asia

JAAN

The latest restaurant & bar addition of the owner of Flavours and Liquid, Jaan opened recently at the corner of Sisowath Quay and Street 106. Meaning 'plate' in Khmer, this small restaurant offers an extensive menu of both western and Asian / Khmer food including soups, salads, meat and fish dishes, pasta, pizzas, sandwiches and satays. A good spot to watch life go by on their corner terrace while having one of their breakfasts (US\$3 to US\$5.75) ranging from omelettes via eggs benedict to the classic English, American and European.

Jaan, corner of Sisowath Quay and Street 106

ENCORE ANGKOR

This centrally located guesthouse opened last month. With 38 rooms

(US\$15 to US\$25) and two suites (US\$40), all fitted with air-con, TV, safety box and fridge, this is quite a snip. Its main attraction is the swimming pool out back, although the front has an attractive restaurant area currently open for breakfast only, but due to be open for longer in January. There is also WiFi in the lobby. Voyeurs splashing out for the rooms with a view, can enjoy the crocodile farm next door.

Encore Angkor, Sok San Street, Siem Reap, Tel: 063 969 400, www.encoreangkor.com


FRANGIPANI

Those in the know, know that Frangipani on the alley behind Pub Street has been the best value-for-money spa in Siem Reap. Now no longer, the two Thai sisters have opened of a second Frangipani on a small road behind the Riviera Hotel. The entrance hall is far more spacious and inviting than the slightly cramped environment greeting guests in the initial Frangipani. The two top floor rooms exude indulgence, with massage baths and an outside terrace with rain showers. Lift your head and enjoy the blue skies above Angkor. Frangipani offers the full range of massages, facials and beauty treatments.

Frangipani, 615 / 617 Hup Guan Street, Siem Reap, Tel: 012 982 062

CHEZ NINIE

Siem Reap's other alley next to Pub Street (the one without McDermott Gallery) is fast becoming the coolest part of town. Following on the heels of chic cocktail bar Miss Wong, is this small French bistro. Fans of home-style French cuisine need look no further. Casoulet, foie gras and many regional dishes that Ninie learned from her grandmother appear on the daily changing menu. The bijou restaurant is adorned with Ninie's own laquerwork. Open from 11am to 3pm and 6pm to late, it is closed on Sundays.

Front Alley off Pub Street, Siem Reap, Tel: 012 482 782 



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Streetsmart: Sothearos Boulevard

Teeming with life in the evenings, Sothearos Boulevard is full of monuments, open spaces, some quality restaurants and street hawkers. **Nora Lindstrom** checks it out.



Green Pepper

■ WHERE IT ALL BEGINS

Sothearos starts in style with Amanjaya Hotel on the riverfront. In high season the spacious and beautiful rooms start from US\$155 per night. The view from the private balcony of each room is either of the river or Wat Ounalom, although the former view is currently disturbed by building work on the riverfront. Downstairs is K West, a brasserie with an international feel, famed for its steaks. Try the king size sirloin (US\$25) if you dare. Wash it down with a buy-one-get-one-free happy hour drink between 6pm to 8pm.

Built in 1443 to keep a hair of Buddha, Wat Ounalom is the centre of Cambodian Buddhism and the most important wat in Phnom Penh, as well as one of the capital's five original wats. Assuming you survive the anarchic

traffic in front of it, you can pop inside the compound and hang out with the monks.

The short stretch between Wat Ounalom and Street 178 has a number of silver shops catering to tourists wishing to avoid the throng of the markets. Everything from US\$5 earrings to expensive heads of Buddha are on display. Up to You! has a beautiful collection of fair-trade handicrafts made from silk. It also sells silk at US\$10 per metre. Products are made by disadvantaged communities and groups in Cambodia.

Bohr's Books stocks one of the better selections of books in town. Re-printed books cost around US\$3, while second-hand ones can have a slightly higher price tag. The Murakami selection is particularly good.

Across the road, Green Pepper is a cosy Khmer and Thai restaurant

with most dishes in the US\$3 to US\$4 range. The décor is a modern take on traditional Khmer, with western style tables on the ground floor, and more traditional floor seating on the mezzanine.

Just along the road is Scuba Nation, a PADI 5 Star National Geographic Dive Centre, as well as the first diving school in Cambodia. For US\$440 you can get your PADI license, with some training in pools in Phnom Penh and two liveaboard days on a boat in Sihanoukville. The focus is on teaching diving, meaning if it takes longer than the allotted time, so be it – no extra charge. Advanced courses, day trips and more are also available.

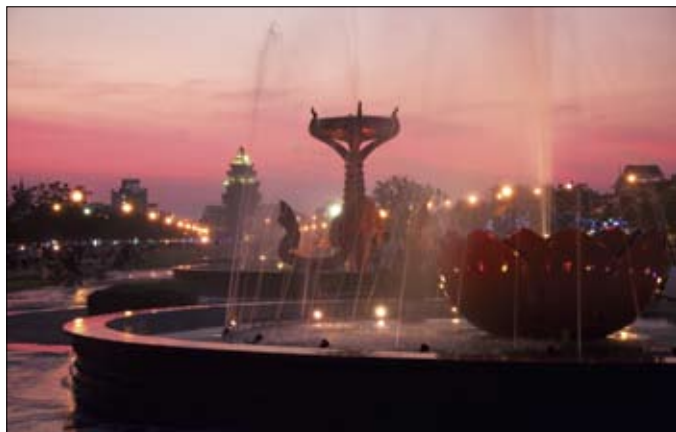
The branch of UCare pharmacy at the corner of Street 178 has almost everything you'd expect from a chemists back home. A very tempting range of beauty

products and make-up – in addition to remedies to most ailments – are sold in a professional and friendly environment.

Back across the road Sentosa Silk sells anything and everything related to silk. Prices are reasonable, the silk is of good quality and there is a very wide selection. Above Sentosa is Corner 33, a WiFi café popular with expats and locals alike. Stylish and comfortable chairs and tables at a good level for typing, as well as air-con are particular advantages. There are four computers too for those without laptops. Bar 33 opens up in the evenings with a 5pm to 8pm happy hour including US\$1 Tiger draft.

■ AROUND THE PALACE

Continuing south opposite the park before the Royal Palace are some beautiful colonial build-



Munich Beer Restaurant



Kids World

ings. One of them, quite fittingly houses Unesco. The most dilapidated building has recently been bought by the FCC group and will open to the public for events during the photography festival.

Built in 1866 as an abode for the kings of Cambodia, the Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda still serve that purpose. The expansive grounds and some buildings inside the walled complex are open to the public daily.

The park between the river and the palace comes alive in the evenings, with food vendors on one side and aerobics on the tiles. All under the watchful eyes of the royal family.

Renakse Hotel, opposite the palace, is housed in an attractive colonial building with lush surroundings. A feature of the Phnom Penh hotel scene for 20 years, its future has been shrouded in controversy – meaning it might close tomorrow or be open for another two decades. Rooms are from US\$40, though their standard does not quite match the handsomeness of the building.

The Cambodia Vietnam Friendship Monument erected in the

1970s dominates the park across the junction with Street 240. The tiles surrounding the monument are so clean you can see your own reflection in them. An interesting memorial can be found at the north end of the park. The small cenotaph commemorates “the heroic demonstrators who lost their lives on 30 March 1997” outside the then National Assembly. The building in question at the corner of Street 240 now seats the Council of Ministers.

The park itself is a pleasant and well-maintained spot. During the day, monks from nearby Wat Botum mill about and during the weekend families flying kites can be spotted, but the space only really comes alive once the sun starts to set. In the evenings crowds gather and the park turns into a playground for locals of all ages. A large section is devoted to badminton players, while young lovers sit flirting on the many benches.

A recent addition is a multi-coloured water fountain show accompanied with music, which draws a crowd every night. Snacks are sold by hawkers mainly at the southern end of the park – the

boiled corn is particularly tasty. As the clock ticks on the crowd starts clearing, leaving groups of mainly young unmarried men drinking various strong concoctions until the early hours.

■ **OPPOSITE THE PARK**

You could easily forget your whereabouts as you step into Thury. Hailed by some bloggers as the best value-for-money restaurant in town, Thury has a rather European feel, if you discount the ‘Chicago Blues’ paintings on the walls. Charcoal grilled steaks (from US\$8.50) are highly recommended by the management, as is the luxury beef burger (US\$4.50).

Japanese Restaurant Origami specialises in tempura, sashimi and sushi, prepared by two Japanese chefs. Opened some seven years ago, the restaurant is one of the better Japanese eateries, with an atmosphere to match the high quality food. Try an origami special (US\$10) or go all out with a sashimi boat for five to six people (US\$100).

One of only two microbreweries in Phnom Penh, Munich Beer Restaurant sells both stout and amber

beer, poured directly from the vats that take over half the restaurant indoors. The stout (US\$1.50 per glass, US\$3 for a tumbler) is slightly on the watery side, but perfectly drinkable. The amber beer (US\$1.10 per glass, US\$2.20 for a tumbler) is a nice change from regular Asian beers. That’s as German as the restaurant gets however, as the menu is thoroughly Khmer, specialising in seafood BBQ.

What Mekong Korean Restaurant lacks in atmosphere, it makes up for in food. The menu is short and meat-centred, with prices ranging from US\$6. Typical for Korean restaurants ordering one dish means that a range of nibbles find their way to your table, making sure you won’t be hungry. Try the soju, a traditional alcohol (US\$4) a bottle.

Just down the road, Bai Thong exudes class to the extent that you might be deterred from entering expecting a pricey menu. While certainly not the cheapest, prices are far more reasonable than you think. Dishes at this classy Thai restaurant are in the US\$5 to US\$7 range, prepared by an authentic Thai



Almond Hotel

chef. The papaya salad (som tam) is highly recommended. At US\$2.90, it comes beautifully presented complete with fresh vegetables on the side, and will easily fill a light eater at lunchtime. Bai Thong does set lunches for US\$6.50 and Thai food taster sets for US\$8 or US\$12.90.

Kids World is a piece of heaven for Lego-lovers. The little shop is filled with Lego, with small packs starting at US\$10, while boxes with bits that can be assembled into houses, cars, or monsters, sell for US\$50 to US\$150. Duplos for smaller children are also on sale as are NUK baby products, and there is a children's play area for some hands on action.

Vietnamese restaurant An Nam is easily one of the cutest eateries in town – decked in pastel colours, down to chopsticks in pink, yellow and purple. Unfortunately the food does not match the décor, especially if you've lived in Vietnam for any

length of time and are accustomed to genuine Vietnamese fare. It is also on the pricey side with dishes at US\$6 to US\$7.

■ SOUTH OF SIHANOUK

Change epitomises Sothea's Boulevard as you head south. In the block by Build Bright University, Japanese restaurant Shonan serves quality sushi and sashimi in comfortable and very clean surroundings. Mixed set meals are around US\$10 to US\$15, while a sashimi set is yours for US\$15 to US\$40. Pick and choose your own mix of sushi from the a la carte menu, or opt for the special buffet at US\$22. Next door is Pho24, of the well-known Vietnamese chain, serving standard meat-based pho for US\$2.80.

Pass the slums and you enter Little Korea. At least four Korean restaurants have recently opened there almost door to door.

O Deng Bar is worth a mention for its cool red and black décor, friendly manager and good

food. The menu is more varied than at other Korean places, meaning there is less of an emphasis on meat, and the bar has an impressive range of sake to suit all wallets. This is a chilled place for a drink and some nibbles.

Next door is YeonGa, whose Korean chef has 30 years of experience in dishing out very tasty bibimbap (US\$6) and bulgogi (US\$9), in addition to a range of other dishes. The kimchi is good enough to convert doubters, but the atmosphere could do with being livened up a bit.

Opposite is Chiva Sokha Massage and Spa, complete with chandeliers and a grand staircase, this offers massages of all sorts starting from US\$10. The aromatherapy (US\$18 per hour) and ayurvedic (US\$20 per hour) massages are recommended by management – although staff seem to have little understanding what 'ayurvedic' means. The oil massage is a relaxing experience and the masseuse clearly knows what she is doing. Facial treatments are available too.

Safely back across the busy street, The Winking Frog, with its 24/7 opening hours, is finding its feet on the Phnom Penh bar scene. Aiming to satisfy the live music starved capital, bands are on every Friday and Sunday, while Saturdays are devoted to DJ Paul Stewart. Food is served, albeit 'only' between 7am and 10pm. The All Day English Breakfast (US\$5.50) consisting of eggs, bacon, fried bread, sausage, beans, bubble & squeak, black pudding, toast and jam is particularly impressive. The Norwegian breakfast (US\$8) with smoked salmon is another morning treat. WiFi is free.

Almond Hotel, at the far end of the strip, opened recently. With 51 rooms from US\$40, a Cantonese restaurant serving affordable dim sum from 7am until 5pm, and both western and Chinese a la carte later in the day, this newcomer has become a hit particularly among smart Asian travellers. Rooms are comfortable and very clean. Free WiFi is throughout the building. 📶

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Phnom Penh Life: Kit and Carrie

In a country that has suffered more than its fair share of distress, Kit Loring and Carrie Herbert established the Ragamuffin project to bring relief to both sufferers and those working with sufferers. Words by **Marcus Burrows**.

“WHEN WE STARTED Ragamuffin it was an idea with commitment, passion, a strategy and action plan,” says Kit Loring who together with Carrie Herbert started the Ragamuffin Project 10 years ago. “Ragamuffin is about relationships – about people encouraging and inspiring each other to do what they never realised they could do.”

The pair first met in 1996, when Carrie was working as a nurse and Kit was running an arts, adventure and education centre for disaffected young people, as well as a multi-arts/multi-media production company. Kit needed a saxophone player for a band and another actor for the drama unit. He was introduced to Carrie – a talented saxophone player – by a mutual friend. As they talked it soon became clear they shared a similar vision – the combination of the Arts and healing in Arts Therapy.

“Arts Therapy is not just a song and dance or play acting,” explains Kit. “We allow creativity to do its gentle healing work and provide a safe place for creative ‘play’.”

■ ARTS THERAPY IN CAMBODIA

“The international work was the result of canny thinking, strategic planning and serendipity,” explains Kit.

Carrie had already worked in Cambodia as a nurse and the impression left on her was lasting.

At a conference in Hastings, England, Carrie met Glenn Miles, who was working for Tearfund in Cambodia. She knew Glenn from the work she had already done in Cambodia. He asked if they would go to Cambodia if he were to set it up. It didn't take long for them to agree.

“Lots of people had been asking whether we could come and run training and retreat programmes,” says Kit. “Carrie spoke from the heart and from



Right pair of ragamuffins

experience about Cambodia and it felt good and right to do so.”

Creative Arts Therapy is particularly relevant to Cambodia where so many adults have undergone traumatic experiences in their lives. The Ragamuffin Project offers training and retreat programmes that can empower people and provide a deeper understanding of the self and the effect of these traumatic experiences through the innovative process.

“Creativity is powerful – the Arts Therapist understands creativity's powerful connection with both the conscious and unconscious issues that lead to the debilitating symptoms of distress,” says Kit. Not that the process is just hard work and no play.

“Inconceivable as it may sound, we have lots of fun together

As we open our hearts to others our hearts can hurt too. Our very sensitivity leaves us vulnerable to being wounded

creating music and drama, dance, paintings and sculptures, not superficial fun, but fulfilling fun as lives become enriched through this creative enterprise.”

Therapists demand from themselves a consistent and exacting standard of excellence. They have worked with many different people to bring relief to the symptoms of trauma and enrich their

quality of life. Survivors of war or natural disasters, refugees and asylum seekers, those who have suffered loss and bereavement, victims and survivors of rape or childhood sexual abuse, and children with severe behavioural problems are amongst those who benefit from Arts Therapy.

■ CARING FOR CARERS

Ragamuffin provides training for a wide range of organisations within the caring professions. “This commitment to the relief of pain can also cause us pain,” explains Kit. “As we open our hearts to others our hearts can hurt too. Our very sensitivity leaves us vulnerable to being wounded. We need to care for ourselves as we care for others.”

The organisation is involved in three areas of work in Cambodia. It provides tailor-made training programmes for NGOs in the psycho-social sector; retreat programmes for staff teams; and advanced training programmes in the healing arts and arts therapy. Their aim is that those who have completed these courses and gained experience, to then learn to train others and, after training in clinical supervision, to supervise those in practice.

Their retreat in Phnom Penh is a beautiful, serene and peaceful environment with high ceilings. What is so visually striking is, apart from the colourful furniture and amenities, everything is white. It's subtle in its calm, yet dramatic. Out back there's a lush green garden to explore. The retreat offers a chance for people to work on and reflect on what's going on for them.

“Finding a place where you can be yourself and reveal your suffering, that's revolution,” says Kit. “The arts heal, gently, respectfully, powerfully.”

To find out more information about the Ragamuffin Project email: ragamuffinproject@hotmail.com ■

Local Hero: Noun Phymean

Disturbed by images of street kids fighting over her discarded chicken bones, **Noun Phymean** decided to do something about it. Six years later her People Improvement Organisation (PIO) is helping educate Phnom Penh's poorest residents to break the cycle of poverty. CNN has recognized her as a Top 10 Hero for 2008, selected from over 3,700 candidates worldwide. **Craig Gerard** sat down with the 38-year-old Phymean just before her trip to Los Angeles for the awards ceremony on Nov. 27.

PHYMEAN FIRST REALISED the need for PIO back in 2002. On a fateful day, she took her lunch down near the riverfront.

"I was eating chicken," she recalls. "When I finished, I threw the bones in the garbage bin. The kids ran over to the bin and fought for the scraps – they sucked the bones dry."

That moment changed her life.

After calling the kids over to talk, she was struck by one thing. They wanted to go to school like other kids, but their parents were too poor to afford the education fees. Phymean knew she had to do something to help those kids.

"Even though these kids were poor," she says, "they still need to know how to read and write."

She quit her job at UNDP. A couple of months later she started PIO, using US\$30,000 of her own money to get the school off the ground.

■ KNEE-DEEP IN RUBBISH

Phymean started by going to the rubbish dump and talking to the children, asking them if they would study at her school. These children, sometimes as young as four-years-old, work at the dump collecting rubbish. They work 12 hours a day, earning only about 2,000 riel – roughly 50 cents.

When Phymean first visited the dump, the huge mountains of rubbish surprised her. "I have seen kids killed by the garbage trucks," she recalls painfully. As people rush to the fresh rubbish, the children don't realise the trucks turn around quickly, so the trucks hit them. Phymean has also seen clashes at the dump over small items like a 100 riel aluminium can.

In her attempt to convince the children about the importance of education, she ended up needing to convince the parents as well.



Will she be the CNN Top Hero 2008?

"The parents were reluctant because they relied on the money the kids earned to feed the family," Phymean explains.

The response was to not only provide meals for the kids while they were at school, but also supply the families with a small amount of rice each month. This supplement provided enough incentive for the kids to attend classes instead of collecting rubbish. As more families saw the benefits, the Stung Meanchey School reached its capacity of 240 students.

■ EXPANDING THE PROGRAMME

In 2003, PIO got a break. JustWorld International, a philanthropic organisation from

New York, came across the PIO website. They had been searching for a Cambodian partner for two years, during which time Phymean had been desperately applying for funding. It was a perfect match. After just one meeting, the two organisations signed a partnership agreement and in 2004 they funded the school at Stung Meanchey.

The partnership has thrived. JustWorld now funds a second PIO school in the slum community of Borey Keila.

Now, PIO currently educates 600 children in three different schools. These are kids who would otherwise not have the opportunity at an education. Not only are they providing an education, they

I want to empower these girls to stand up and to be leaders, because I know if you help one girl, you can help the whole family

also provide food, clothing, health care, and clean water.

Additionally, 200 families participate in a Community Savings Programme. By pooling money together they can save on rice by buying in larger quantities. There is money for small business loans or emergencies that families pay back interest free.

The organisation also runs vocational training, teaching dressmaking, beauty salon and computer skills. Since May 2007, they have helped place over 100 girls in jobs. According to Phymean these jobs keep Cambodian girls away from prostitution and trafficking.

"I want to empower these girls to stand up and to be leaders," she said, "because I know if you help one girl, you can help the whole family."

■ CNN TOP HERO

The nomination for the CNN Top Hero of 2008 came as a complete surprise to Phymean. She was nominated by her English teacher in Toronto, but didn't know about it until she got an email from CNN asking for an interview.

"I didn't think it was real," says Phymean. "I almost deleted it."

The CNN panel of humanitarians, celebrities and



Phymean with the children she has created a future for

world leaders spent two hours interviewing Phymean Noun, an hour and a half longer than most other candidates.

"I couldn't sleep for three days," she says after she found out she was selected in the Top Ten, which comes with a US\$25,000 bonus for PIO.

The winner of the Top Hero award receives an additional US\$100,000 for their organisation. This is money Phymean already is planning to spend.

"The kids need a clean place to sleep," she says.

She would like to build an orphanage with an attached health

clinic. The kids are sick often from living in rubbish. Currently PIO provides health care, but at a costly private clinic. An onsite clinic would be a cost effective way to help the whole community, not just the children.

HERO'S HERO

When asked who her hero was, Phymean has no hesitation.

"My mother taught me that education is necessary for success and to never look down at anybody," she says. Her mother died from cancer when Phymean was only 15 years old, leaving Phymean alone with her

two-year-old niece, whose own mother had fled the Khmer Rouge. Phymean took her mother's lessons to heart.

"Even though she only spent a short time with me, she taught me that education can change your life," she explains.

Part of the problem, according to Phymean, is the average person in Cambodia does not always understand the importance of education, so the kids do not go to school.

"It is a big problem for the country, not just the family," she explains. "We need for everyone to be able to go to school. The world

can change, but it has to start with the education of children."

So what is next for this bright community organiser? In addition to building the orphanage and clinic, she would like to make the vocational programme self-sustaining by teaching people to train others. She would also like to expand PIO to Europe and America.

"There are children all over the world who need help," she explains, "not only in Cambodia."

If you want to make a donation to PIO, or find out more about the organisation, visit the website at: www.peopleimprovement.org.

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the MANY FACES of an EXPAT LIFE

Some were born into an expat life, some are running away from their original home, others have come here in order to start a new life. What is it that drives people to live an expatriate existence? Why have they chosen to settle within this Kingdom? **Johan Smits** and **Marcus Burrows** talk with a variety of expats to find the answer to these questions, and to try to discover the quintessential appeal of living in this dynamic city.

THERE'S NO SUCH THING IN Phnom Penh as a "blueprint expat" – that quickly becomes clear when talking to them. Their reasons to be here are as diverse as the things they love about 'the Penh' and so are the challenges that they face every day.

"We absolutely hated it when we arrived," forty-two year-old Alexis admits, remembering the time when he, his wife Marie from South Korea and their two young sons arrived in the Kingdom. And it's not from any lack of 'expatriate

experience' – it's pretty hard to be more expat than Alexis is. A fourth generation expat, his father, grandmother and great grandfather were constantly packing their bags and moving to different places around the world, working as civil servants for the French government. Not your typical French household but rather a family of travelling "bohemians" as Alexis likes to put it.

So, don't give yourself a hard time if you have some trouble adjusting to Phnom Penh when you arrive here.

"Cambodia was the first country where I didn't speak the language," he says. "Marie and I wanted to leave." But after one and a half years the absolute hate has turned into a big love, to such an extent that Cambodia is the first country that they have considered settling down in.

"Usually it's the other way around," Alexis notes, referring to the more common phenomenon where foreigners arrive on an absolute high, but after a few years start feeling that it's time to leave. So what made this turnaround?



Alexis at his latest venture – The Chinese House



Veerle will never call herself an expat

My nationality is expat, with the good and the bad things that come with it

“WE SPENT A LOT OF TIME IN THE former U.S.S.R. where people are very warm and hospitable and where a high level of intimacy comes fast,” he says. “You know, they slap you on the back, sit you down at their kitchen table with a bottle of vodka and start discussing the world.”

Both Alexis and his wife Marie, whom he met in Moscow, speak Russian, which made it easier to connect there.

For Alexis the barrier is higher in Cambodia. Khmers are more distant and they show more reverence. This creates a gap that takes a long time to bridge. “But then, when you finally get to know people, you can start exchanging,” he says. A view echoed by many a long-term expat.

■ ONE COUNTRY, TWO WORLDS

Veerle from Belgium agrees. Four years ago she arrived in Cambodia after living in South America for seven years.

“In the beginning real contact with Cambodians was difficult compared with the much more extrovert South Americans,” she says.

This problem is less distinct in Phnom Penh than in Siem Reap, her first point of call in the country. She lived among the temples for three years before moving to the capital.

“When I first arrived I found two worlds – expats and Khmers,” she says. “But in Phnom Penh there seem to be more mixed activities going on, culturally as well as when going out at night.”

Alexis too sees that split between expats and Khmers, but also amongst expats themselves.

“In the beginning we suffered a lot from social isolation,” he says. “But not anymore.” According to him, people who complain about a lack of cultural and social activities in Phnom Penh are wrong. “If you want to go to every opening or event in town, you’ll be out every night of the week,” he argues.

He definitely feels expat.

“My nationality is expat, with the good and the bad things that come with it,” he says. For him, expats are a distinct community. “My wife too is expat and, although she’s Korean, I have more in common with her than with a French person.”

However, Veerle doesn’t consider herself like that at all. “I will never call myself ‘expat,’” she says. “To me it has some kind of ‘better than the rest’ connotation to it. I just happen to work here. I live here and am part of it.”

Expat conjures up an image of lots of rowdy Brits on the Costa del Sol, where westerners stick to their own places in the bars and chip shops and don’t mix with the locals

■ WHAT IS AN EXPAT?

Jemma Green shares Veerle’s dislike for the term expat.

She came to the country after a receiving an unexpected phone call from her mother, who had just bought a restaurant in Siهانoukville having only come here for a few days for a friend’s wedding. At the time, Jemma managed a restaurant in London so her mother asked her to help out. She came for three months – that was almost three years ago.

“Expat conjures up an image of lots of rowdy Brits on the Costa del Sol, where westerners stick to their own places in the bars and chip shops and don’t mix with the locals,” she explains. “To me living in another country is about living with the local



Jemma feels that westerners should integrate more

people and living the local lifestyle, coming together and learning from each other and being multicultural. I think as westerners we should integrate more, which would lead us to bridge many divides.”

She feels that part of the problem many encounter while trying to settle here comes from our own pre-conceptions.

“What I’ve learnt is that as westerners we should not come here and push our ideals on how Cambodia should be,” she says. “We don’t necessarily know what’s best for the people here.”

As for Bastian Brethauer, the most recent arrival of those interviewed, he was not even aware of what the term expat meant when he decided to come to Cambodia.

“Honestly, I heard the word expat for the first time three weeks before leaving my home country,” says the native Berliner. Turning 40 and finding himself single, he went through a period of uncertainty many readers will readily identify with.

“You can call it a mid-life crisis,” he accepts. “I call it the best decision I ever made.”

Deciding to leave his PR job for the German Government he came to Cambodia to work as a consultant for the Salvation Centre Cambodia, working with people with HIV.

Being gay, the circles that Bastian floats in are somewhat different to the others interviewed.

“I’ve noticed the burgeoning gay scene reflects how hard it is for Cambodian gays to live life openly,” he says. “None of my friends have told their families about their being gay. They’re afraid of being discriminated against and disowned. I think it may take some time before this society becomes really liberal.”

Despite his recent arrival, he has one tip for fellow expats. “I think people here are a mirror, once you start smiling at them, they smile back at you and you feel loved,” he says. “That’s why I try to keep my positive approach to this culture. It opens lots of doors and hearts.”



Bastian: left his job in Berlin to come here and has no regrets



Yi-He feels like a Phnom Penher



Loving every minute of it

■ ASIAN EXPAT

Thirty-three year old Yi-He from Manchuria is another recent arrival. She came to Phnom Penh five months ago to study English and doesn't feel like an expat either.

"I feel like a 'Phnom Penher,'" she says. "Many people here speak Chinese. Same as in Saipan," she finds, referring to the U.S. island in the Pacific where she lived for two years before arriving in Cambodia. "I even get into the museum at local rate, as long as I don't open my mouth," she laughs.

As a Buddhist, Yi-He enjoys living in a Buddhist country and often visits the temples in Phnom Penh. "Cambodia feels more like China," she says, "it's more conservative in its customs and traditions." Compared to Saipan, she prefers the Cambodian way. "Americans can't relax, they're too neurotic," she giggles.

So does being Asian help?

Thirty year-old Sophie knows both worlds – she's half-French, half-Malaysian. Initially she didn't want to live in Phnom Penh. She arrived in Siem Reap about one and a half years ago to work as an architect consultant on the temples of Angkor. When seven months later her contract ended, she moved to the capital to continue with similar work in heritage conservation.

"First I thought that the city was dirty, dusty and full of cars," she remembers, "but now I think Phnom Penh is a village too."

The first two months in Phnom Penh were like hell, I was playing Mister Mom, looking after Jeremy all the time and getting paranoid about malaria-born mosquitoes

Just like Alexis, Sophie has been an expat her entire life. Compared to other cities, she believes the level of development of the country affects the way that an expat fits in.

"When I arrived in Rome and couldn't speak Italian, I could still pass for an Italian or a European. Not here in Phnom Penh, it's not developed yet to that level. Even if they think I was born Cambodian, because of my Asian physique, they still know I'm a foreigner. They say it's by the way 'I carry myself'."

■ THE EXPAT FAMILY

Andy and Anne-Marie from Quebec are unequivocal about their feelings for Cambodia. "Every day I feel so lucky at what I see, walking along the Tonle Sap," Andy

says. "Watching the rain splatter down, the sunsets, I have to pinch myself to make sure it's all true."

His enthusiasm is very catching. It almost feels as if he's grinded the whole of Cambodia into a white powder and sniffed it off a toilet seat. "I don't want this dream to finish," he says.

His wife Anne-Marie recalls how they unexpectedly ended up here with their little boy Jeremy who's now almost two and a half years old.

"I applied for a job at the ECCC [Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia]," she explains. "The day we were leaving to go on holiday to Germany, I got notice to come to Cambodia. We didn't know anything about the country. Would they have diapers? What's the healthcare like?"

When they got back to Canada they had barely three weeks to get ready, and to get married. Although the wedding was planned to take place a year later, they quickly squeezed it in between Canada and Cambodia.

"It was great," Andy smiles, "very intimate, just a small group of people."

But he wasn't so positive when they arrived. "The first two months in Phnom Penh were like hell," he remembers. "I was playing Mister Mom, looking after Jeremy all the time and getting paranoid about malaria-born mosquitoes."

But then, contact with other expat families made him slow down. "Finding day care

and talking to other parents really helped,” Mister Mom says.

“Jeremy too has plenty of little friends. He’s got two girlfriends now. I actually envy him, I wish I could get back to his age, to go to day care,” Jeremy grins.

To Anne-Marie being expat in Phnom Penh is a world of difference from the routine at home.

“We go out and visit places on the weekends, and there’s a great atmosphere here. People are here because they want to, they like to be here,” she says. “At home sometimes people are stuck in their job and their routine, but here they come for a reason.”

■ BUT IS IT HOME?

For some expats this city has become their adopted home – they are lifers in the Penh. Freelance writer Nathan Green has lived extensively throughout Southeast Asia. He plans to stay. “There was something a little too easy about living in my own country,” he says.

However, working here has not been as easy or as affordable as he thought. Too many temptations makes his a far from cheap lifestyle. Not that regrets his decision to come here, both on a personal and professional level – far from it.

“As a writer, it’s a fascinating place to live,” he explains. “One of my main reasons for coming here was to witness, and perhaps document, the country’s hard slog out of poverty, and how it affected people. I wanted

to write about the return of hope, and what people who had done without it for so long would do if it came into their lives again.”

Hannah Stevens, of Epic Arts in Kampot, is equally enthusiastic about life here.

“I feel lucky every single day,” she says. Something she did not feel back in her native U.K. “I have a much clearer idea of what is truly important in life when I am here. Every day I am inspired by the people that I work with and the friends that I surround myself with.”

She admits that Cambodia has taught her patience. “I generally live my life at 400 miles per hour so I appreciate how Cambodia forces me to slow down,” she says. “Over time I have learnt to not allow things to frustrate me as it only brings about negativity.”

Unlike Nathan, she is undecided as to what the future holds. “At this stage I am planning on staying another two years,” she says. “But who knows what will happen!”

Veerle on the other hand is sure she won’t settle here forever. “I’m glad to have made the step,” she says, “but I won’t root down here as much as I did in South-America.”

Sophie too won’t settle here. For her, safety is an issue.

“I don’t feel at ease with the level of impunity here and the virtual absence of law,” she says. “As a foreigner you might not be easily confronted with it because of your ‘status’, but just the knowledge that it is happening, it’s not very comfortable.”

■ A CITY IN FLUX

But what amazes her the most is how fast Phnom Penh has changed since the nine months she has been living in the city.

“Even if you go away for just a month or so, things change noticeably,” she says, “a lot of new development.”

That’s also what Alexis notices. “What has changed here over the past three years is very significant – compare this with a city like Paris and it’s stunning,” he says. “Not just in development but also in people’s heads. Their professional ability has improved a lot. I can see that with the people who are applying for a job – their level of knowledge and competence has increased significantly from a few years ago.”

This seems to be a point every body agrees upon.

“I only hope that Phnom Penh will evolve in the right direction with green spaces etc.,” Andy says. “It’s a beautiful city and I hope it will grow into an even more beautiful place for everyone to enjoy.”

Is Phnom Penh a city that can be summed up in a few words?

“Easy mess,” says Alexis.

“Pleasantly busy,” Veerle comes up with after a minute of reflection.

To Anne-Marie it’s “a great adventure”.

But Andy doesn’t need to think. “A dream come true!” he says with great enthusiasm. ■



Hannah: feels lucky every single day



Nathan: life at home was too easy

Rediscovering their roots

Feel like you don't fit in – an outsider in a foreign society. Think that nobody understands the real you. You crave for acceptance. Sound familiar? Then imagine that you are actually Khmer or half-Khmer, that this is your society, albeit one you have been estranged from since childhood. **Marcus Burrows** talks with six Cambodians about what it has been like to come home.



Delphine: feels she did not fit in with society's expectations of what a woman should be

■ THE DAUGHTER

The daughter of Cambodia's most famous architect Vann Molyvann and his Swiss wife, Delphine Vann has very few memories of her early years in Cambodia. Although born here, her family left when she was only four years old. The impression she did have of the country of her birth came from her parents' stories, photographs and memories and the few things they brought back.

Her first return visit to the country of her birth was in 1990. This sparked off buried feelings of guilt for the traumatic period in her country's history she was fortunate enough to escape.

"I had a lot of 'I don't fit in at all' feelings," she explains. "All this was mingled into very unsettling feelings of guilt because I was lucky enough to escape the atrocities of this war while 'they' stayed."

Her reaction was a mix of good and bad, with a lot of déjà-vu moments – instinctive feelings, scenes that felt familiar to her, or even flashbacks reminiscent of childhood. One thing was unmistakable, the city her illustrious father had helped to craft was beautiful, even though it was in an extremely poor state.

She wanted to make a difference but initially she was lacking in self-confidence. She went to Africa and then South America gain-

ing experience through working on projects in the humanitarian and development field. Then in 2001 she decided to settle here with her then husband and newborn son, Scott.

But she encountered difficulties in settling. "I did not feel as if I fitted society's expectations of what a Cambodian woman should be," she says. "A woman is perceived of as a doll. This is something which my father never wanted, but I found myself being expected to play a role by my extended family that I did not feel comfortable with."

Eventually she realised that this society is extremely tolerant and that she could be herself here. The whole experience taught Delphine much about herself and the country of her birth. Now she is achieving what she set out to do, helping to reconstruct the country that her father had done so much to build, with the child she loves.

Feelings of guilt because I was lucky enough to escape the atrocities of this war while 'they' stayed

■ THE MALE ARTIST

Like Delphine, contemporary artist Pich Sopheap's early years were spent in Cambodia, but under very much different circumstances – his family was one that stayed. Born in Battambang, Sopheap's family left the country in 1979 upon the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime, when Sopheap was eight years old. He spent the next four years in refugee camps in Thailand and Philippines before the family settled in Massachusetts in 1984.

Despite successfully integrating into American life – he gained a masters in fine art from the Art Institute of Chicago – like most émigrés, Pich Sopheap felt a need to return home, to experience a different pace of life from that in the U.S.

"I arrived in November 2001, I stayed in an old fourth floor apartment with my brother, Sophy – we paid US\$40 a month," he says. Despite these sparse surroundings, Sopheap was struck by the beauty of the capital.

"As I had no image or idea of what Phnom Penh was like prior to returning, I was genuinely impressed by how beautiful the architecture was," he says.



PHOTO BY PETER STUCKINGS

Sopheap: friends have given him great support

Long: grew up with snow up to his waist

I had to learn to slow down both in my thinking and my movement

When he first arrived he spoke broken Khmer with a very heavy American accent. This made integration and acceptance more difficult. Not that this was the only difficulty.

“Coming from the U.S., some things just required a lot more patience,” he explains. “I had to learn to slow down both in my thinking and my movement.”

Now fluent in Khmer things have changed and he has many close local friends.

“They give me a sense of warmth and support my efforts,” he says. “This has been a kind of saving grace as when you are here for as long as I have been, sometimes it’s easy to get really negative and pessimistic about things.”

Now an established international artist in his own right, he is impressed and still amazed that there are so many artists making all sorts of objects and images despite hardships, family pressure and the struggle of buying even basic materials. Many younger artists are now coming forward to produce great work. But he is wary of the future. “Improvement will be slow,” he cautions. “We have to be patient.”

■ THE FEMALE ARTIST

Most overseas Cambodians have an innate desire to be rooted, according to artist Linda Saphan. They question their sense of belong-

ing. This quest for an identity eventually requires them to visit Cambodia.

She should know, born in Cambodia, she also emigrated as a young child, this time to Canada. She subsequently lived in Paris before settling in Cambodia in 2003.

Initially when she returned to the country of her birth, she was frustrated to experience Cambodians treating her as they would a foreigner. The general assumption was that she was a Japanese woman who could speak great Khmer – she had always spoken Khmer with her family in Canada.

“My sense of intimacy, privacy, independence and even altruism is not always understood by my Khmer family and friends in Cambodia,” she explains. “I believe that my need to be rooted, my search for my identity and my desire to feel part of a culture was not recognised by other Cambodians.”

Later on she realised that it was the Cambodians who were right – she was different to them.

“I am not one of them – I grew up in a western culture,” she says. “I am the sum of all the different cultures in which I have lived. Before I accepted that I was not like them, I went through a lot of tense relations with different people. I’d say it took a year to adjust myself.”

By the second year she began to find the cultural differences were getting smaller. She no longer felt judged by her surrounding company as an eccentric person but rather as someone who does not share the same values as the majority. Late last year she moved to

If you try new things and if you fail here, it’s not such a devastating thing, you can pick yourself up

New York, where she is experiencing considerable success as an artist.

■ THE REFUGEE

Born in 1976 and liberated from a labour camp in 1978, Chean Long was sent to Park River, North Dakota along with his mother and stepfather.

“It must have been like going to the moon for my parents,” he says. “It was great for me because I was a kid, there was snow up to my waist.”

Long returned to Cambodia because he wanted a change of scenery and lifestyle. He feels fortunate to have a lot of friends around him that have returned.

“There’s a common thread that passes between us – we’re birds of a feather.”

For him, Cambodia is a country where you can reinvent rather than find yourself.

“If you try new things and if you fail here, it’s not such a devastating thing, you can pick yourself up,” he says. “I can now create my own work, which has given me so much freedom.”

Challenges are minor for Long, the humidity along with some cultural differences and the traffic. Acceptance is also a key issue. A



Dee Dee: feels there is a distance between herself and Khmers

lot of locals assume he's not Khmer – maybe Peruvian or Filipino. He believed his Khmer was good, until he got here.

"The language barrier can be tough for me," he explains, especially when conveying thoughts, feelings, emotions and more abstract ideas in Khmer.

■ THE OUTSIDER

Unlike the others, Vanhon Devi (Dee Dee) was not born in Cambodia, but in Basel, Switzerland in 1980, like Delphine to Swiss-Khmer parentage. Her grandmother was Princess Norodom Thiek. Her father left Cambodia in the early 60s to study in France.

"I don't really have any surviving family here," she says. "They all died during the Pol Pot era. I lost 24 members of my fam-

ily – they were all eliminated. There are still some surviving but distant family members in France and in Long Beach California, but there's no contact. There's nobody left."

Growing up in Switzerland, she experienced a lot of extreme racism, which led to confusion about her own cultural identity. She had a constant sense of being an outsider. In 2004, after completing her Economics and Business Law studies in Malaysia, she decided to come to Cambodia.

"I was hoping here that I would be at home, that I'd be accepted," she explains. It wasn't the case. "Khmer people see me as a foreigner. There's a distance – I don't speak the language. In the beginning even making Khmer friends, I was missing a deeper level of communication."

I was hoping here that I would be at home, that I'd be accepted, it wasn't the case

Part of the reason for her decision to settle in Cambodia was to establish a connection with her own roots.

"I came here because I wanted to find out about my family," she says. "I lost my dad when I was 12 years old. This really hurt me. It is as if part of me died with him and I'm left without any way of reassuring myself of my 'Asian-ness'. Somehow I have no real identity I can claim. Some say that living in a tightly-knit community can be suffocating, but I think it must also give one a sense of security and belonging."

Since settling in Cambodia in 2004, she has seen the country go through a period of momentous change and is optimistic about the future. "It's almost like night and day," she says. "Most streets in the capital are asphalted now. New buildings are mushrooming. We have shopping malls, fast food restaurants, expensive clothes boutiques, foreign banks and ATMs all over the place."

■ THE RETURNÉE

Monk B was born in the Thai camps after the war and grew up in Richmond, Virginia with his Khmer mother and father. He was on his own since the age of 10, living on the streets.

"I really didn't have a teenage life," he says. "I was a runaway, just bouncin'. I wanted stuff like most American kids, chasing the dollar. I had to rob and steal basics to stay alive."

After a series of escalating run-ins with the American law, B was due to be released from prison in 2001 after a two-year sentence.

"A week before I was supposed to go home, I was told I was an illegal immigrant and that they had to detain me further." Two-and-a-half years later he was deported to the country of his parents' birth. "My whole family is still over there," he says. "My mum, dad, two aunts and cousins"

Deported five years ago, he lived with his uncle in a shack that had no shower or toilet next to an old army base.

"I had the very basic essential Khmer speaking skills down but back then I couldn't understand nor express myself with any bigger words," he says. "Now I'm speak mainly Khmer."

This has brought about a substantial improvement in how he is perceived in his community. It can still be awkward – having earrings and tattoos brings social judgement here – but he works on turning around these misconceptions. His relatives and community are far more comfortable around him now and have a deeper understanding of his identity and accept him for who he is.

Now married with a daughter he adores, becoming a father has brought about a new life direction and tremendous happiness.

"I love Cambodia. It's home for me now. I'm making a stable life here the legal way," he says. "Having my daughter has caused the biggest change and turnaround and I absolutely cherish my wife." ■

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food corner

Lunch Specials for under US\$10

Fed up with the same-old, same-old lunch options, but haven't enough time to try something new? This month AsiaLIFE samples a few places that can make your lunch special, all for under US\$10.



Chow's Kampot pepper prawns on udon noodles

■ FREEBIRD 69 Street 240

Like a true American diner, Freebird offers days-of-the-week specials. Monday is cream of chicken and mushroom soup. Tuesday brings fresh tomato and cucumber salad served with toast and butter. Wednesday is the pick of the week as Freebird cooks up BLT sandwiches accompanied by French fries and coleslaw. Thursday the specials go Asian – vegetable fried rice with your choice of pork, chicken or beef. Wrap up the week with spaghetti and tomato sauce topped off with garlic bread. All of the specials are US\$4.50 and come with your choice of soft drinks. Specials are offered from 11am to 2pm.

■ IRINA 15 Street 352

Irina's set lunch offer comes at US\$8 and allows you to compose

your own three-course meal of Russian fare consisting of a salad, soup and main dish. The salad section gives you a choice of no less than six different options including tuna, bacon bits, chicken, chicken liver, smoked salmon and feta, all coming with fresh garden salad. Of the soups, the borscht is definitely a favourite. But if you have been borschtting too much lately, you can still opt for Russian chicken noodle soup or the more conventional cream of mushroom soup. Your Russian skills remaining untested until the mains. If Vareniki and Pelmeni sound unfamiliar, then there's still the Golubtsy with meat. It opens at noon.

■ ALLEY CAT CAFÉ Alley just south of the Corner of streets 19, 178

If a touch of tasty crispy cheesy grease is what you're in the mood

for, Alley Cat Café has the lunch special you crave. Purchase any menu item, be it a burrito meal, a Philly cheese steak or a fat cat bacon double cheeseburger and receive any soft drink free. This special is offered weekdays from 12pm to 2pm.

■ RUBIES WINE BAR Corner of Streets 19 & 240

Popular Rubies Wine Bar has recently made some changes. Not only will it now be open from 11am Tuesday through Sunday, the bodega has also begun serving food and espresso coffee. Daily lunch specials offered from 12pm to 2pm includes any sandwich and selected soft drink for US\$6. All of the sandwiches are accompanied with salad and kettle chips but if that isn't enough to fill your lunchtime hunger Rubies also offers a second special. The choice of any coffee and Epic

Arts cake or cookie for US\$3 means you're not just indulging your sugar craving you are also contributing to a good cause.

■ CAFÉ LIVING ROOM 9 Street 306

Café Living Room is in the process of revamping not only their front garden terrace but also their menu. Heartier meals was what the public wanted and heartier meals made from the same local organic ingredients is what the public will get. Don't fret, your favourite light lunch choices are unchanged and still available. The menu has been filled out with items such as pastas, hearty soups, sandwiches and quiches (US\$3.50 to US\$4). Add one of Café Living Room's delicious lassies or smoothies (US\$2.50) and you have a satisfyingly healthy and organic super special lunch.

■ CHOW

277 Sisowath Quay

As part of their menu revamp, Chow has created an US\$8 lunch menu – Chow 8 – fit to make other lunch menus blush. Diners can choose one of 11 meals from three categories – wok-fried noodles, noodles in broth and 'from the garden'. A particularly popular dish from the wok-fried noodles category is the pepper prawn udon. The sauce made with green Kampot pepper and a hint of miso is perfectly complemented by its three condiments. The ginger salsa is especially divine. From the garden section the marinated barbequed duck breast salad with pickled vegetables is brimming with crisp, tangy flavour. Chow's set lunch comes with your choice of Illy coffee, tea, glass of red or white wine, glass of Tiger Draft or a soft drink. Don't forget to bring your laptop as Chow now offers free WiFi until 8pm.

■ ARIA D'ITALIA

9 Street 254, next to Naga Clinic

This Italian trattoria offers a lunch set menu at US\$8 where you can combine a small pizza with a small mixed salad and a soft drink. As Mama wants her bambini to eat enough fruit, a banana is thrown in for dessert. Choose between nine varieties, or for an extra fifty cents, you can also have a small seafood pizza, bacon, della casa or al cotto special. Is open for lunch until 2pm.

■ ANNAM

1C Street 282

This al fresco Indian restaurant offers four set lunch meals that won't leave you hungry. The four special thalis cover the whole dietary spectrum – mut-ton, chicken, fish and vegetarian. They all include poor or chapati, steamed Basmati rice, rasam, kootu, poriyal, appalam, pickle, yoghurt and sweet. The vegetarian option adds kolambu and sambar to replace the respective curries of the three other meals. The mutton, chicken and fish fill you up for US\$7.50 and the vegetarian option comes in at US\$6. Lunch is from 11am to 3pm.

■ KO KO RO

18 Sihanouk Boulevard

If you're on a tight budget or just a cheapskate, look where you will least expect it – Japan. Ko Ko Ro, run by the always joyful Mr. Sushi, offers four set lunch dishes for just US\$3 and one for US\$5.50. The "four for three" lets you choose from fried fish, fried mashed potato, fried tofu and 'humberg' (Japanese for hamburger). The sets include miso soup, steamed rice and some garnish. If your shares haven't crashed yet and you really want to splash out, then go for the US\$5.50 sashimi and 'humberg' offer, which also comes with miso soup, steamed rice, salad and garnish. If that's not enough, you might as well succumb to the US\$11 all-day buffet. Lunch in Japan runs from 11.30am till 2pm.

■ TAMARIND

31 Street 240

If you're American and you want a change, go to Tamarind. Their 'lunch express' set menu changes every week and typically consists of a choice of starters, a dish of choice or a dish and dessert, and an espresso, coffee or tea. The whole set comes at US\$8.50. A recent example from The Tamarind's menu consisted of a rice salad with tuna as a starter, beef bourguignon (prepared with red wine) and pasta as a main, and crème caramel for dessert. Tamarind also has an extensive North African inspired menu with dishes such as tagines, kebabs and couscous. Lunch express is served from 11am to 2pm or later.

■ PACHARAN

389 Sisowath Quay

The city's esteemed tapas bar has one of the longest running lunch specials in town. Diners can choose two items from a list of nine selected tapas including Pacharan's famous gazpacho soup, patatas bravas and calamares a la romana. The special includes bread with alioli, coffee and choice of a glass of sangria, beer, wine or a soft drink. Beginning at 11am and running until 3.30pm, this means that Pacharan is the longest running lunch special in more than one sense. ☐



Penne bacon and tomato with a hint of cream at Café Living Room



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Behind The Dish: Scoop

Continuing AsiaLIFE's sneak peak into the kitchens of your favourite Phnom Penh eateries, this month she visits Scoop, the stylish contemporary restaurant established by Reiner Thieding.

BEHIND AN OPAQUE GLASS sliding door lays the impressive kitchen at Scoop Bar and Bistro. The long, rectangular kitchen is large and spacious, lined with sinks, refrigerators, and various high-tech kitchen equipment that still glisten. Everyone in the kitchen is clad in white chef's uniforms and chequered aprons. The atmosphere is calm and the space is completely devoid of any mess.

Everything is pre-chopped and compartmentalised, with small Tupperware containers bearing various ingredients and products from fresh spring rolls to the Caesar Salad dressing. These containers can be found on shelves or in various refrigerated drawers. One such drawer is filled entirely with fresh pasta.

"I am very proud of my kitchen," says Scoop's chef Reiner Thieding. "It is always clean." He says that customers can pop in and view it at any time. "Maybe it will be hectic, with a lot going on and things everywhere," he adds. "Kitchens should be a little hectic and crazy, but they should still always maintain a sense of order."

■ THE CHEFS

Although it's hours before dinner everyone in the kitchen is hard at work on various tasks. Try Bophana carefully cuts fresh pineapple. Sony is hard at work making Scoop's garlic butter. Another chef rinses potatoes.

Rubber mats line the kitchen floors to help ensure the comfort of all staff during long hours on their feet. Some of the artwork from Scoop's dining room even adorns the kitchen walls, creating a touch of warmth amid all the heavy-duty cooking equipment.

"I am very happy here," says Executive Sous Chef Et Sopheak. "We are learning many things, everything is new for us and the whole kitchen staff is improving." He enjoys learning how to make new western dishes and is said to



Reiner cookin' with cognac

make a fabulous Japanese-style tempura. His only complaint is that it is quite hot sometimes, but who has heard of a cold kitchen?

■ KITCHEN SECRETS

One of Reiner's secrets is his large computerised oven, called the chef's assistant. This very expensive instrument allows you to select various cooking techniques from braising, to custard flan, to quiches. Looking to roast something? The chef's assistant allows you to choose between roasting, soft roasting, and roast with crackling.

"This oven will cook anything to perfection, explains Reiner. "It will calculate that it will take exactly 17 minutes to make meat brown and crisp on the outside and still pink in the

middle. We do a very nice pork shoulder in this oven. Slow roasted with a little bit of redness inside, it is wonderful!"

Small pictures of every item on the menu have been pasted in the station where the finishing touches go into each dish. This ensures that each dish will come out looking just right.

■ KEEPING IT CLEAN

Sinks can be found throughout the kitchen. All have soap and paper towel dispensers above. The kitchen is thoroughly sanitised after each meal service. Refrigerator temperatures are monitored three times a day so as to ensure there is no room for error. Chefs don latex gloves while handling certain ingredients.


Small tips about good sanitation practices have been posted in several key locations around the kitchen. They advise kitchen staff on how to properly wash both dishes and hands and remind them to always use separate cutting boards for raw meat and vegetables and on how to correctly store ingredients.

"It is not just about making good food, it is about making safe food," says Reiner. "After twenty years working in good hotels, I've been really drilled in high kitchen standards."

■ MAKING THE DISH

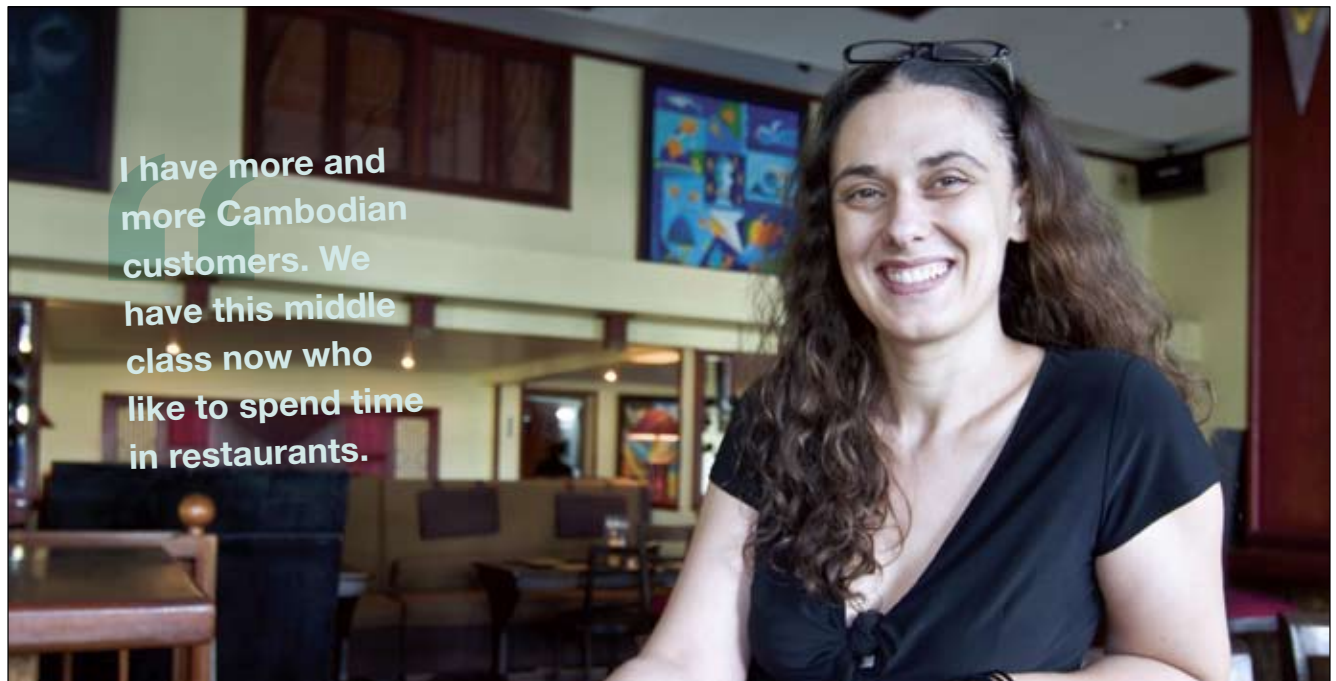
Before concluding the tour, Reiner decides to prepare a quick pasta dish for AsiaLIFE. He starts by chopping fresh artichokes and black and green olives on a bright blue cutting board. He spoons extra virgin olive oil onto an already heated pan. Once the oil has had time to heat, Reiner throws in small spoonfuls of minced shallots and garlic, soon adding the olives and artichokes. He stirs the pan over the fire. After sprinkling in some salt and pepper, he adds a dash of martini and fresh lemon juice. As everything quickly sautés, Reiner adds salt and pepper to taste – always using a clean spoon when he tastes – and ladles some chicken stock into the mixture. He then puts fresh fettuccini into an enormous pot of boiling water and cooks it for a few minutes. Draining the pasta, he throws it into the pan with the rest of the ingredients and adds fresh herbs.

He then spoons the pasta onto a large ceramic bowl, adding cubes of feta cheese and a sprig of fresh basil. He tops the dish off with a drizzle of olive oil. A fabulous pasta dish is prepared in five minutes. Cooking has never looked so easy.

Scoop, 2-6A Regency Square, Mao Tse Tung Blvd., Tel: 023 216 130 

Food Talk: K West

K West, long a landmark of the capital's busy riverfront, has become a haven of tranquillity. AsiaLIFE gets the low-down on one of Phnom Penh's most popular riverside restaurants.



I have more and more Cambodian customers. We have this middle class now who like to spend time in restaurants.

Celine Serriere is the general manager at popular riverfront restaurant K West

CAMBODIAN RESTAURANTS are improving because of a glut of new restaurants offering high-quality fare not on offer even two years ago, according to long-time French expat Celine Serriere, the general manager of K West. "Customers now demand good food, good service – the whole package," she says. "Before it wasn't like that."

The high standard of restaurants in Phnom Penh can be surprising to many visitors, especially given the positive comparisons to other regional capitals, despite the city's far smaller size. Celine thinks that a market relatively free of restrictions leads restaurateurs here.

"Cambodia offers opportunities for people to develop business – people think, 'maybe I can do something here,'" she says. "You can create your own business very quickly."

■ NOT JUST FOR FRIENDS

She sees the main appeal of the French brasserie and bar as being a place to meet friends. She cites

a French woman's group that holds meetings at K West, but often stays afterwards for coffee and a chat. There's a very relaxed vibe, even to the first-rate service. Most staff have worked at K West since it opened in 2003, so staff know regulars well and have an excellent rapport with customers.

But K West is no French enclave. Cambodians now make up 50 percent of K West's customers.

Khmer people have a diverse palate, Celine points out, willing and eager to try new dishes both from Asia and the West. Restaurants offering both options have the best chance to attract business.

"I have more and more Cambodian customers," she says. "We have this middle class now who like to spend time in restaurants."

■ MOUTHWATERING

Celine, who has lived in Cambodia for the past 11 years, first moved to Phnom Penh when her husband set up a scuba diving centre. She has been at the helm of K West for the past two years,

bringing food expertise from her Lyon hometown ("a gastronomic town") to the riverside.

She said that the food was the motivation for K West's original owners, who named the restaurant simply because, "it's on the quay [try saying this with a French accent], and is western."

"They wanted to serve good quality western food," she says. "There weren't so many places at the time and the quality wasn't good."

■ MAINTAINING STANDARDS

Being successful in the food industry is not so simple as it appears, Celine cautions.

"I think maybe, when people open a restaurant, they think it's easy," she says. "In terms of food quality and human resources you have to be very careful."

Buying only the best ingredients ensures customer satisfaction, though creating distinctive cuisine at an acceptable price can be a challenge.

"I think we have some very good suppliers here, who can

provide a very good quality of ingredients," she adds.

Domestically grown vegetables and delectable fresh sea fish and shrimp from Sihanoukville are presented alongside the finest local and imported meats, mostly from Australia, and premium wines from Celliers d'Asie.

Finding experienced, well-trained kitchen staff in a country notorious for its poor quality human resources can also be a real headache.

"It's difficult to find a good Cambodian chef," Celine confides. "We have had one of our chefs for five years. Before he used to work in Raffles [Hotel Le Royal], in the Sunway [Hotel], and afterwards he started here as the chef. Now he is able to create his own recipes or a daily menu. He's very good."

K West is to offer a new special every two days, something she says is "bringing out the chef's creative, innovative side."

"It's a big challenge," Celine says, "but it will provide variety and interest to the menu." ■

restaurant guide

key to symbols

- 01** Under \$3 per average dish **A/C** Air Conditioning
- 02** \$3 - \$6 per average dish Free home delivery available
- 03** \$6 - \$10 per average dish Free wireless Internet service
- 04** \$10+ per average dish ChildSafe®

cambodian

Boat Noodle
8B Street 294 Tel: 012 774 287
Khmer and Thai restaurant with excellent, well-priced food, set in a beautiful, traditional wooden house. Open 4pm to 10pm. **01**

Frizz Café
67 Street 240, Tel: 023 220 953
Dutch-run, run restaurant specialising in authentic Khmer cuisine. Serves very good amok. Also runs its own cookery classes. **02**

Green Pepper
6F Sothearos Blvd, Tel: 012 776 679
Serving Khmer and Thai food in an elegant setting near the riverfront. Open from 10am to 2pm - 4pm to 10pm **02**

K'NYAY
25K Suramarit Blvd., Tel: 023 225 225
www.knyay.com
A modern Khmer restaurant that is tucked away down an alley off of Sihanouk Blvd. The menu includes a selection of freshly prepared, vegan dishes, along with more traditional Cambodian specialities. K'NYAY also offers a selection of cakes, ice-creams and sorbets, using all vegan ingredients. **02**

Malis
136 Norodom Blvd., Tel: 023 221 022
www.malisrestaurant.com
Beautiful modern Khmer restaurant with a courtyard set around narrow water channels and decorated with terracotta floor tiles. Inside there are four aircon rooms if the mid-day sun gets too much. The



A network protecting children from all forms of abuse. www.childsafe-cambodia.org.

cuisine is modern Khmer, with no MSG, and is served elegantly in hollowed out palm tree bark. **04 A/C**

Pon Loc
319 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 212 025
Large, multi-storied restaurant serving Khmer food on the riverfront. Always seems to be filled out with locals and tourists alike. Open 10am to 12am. **02**

Romdeng
74 Street 174, Tel: 092 219 565
Recently moved to new location in Street 174 and run by the same NGO as Friends, this non-profit training school restaurant specialises in Khmer cuisine. Food has an appropriately fresh and daring flavour, especially if you opt for the crispy tarantulas as a starter. Good place to try fermented fish prahok. Open 11am to late. **02**

chinese

Hua Nam
753 Monivong Blvd., Tel: 016 899 555
Large Chinese restaurant that specialises in seafood and duck. Has a good selection of wines. Has VIP rooms. **03**

Man Han Lou Restaurant
456 Monivong Blvd., Tel: 023 721 966
Cambodia's only micro-brewery with four types of German-style beer. Has extensive Chinese, Thai, Khmer and Vietnamese menus, as well as dim sum breakfasts and excellent seafood. Features traditional

Khmer dance performances nightly. **03**

Mekong Village
290 Monivong Bvd.
Large Chinese restaurant that specialises in crispy Beijing duck. Stays open until late in the morning. **02**

Sam Doo
56-58 Street 128, Tel: 023 218 773
The place for dim sum in Phnom Penh, baskets of steamed prawn dumplings, pork buns and more go for a mere US\$1.20. In addition wonton soup and other tasty meals are a steal. **01**

Xiang Palace
Intercontinental Hotel, 296 Mao Tse Tung
Upmarket restaurant with possibly the best range of Cantonese cuisine in town, served in opulent surroundings. **04 A/C**

Yi Sang Chinese Restaurant
128F Sothearos Blvd., Tel: 023 220 822
www.almondhotel.com.kh
Restaurant specialising in Cantonese food and dim sum that fuses the traditional with the contemporary, set on the ground floor of the Almond Hotel. Serves some of the best dim sum in town. Open from 6.30am to 10am, 11.30am to 2pm and 5.30pm to 10pm - dim sum not served in the evening. **03 A/C**

french

Atmosphere
141C Norodom Blvd., Tel: 023 994 224

Best Kept Secret: Sovanna BBQ

Ever wondered why some places are jam packed with Cambodians after dark, feasting away on BBQ beef. AsiaLIFE visits one of the more popular local eating places. Words by Uli Schmidt.

SOVANNA BBQ, AROUND the corner from Java - off Sihanouk on Street 21, is a place hard to miss after dark. The restaurant is packed most of the time from six onwards, with rarely a foreigner to be seen. Customers park their cars all over the pavement from one end of the street to the other, in double file where possible.

After two futile attempts after dark, we went at four o'clock, and the service was friendly and only moderately inefficient. The ambience is rustic, to say the least, in line with the food, which is cheap and served in generous portions. Grilled meat, offal, chicken etc. are the mainstay of the menu, which is only partly translated into Khmenglish. The menu also includes seafood, soups and local salads, and some wild things like baked honeycomb full of bee pupae.

We ordered grilled beef, which came with some tired looking raw vegetables and the usual salt, pepper and lime



concoction (or prahoc sauce for the adventurous). The meat was local (obvious at US\$2 a portion), quite tasty, not burnt and only moderately tough. The grilled eel which followed was good, but, remarkable for Khmer cooking habits, slightly undercooked. Beef steamed with lemon came with Chinese kale and lots of garlic. It was more interesting in culinary

terms than the rest, but, as with the shrimp and squid tom yum (US\$4.50 USD) we had to finish the meal, it showed the cook's exaggerated affinity to sugar.

Overall, the place is rather par for the course, with a few hundred similar establishments strewn all over the city.

Beer (Anchor and Tiger) is on draught and cheap. Those of our brethren who use food

to fight last night's hangover or prepare for the next one - while preparing for the next economic crisis at the same time - will find it an interesting option, as will those who also refuel rather than eat without a particular agenda. According to friends who ventured out later at night, there is a marked tendency towards charcoaling as time advances, the beer girls arrive and the service slumps. But for the usual evening crowds with their sights firmly on maximum alcohol consumption and food a justification for swilling away, this is apparently no deterrent. Neither would it be for many of my Antipodean, Anglophone and African friends. Their love for charred meat and cheap beer will not go unanswered here.

To the silent minority among the international community who eat to enjoy food and who have passed the initiation rites of eating local, this best kept secret may well be kept secret.

Sovanna BBQ, Street 21

Scrapbook caption



“With friends like this, who needs enemas?”

The winner of last month's **Scrapbook caption competition** was Jennifer McCarrick who wins a meal for two, with a bottle of wine thrown in, at **Metro Café** for her wit. This month's com-

petition has the same rules. Simply provide a caption for one, or many, of the photographs in our **Scrapbook** (page 58) to have a chance to win a meal for two with a bottle of wine at the **Gym Bar**. SMS entries to 012 261 449 by Dec. 15.

Well-established aircon restaurant serves fine French food in an elegant yet tastefully decorated setting. Close to Independence Monument. Open from 11am to 2pm and 6pm to 10.30pm. Closed Sundays. **03 A/C**

Bougainvillier
277G Sisowath Quay Tel: 023 220 528

Elegant, riverfront French restaurant using gourmet homemade ingredients, specialising in foie gras. Fish, beef, gourmet pasta dishes and langoustine also feature, plus a regularly changing specials board and excellent French wines. Three course set lunches are also available. Open from 6am to 10.30pm. Also has rooms upstairs. **03 A/C**

Comme a la Maison

13 Street 57, Tel: 023 360 801
Decidedly sophisticated French restaurant with a beautiful outdoor terrace area at the front, yet secluded from the street. One of the best French kitchens in town, shown by its popularity both at lunch time and at night. Small delicatessen at the back of the restaurant. Open from 6am to 10.30pm. **03 A/C**

Elsewhere

175 Street 51,
Tel: 023 211 348

A beautiful garden with palm trees, bath-sized swimming pool and luxurious reclining couches makes you feel anywhere else than in the centre of town. A separate restaurant has a simple menu, although dining Romano-style is far cooler. Open 10am to late. Closed Tuesdays. **02**

La Croisette

241 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 011 882 221

Riverfront restaurant with an ample outside dining area screened off by trees. Good, reasonably-priced, French cuisine with excellent barbecues, as well as Asian and Khmer food. Newly redecorated with more indoor air-con space. Open 7am to late. **02 A/C**

La Marmite

80 Street 108, Tel: 012 391 746

This small, reasonably priced French bistro has two adjoining rooms, one non-smoking. Relaxed, cosy atmosphere. Serves excellent fish, steaks and offal as well as daily specials, but no Marmite! Open 11am to 2.30pm & 6pm to 11pm. **02 A/C**

La Residence Restaurant

22/24 Street 214, Tel: 023 224 582

Fine dining on an international scale in this sophisticated restaurant, where French classics meet gourmet, modern cuisine. Open for lunch and dinner Mondays to Fridays, and dinner only on Saturdays and Sundays. **04 A/C**

Le Jardin

16 Street 360,

Tel: 011 723 399

Beautiful shaded restaurant with large garden and spacious outdoor play area for kids. Serves excellent ice cream. Open 7am to 6pm. **02**

Tamarind

31 Street 240, Tel: 012 830 139

Bold Mediterranean / North African restaurant set on three floors which serves couscous, tagines, chawarma, tapas and mezze. Small bar with pool table downstairs denies the elegance upstairs, especially the roof terrace, which opens after sunset. Open 10am to 12pm. **03 A/C**

The Wine Restaurant

219 Street 19, Tel: 023 223 527

Excellent fine dining restaurant in the same grounds as Open Wine. The fresh food and extensive selection of wines make this one of the more exclusive places to dine in town. **04 A/C**

Topaz

182 Norodom Bvd. Tel: 012 333 276

Sophisticated, aircon restaurant with outside dining, upstairs bar, wine shop, cigar room and private rooms. One of Phnom Penh's finest restaurants. Open 11am to 2pm and 6pm to 11pm. **04 A/C**

Van's Restaurant

5 Street 102, Tel: 023 722 067

French fine-dining in a grand setting awaits at Van's, located on the second floor of a well preserved colonial era building near the city's Post Office. Open every day from 11.30am to 2.30pm and 5pm to 10.30pm. **04 A/C**

indian sub-continent

Annam

1C Street 282, Tel: 023 726 661

Beautiful terracotta terrace and garden Indian restaurant, offering north and south Indian cuisine, with open kitchen, separate aircon restaurant and kids' playpen. Separate north and south Indian menus. Open from 11am to 3pm & 6pm to 11pm. Closed Tuesdays. Free home delivery. **03 A/C A/C**

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31 Street 240. Tel: 012 830 139: reservations catering - home delivery

Dosa Corner
15 Street 51, Tel: 012 673 276 Street
This small south Indian restaurant opened in January. True to its name it has a wide range of very good value dosa (US\$1 to US\$2) as well as thali and biryani dishes (US\$2.50 to US\$4). Air-conditioned, it's open from 7.30am to 11pm. **02 A/C ☺**

East India
9 Street 114, Tel: 023 992 007
Predominantly South Indian cuisine in this pristine restaurant. Excellent breads including 9 types of dosa. All-you-can-eat vegetarian Sunday special for US\$4. **02 A/C ☺**

Flavours of India
158 Street 63, Tel: 012 886 374
Relaxing Indian and Nepalese restaurant with friendly staff and a good range of dishes. Both the vegetarian and meat thalis are good value. Open 10am to 10pm. **02 A/C ☺**

Saffron
11 Street 278, Tel: 012 247 832
Pakistani and Middle Eastern café, restaurant and wine bar. The curries are excellent and not too spicy, and come with a range of breads and chutneys. The wines have a bias towards the antipodes, including possibly the best range of wines by the glass in town. Open 11am to 11pm. **02 A/C ☺**

Shiva Shakti
70 Sihanouk Bvd.,
Tel: 012 813 817
Decidedly upmarket and sophisticated Indian restaurant in a beautiful setting with prices to match. Good place for an Indian treat, especially the tandooris. Open from 11am to 2pm and 6pm to 10.30pm. Closed Mondays. **03 A/C ☺**

International

Art Café
84 Street 108, Tel: 012 834 517
Elegant bistro and art gallery in the style of a European coffee house. German flame cakes and eau de vie as specialties. Features art exhibitions and classical music performance. Open from 11am to 11pm. **02 A/C ☺**

Billabong
5 Street 158, Tel: 023 223 703
Excellent western and Asian food which comes with a dip in the hotel's beautiful pool. Lunchtime special of food & swim for US\$7.50 is particularly good value. Open from 6am to 9pm. **02**

Bodhi Tree
50 Street 113
Relaxed garden atmosphere and open balcony restaurant with an imaginative menu. Right opposite Tuol Sleng. Open 9am to late. **02**

Cadillac Bar & Grill
219E Sisowath Quay, Tel: 011 713 567
Air-conditioned riverfront bar which promises a hassle-free drink. Mixing up burgers, pasta and some Asian food with Blues and rock and roll, this American-style bar serves good hearty food. Open 8am to 1am. **03 A/C**

Café Living Room
9 Street 306, Tel: 023 726 139
Set in a stylish villa, Living Room has healthy salads and snack plates, plus a great tea and coffee menu. Has a kid's playroom and baby changer. Uses organic and fair trade produce. Open everyday from 7am to 8.30pm. **02 A/C ☺**

Del Gusto
43 Street 95
Beautiful colonial setting makes a perfect setting for the Mediterranean-inspired menu. Run by the same people as Bodhi Tree. Open 7am to 9pm. **02**

Edelwiess Restaurant
375 Sisowath Quay,
Tel: 092 341 329
This open-air restaurant specialising in German and Khmer food offers the perfect spot to enjoy an Erdinger beer while watching life go by on the riverfront. **02**

FCC Phnom Penh
363 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 724 014
Phnom Penh's landmark restaurant, with sumptuous views across the river on one side and the National Museum to the other. It's best to come at sunset when the streets below are most crowded, the cocktails are half price and draft beer goes for US\$1. Open 7am to midnight. **03**

Flavours
Cnr. Street 51 & 278, Tel: 012 175 896
Relaxing restaurant and popular bar run by two Quebecois with comfortable chairs falling onto the street. The mix of Asian and western cuisine has proved so popular that they have a copycat restaurant opposite. Open 7am to late. **02**

Freebird
69 Street 240, Tel: 023 224 712
Aircor American bar with neon lighting, a variety of memorabilia, comfortable seats, rock music. International menu with good lunch offers, an excellent range of bottled sauces, excellent International, Mexican food and burgers. Be prepared for some good solid R&R. WiFi is available, but there is a small charge. Open 7am to midnight. **02 A/C ☺**

Friends
215 Street 13, Tel: 012 802 072
Non-profit training restaurant where all the proceeds go to the neighbouring street-kid school. Food is a reliable mix of Mediterranean and Asian with tapas thrown in if you are not feeling too hungry. Great juices. Another one of Phnom Penh's places designed to take it easy, but this time with a clear conscience. Open 11am to 9pm. **01 ☺**

Garden Center Café 2
23 Street 57, Tel: 023 363 002
www.gardencentercfe.com
More compact version of the Garden Center is conveniently located close to the popular Street 278. Open from 7am to 10pm. Closed Mondays. **02 ☺**

Gasolina
56/58 Street 57, Tel: 012 373 009
Largest garden bar and restaurant in town. Extensive menu includes a Saturday brunch and BBQ, and Sunday



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Bargain Bucket



54 LANGEADH SROS RESTAURANT

As soon as you enter this fairly spacious restaurant, you are immediately hit by the infectious atmosphere. Sounds of people chatting, laughing and drinking beer; tables full of local people; and the wonderful aroma of seafood and meat being cooked on small gas cookers abound. Soft music plays in the background and the green foliage covering the walls creates a natural atmosphere. The English menu includes a good choice of meat and seafood to cook on your own mini-barbecue. The beef is served raw with raw eggs on top, a selection of side dishes – soy, chillies and sweet chilli sauce – and a large plate of mixed vegetables. A tasty choice for only 9,000 riel a plate, cooking it yourself makes for a more fun and interesting meal out. As well as the DIY range, you can choose from a large variety of dishes on the menu. Some weird and wonderful choices include deep fried frogs, goat soup or beef with some big

black ants thrown in to add that extra flavour! Most dishes are priced between 8,000 and 12,000 riel with a few dishes just over the 20,000 riel mark. For 8,000/11,000 riel you can have a plate of really tasty squid or prawns with black pepper. Full of flavour, the food is well presented and surprisingly, everything comes out really fast and at the same time. The staff are very friendly and helpful. The headset-wearing, English-speaking manager is happy to assist you if you need any help and takes pride in telling you about the local food and how it is cooked. The beer is pretty cheap at 5,000 riel a bottle or alternatively, for 17,000 riel you can have your own 3-litre dispenser of beer on the table. One word of warning though, watch out for the beer girls. They are very good at filling up your glass without you even realising it and before you know it, you've managed to get through three bottles of beer when you only ordered one! – SANDRA VALLENDER

54 Langeadh Sros Restaurant, 15a Street 178

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NO. 5E, STREET 51, WAT LANGKA, PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA

Recipe Corner: Saik Ko Neung Toeuk Kroch (Stir-Fried Beef with Orange Sauce)

Combining the spice of the chillies with a sweet orange sauce this dish proves there is more to Cambodian food than meets the eye.



Khmer cuisine made with love

INGREDIENTS

300 g. thinly sliced best sirloin beef
 2 tbsp. all purpose flour
 1 tbsp. finely chopped lemongrass
 1 tbsp. fish or soy sauce
 1 clove minced garlic
 2 thinly sliced chillies
 1 cup cooking oil
 ½ head Chinese cabbage, cut in thin slices
 Fresh mint leaves

Orange sauce

½ cup orange juice
 ½ cup water
 2 tbsp. cornstarch
 1 tbsp. light brown sugar
 1 tsp. salt
 ½ tsp. Kampot pepper
 1 green bell pepper, sliced
 1 small onion, sliced
 1/2 measure of raw sugar
 1/2 coffee spoon of cinnamon powder
 4 tbs. of orange blossom

PREPARATION

Put the beef in a large bowl with soy sauce, lemongrass, garlic, sugar and chilli peppers. Mix the marinated beef with the flour and set aside. Preheat cooking oil in a wok at a high temperature. Add beef and fry until beef is crispy. Remove the beef from the wok and put in on a paper towel covered plate to drain excessive oil. Keep approximately 1 tbsp. of oil in the wok to make the sauce.

Orange Sauce


In a small bowl, mix orange juice with water, Kampot pepper, sugar, salt and cornstarch. Mix well. Put onion and bell pepper in the wok and sauté until softened.

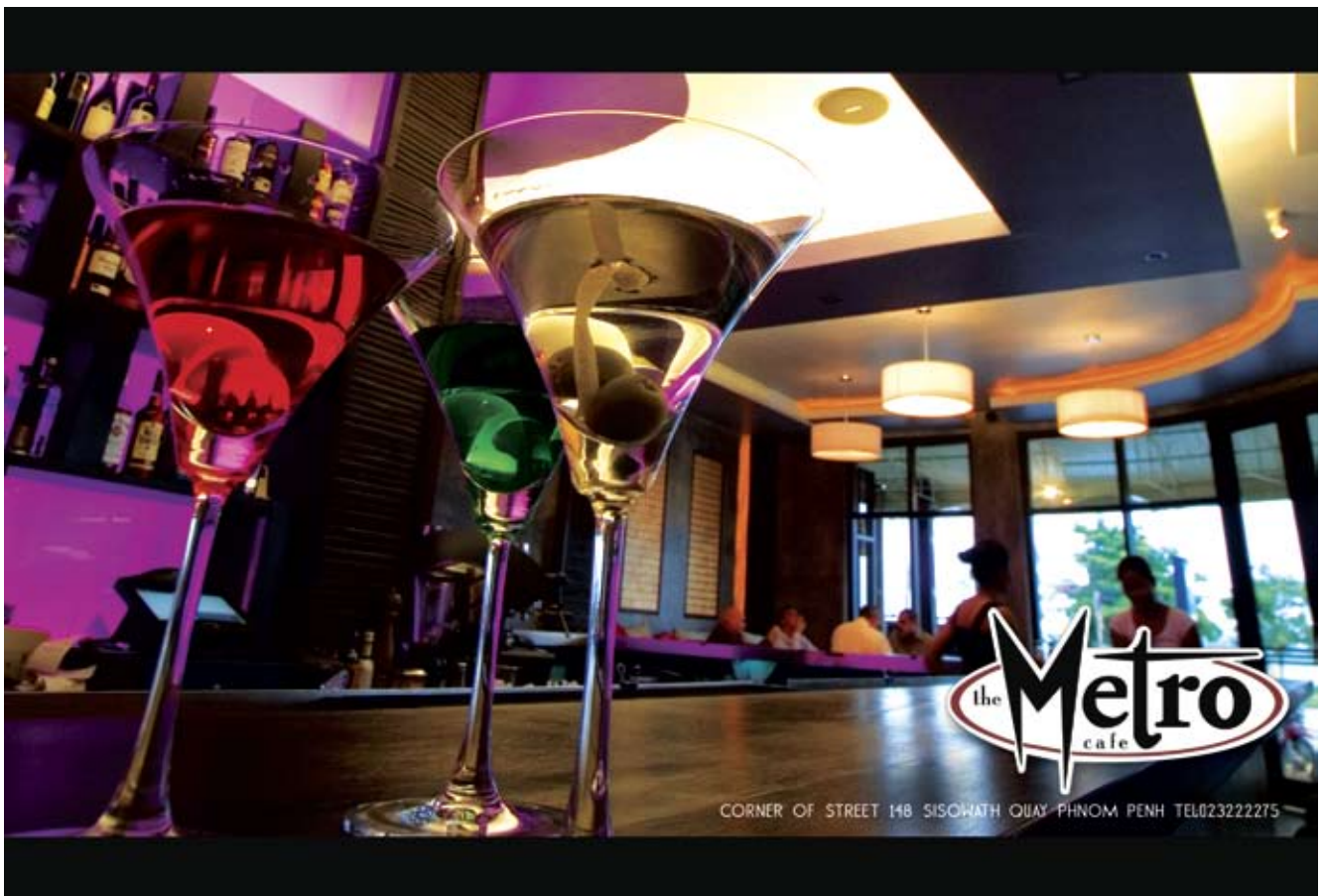
Pour orange juice over and stir well until the sauce thickens.

To Serve

Place the sliced cabbage on the centre of a plate, put fried beef on top of the cabbage leaves. Then pour the orange sauce over the beef. Top with more sliced cabbage and mint leaves. Serve with rice.

ABOUT THE CHEF

Chef Seng Sophy has been working at Frizz since the restaurant's inception in 2003. She trained under the restaurant's original head chef for three years and became the head chef two years ago. Her favourite dish to prepare and to eat is, you've guessed it, stir-fried beef with orange sauce. 



CORNER OF STREET 148 SISOWATH QUAY PHNOM PENH TEL:02322275

brunch with crêche facilities. Open from 11am to late. **02**

Green Mango

Cnr. 63 & 278, Tel: 016 821 303
Very green décor for this corner plot that used to be Tom's Bar. Serving a mix of Khmer and western dishes in a relaxing atmosphere, it's open from 7am to midnight. **02**

Green Vespa

95 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 012 887 228
Arguably the best pub grub in town and guaranteed never to send you home hungry. Country pub style menu with wide range of breakfasts. Special food offers each night of the week with a range of alcohol for US\$10. Open 6pm till late. **02 A/C**

Gym Bar

42 Street 178, Tel: 012 815 884
The best sports bar in town also has reasonable food. Good burgers, curries and an ignominiously named Joel Garner hot dog. Open 11am to late. **02 A/C**

Huxleys

Cnr. of Streets 136 & 5, Tel: 023 986 602
Wood-pannelled traditional English pub downstairs serving pub grub, international restaurant located on the first floor. Abundance of water features creates a soothing place to dine out. **03 A/C**

Irina Russian Restaurant

15 Street 352, Tel: 012 833 524
Russian restaurant of iconic Phnom Penh status. If you can walk out of the restaurant after hitting the vodkas then you are doing well. Open 12pm until the vodka runs out. **02**

Java Cafe & Gallery

56 Sihanouk Bvd., Tel: 023 987 420
Great coffees, salads, mix-and-match sandwiches and juices served in an elegant setting. The terrace, which overlooks the Independence Monument, is a good place to sit and while away your afternoon. The relaxed inside dining area has a small gallery attached to it with exhibitions of Cambodian photography and art. Open 7am to 10pm. **02 A/C**

K West

1 Street 154 (Cnr. Sisowath Quay) Tel: 023 214 747
Stylish aircon bar and restaurant below the Amanjaya with an excellent steak menu and good value happy hour from 6pm to 8pm Fridays. Now has a brasserie menu with daily specials. Also has free Wifi. Open 6.30am to midnight. **03 A/C**

Le Quay Café

Cnr. Sisowath Quay & Street 110, Tel: 023 213 582
www.amaraspahotelcara.com
The restaurant side of Amara Spa specialises in 28 varieties of crêpes (US\$2.50 to US\$8) with salads (US\$3 to US\$4.50) and panini (US\$3.50 to US\$6) also featuring strongly on the menu. Le Quay is a very healthy addition to the riverside scene. Open from 9am to 8pm. **02 A/C**

Le Rit's

14 Street 310, Tel: 023 213 160
Restaurant and boutique handicraft shop run by the NGO NYEMO, set in a beautiful garden, the restaurant specialises in Asian and European cuisine. Open from 7am to 5pm, closed Sundays. **02**

Mes Amis

41 Street 310, Tel: 023 212 118
Elegant Ukrainian-run restaurant in Boeung Keng Kang with secluded patio and simple air-conditioned interior with free WiFi. Menu includes salads (US\$3 to US\$4.50), pizzas (US\$3 to US\$7), pasta (US\$3.50 to US\$5.50) and burgers (US\$3.50 to US\$4). Open from 7am to 11pm. **02 A/C**

Metro Café

Cnr. Sisowath Quay & Street 148 Tel: 023 222 275
Stylish Metro has much more than cool décor and changing light boxes. Contemporary Asian and western dishes on a manageable menu divided into small plates, grills, salads, soups and large plates. Also has reasonably priced Tiger, house wines and a great range of Martinis. try the Espresso and you'll never look back. Free Wifi. Open 10am to 2am. **03 A/C**

Nature & Sea

Cnr. Street 51 & 278 Tel: 012 195 3810
Laid back eatery overlooking Wat Langka. Serves many types of fish dishes as well as some great crepes. Also sells some take home organic produce. Open from 8am to 10pm. **02**

Ocean

11 Street 288, Tel: 012 176 6690
European managed Mediterranean restaurant that dishes up some of the best fish and seafood in town. Try the red snapper or the squid with rocket. Often has exhibition around the understated walls. **03**

One More Pub

16E Street 294, Tel: 017 327 378
English-style bar with comfortable wooden bar stools, filled with traditional paraphernalia and enough flags to make the UN envious. No hip nor techno music, instead hearty Teutonic fare. Open from 5pm to late, happy hour from 5pm to 7pm, closed Tuesdays. **03 A/C**

Pacharan

389 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 224 394
Barcelona comes to Phnom Penh via London's Mayfair in this exquisite up-market bodega. Aircon restaurant that specialises in tapas and fine Spanish wines. Set in a beautiful colonial building with great decor, an open kitchen and sweeping views of the river. Pacharan is one of Cambodia's finest. Second branch in Ho Chi Minh City. Open from 11am to 11pm. **02 A/C**

Pickled Parrot

4-6 Street 104, Tel: 012 633 779
www.tonlesapguesthouse.com
Aircon bar with an excellent 9-ball pool table. 24-hour satellite sports channel. Reliable international and Khmer cuisine is available at the bar. Open 24 hours with free WiFi. **02 A/C**

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House No. 14, St. 310, Phnom Penh
Tel: 023 213 160

Review: Tonle Bassac Restaurant

Although nowhere near the river, the fish is just as fresh. AsiaLIFE visits a Khmer institution.



YOU COULD BE FORGIVEN for thinking the Tonle Bassac Restaurant is located on the riverfront. Or could you – how often do names and numbers make any sense in this wonderful city. Naturally it's located on Mao Tse Tung Boulevard at the corner of street 163. You can't miss it though. The large white building has a very open entrance and of course a corruption of Lexi parked out the front. There are three different seating areas, two indoors and an upstairs balcony area which appeared not to be open on our visit.

For a buffet restaurant lots of staff run around with walkie talkies, looking as though they are taking drive

through orders. At US\$14.50 the price may seem a little steep, but being a buffet you can top yourself up as much as you like.

The food is spread out over three different areas. Various seafood is presented in the open entrance area, as well as Vietnamese soup and other starters such as fresh or fried spring rolls. The rest of the food lies inside in one of the two dining areas.

One of the tastier items available is the stir-fried crab with tamarind. Be prepared to work for it though these shells are hard to crack and messy but ultimately worth the effort. The salted Mekong fillet was very delicate,

and surprisingly not too salty, though probably a little bland for some. The prawns also lacked any real flavour.

Of the non-seafood options the crumbed deep fried frogs legs, with a slightly citrus flavour was the stand-out. The fish amok presented in a small banana leaf bowl wasn't particularly exciting although the fish tasted fantastic as it fell apart in your mouth.

All in all, there is enough on offer here to ensure that most customers will leave happy enough.

The Tonle Bassac, 177 Mao Tse Tung Blvd., is open from 11am to 2pm for lunch and 6pm to 11pm for dinner – ADAM FITZGERALD

Restaurant Tell

13 Street 90,
Tel: 023 430 650

Up-market eatery that re-creates the genuine feel of an Alpine chalet. Older sister to its namesake restaurant in Saigon's District 1, it has a spacious indoor restaurant and outdoor terrace with rotisserie and bar. European menu with imported steaks, fondue, raclette and an extensive wine list. **03 A/C**

Rising Sun

20 Street 178,
Tel: 012 970 719

English-style pub with good breakfast, meat pies and hamburgers. Has a regular following at night especially on Fridays. Great posters of British films and TV classics adorn the walls. Ideal for that touch of nostalgia and the fish and chips are good, although not wrapped in newspaper. Open 7am to 10pm. **02**

Riverhouse Restaurant

6 Street 110, Tel: 012 766 843

Sophisticated restaurant with a welcoming outside seating area that serves up a mix of Asian and western food, including couscous. Has a nightclub upstairs. **03 A/C**

Riverside Bistro

Cnr. Sisowath Quay & Street 148

Tel: 012 277 882

Popular restaurant with expats and tourists alike mainly due to its large outdoor terrace area to view the river. Serves a mixture of Asian and western food with an emphasis on German cuisine. Has rock music videos and a pool table in the Mata Hari pub at the back. Open from 7am to 2am. **02**

Sarika

69 Street 566,
Tel: 017 456 116

Set in the most beautiful traditional wooden house in Tuol Kork, Sarika has an aura of elegance. Spacious gardens provide an excellent setting for the range of BBQs. Specialises in skewers, seafood steak and Asian cuisine. VIP rooms upstairs. **03 A/C**

Scoop Bistro Bar

2-6A Regency Square, Mao Tse Tung Blvd.

Tel: 023 216 130

Elegant, chic bistro with a simple, yet refined black and white design with comfortable, high-backed dining chairs providing seclusion from other diners. Wonderfully conceived menu with homemade pasta and varied selection of vegetarian dishes. Slightly raised lounge area is ideal for cocktail or coffee. Has three private rooms. Open from 11.30am to midnight, closed Sundays, reservations recommended. **04 A/C**

Steve's Steakhouse

20 Street 51, cnr. Street 282,
Tel: 023 987 320

Longstanding restaurant specialising in local grain-fed beef as well as a large variety of imported steaks, hamburgers, ribs and Greek cuisine. Has a terraced lounge with pool tables upstairs as well as a sports bar with large screen TV. Happy Hour from 12pm to 7:30pm. **02 A/C**



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Talkin to a Stranger

21B Street 294
Cosy garden restaurant cum bar using imported Australian and local products. Menu changes regularly and Thursday night is special roast lamb night. Excellent cocktails menu. Open 5pm to late. **02**

The Kitchen

17 Street 148, Tel: 092 986 951
With a simple décor, this restaurant specialises in exotic meats – ostrich, crocodile and kangaroo. The Khmer set including beef, chicken, pork, squid and crocodile is US\$8, the half-ribs are US\$5 and full-ribs are US\$8. There's also a BBQ every day at 6pm with ribs, kebabs and brochettes. Open from 8am to 2am. **02**

The Shop

39 Street 240, Tel: 092 955 963
Stylish café, with a wide range of fresh bread, tempting patisseries and juices, excellent salads and sandwiches. Crowded at lunchtime, but the small, cool courtyard at the back creates a perfect haven from the sun. Open 7am to 7pm Monday to Saturday and 7am to 3pm Sunday. **02**

Velkommen Inn

23 Street 104 Tel: 092 177 710
Comfortable hotel restaurant and bar, the Velkommen Inn, just off the riverfront, offers a wide selection of western dishes as well as several Scandinavian specialties with a full bar, draught beer, wine and sprits. Open 7am till late. **02**

Wine Garden

219 Street 19, Tel: 023 223 527
Outdoor garden restaurant at the front of Open Wine. BBQ meat, fish and seafood as well as Fanny ice-cream. Excellent wines by the glass or bottle. Open 9am to 11pm ever day. **02**

The Winking Frog

128 Sothearos Blvd. Tel: 023 356 399
Large air con British-run pub with live band and DJs at weekends. With pub grub, Thai and Khmer food and large slate, 9-ball pool table at the back, this place offers something for everyone. Has a 31-room guesthouse upstairs. Open 24 hours. **02 A/C**

Beautiful courtyard or stylish interior air-con restaurant, whichever you choose, Luna has more classical pizzas, both red and white, to choose from than most restaurants. Also serves excellent pasta and other up-market Italian food. Good wine cellar on view in the restaurant. Open 11am to 2.30pm and 5.30pm to 10.30pm. **03 A/C**

Pop Café

371 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 012 562 892
A sophisticated, small Italian restaurant located next to the FCC that serves light, contemporary Italian cuisine including fresh pasta and pizzas. Extremely popular with expats. Open for lunch from 11.30am to 2.30pm and 6pm to 10pm for dinner. **02 A/C**

japanese & korean

Fusion Sushi

18 Street 47, Tel: 023 986 114
Located inside of Cara Hotel. Beautifully decorated, impeccable service. Serves excellent quality Japanese and Korean sushi. **04 A/C**

Le Seoul

62 Monivong Blvd.
Popular up-market South Korean restaurant specialising in BBQ. Each table is equipped with its own charcoal burner. All beef is imported from the U.S. Open from 11am to 2.30pm and 5pm to 10pm. **03 A/C**

Mr. Sushi & Ko Ko Ro

18 Sihanouk Bvd., Tel: 012 601 095
Affordable, canteen-style restaurant with lots of specials dotted around the walls. Charismatic owner has a copious supply of Japanese vodka. Open 11.30am to 2pm and 5.30pm to 9pm. **02 A/C**

Himajin

84 Sothearos Bvd., Tel: 023 214 641
Beautiful small restaurant with open bar and private Japanese-style dining rooms. Elegant tiled floor, and wooden décor create a very homely feel. Reasonable prices. Open from 11am - 2pm and 5pm - 10pm. **02 A/C**

Origami

88 Sothearos Bvd., Tel: 012 968 095
Up-market, contemporary Japanese restaurant with a spacious air-con area downstairs and four private rooms upstairs. Specialises in sushi and tempura, and has Asahi, Kirin and Sapporo beers. Open from 11.30am to 2pm and 5.30pm to 9.30pm. **03 A/C**

Pyongyang

400 Monivong Bvd., Tel: 023 993 765
Phnom Penh's only North Korean restaurant has cultural shows starting at 8pm each night. The kim chi is excellent too. Unforgettable experience. Open from 11am to 11pm. **03 A/C**

mexican & tex-mex

Alley Cat Café

Cnr. of Streets 19, 178, Tel: 012 306 845
Small, friendly patio café serving good Mexican food and claiming to have the biggest burgers in town. Hard to find,



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italian

La Volpaia
20-22 Street 13, Tel: 023 992 739
Part of a global pizzeria chain that includes Florence, Tokyo, Seoul and Phnom Penh. Good terrace area and inside aircon room. The cuisine is excellent with pizza and pasta cooked fresh in front of your eyes. **03 A/C**

Le Duo
17 Street 228, Tel: 012 342 921
This beautiful restaurant has the option of sitting outside or inside in air-con. Excellent wood-fired pizzas and pasta. Friendly Sicilian owner will guide you through the extensive wine list. Open from 11.45am to 2.15pm & 6.15pm to 10.15pm. **02 A/C**

Luna d'Autunno
6C Street 29, Tel: 023 220 895



La Gourmandise Bleue Pâtisserie

The Chef offers you quality of produces carefully prepared by himself,

Pastry : Macaroons (18 flavours), chocolates, croissants, cakes and oriental pastries, birthday cakes.

Caterer : Tunisian couscous by order, sandwiches, taboules, salads.

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159 EO Street 278 (behind Lucky supermarket), Phnom Penh
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Alley Cat is tucked down an alley at the back of the National Museum, the first on the right if you are coming from Street 178. **02** 🍷

Cantina
347 Sisowath Quay,
Tel: 023 222 502

A mainstay of the riverside scene, this is a popular meeting place for local expats. Serves good Mexican fare and features photographs that capture the changing face of Cambodia. Open 3pm to late, closed on Saturdays. **02**

Sharky Bar
126 Street 130, Tel: 023 211 825
www.sharkyofcambodia.com

Not just a pretty face, the biggest and most famous of Phnom Penh's bars has one of the best bar menus in town. The burritos and burgers are extremely good, although of gargantuan proportions. Open 4pm to 2am. **02** 🍷

thai & pan-asian

Anise Terrace
2C Street 278, Tel: 023 222 522
Beautiful terrace restaurant serving up South-East Asian cuisine. Does excellent value breakfasts and also sells New Zealand ice cream. Open 6am to 11pm. **02**

Bua Thai
Ground Floor, Phnom Penh Hotel,
Monivong Blvd. Tel: 023 990 098
Over 200 dishes provide a wide range of delights in this surprisingly good Thai restaurant. The sauteed prawns with chuchee chilli paste are divine. **03 A/C**

Chow
277 Sisowath Quay,
Tel: 023 224 894
Contemporary and sophisticated riverfront restaurant that serves southeast Asian cuisine, a wide range of cocktails, juices and Illy coffee. Great place to have a drink during its half-price 4pm to 8pm happy hour. Open 7am to 11pm. **04 A/C** 🍷

Lemongrass
14 Street 130, Tel: 012 996 707
Elegantly designed Thai-managed restaurant that serves Thai and Khmer cuisine. Aircon with stylish use of heavy wood and artefacts to create a far more luxurious ambience than the reasonable prices would suggest. **02 A/C** 🍷

Le Wok
33 Street 178, Tel: 092 821 857
Light and modern pan-Asian and French eatery with dishes such as prawns with lime and wasabi and Mekong lobster thermidor. Comprehensive wine list and cocktails. Open Daily from 9am to 11pm. **03**

Regent Park Hotel
58 Sothearos Blvd., Tel: 023 427 131
Little known but excellent Thai restaurant that serves well prepared and wonderfully spicy dishes. A subdued elegant setting and reasonable prices make this a real find. **02 A/C**

cafés

Art Café
84 Street 108, Tel: 012 834 517
Elegant bistro and art gallery in the style of an European coffee house that opened early January. German flame cakes and eau de vie as specialities. Open from 11am to 11pm. **A/C** 🍷

Café Fresco
363 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 217 041
This outlet at the base of the FCC sells strong Illy coffee and mix-and-match sandwiches. The interior has a slight retro 70s feel to it and there is a pleasant outside seating area. Open 8am to 8pm. **A/C** 🍷

Café Fresco
Cnr. Streets 51 & 306, Tel: 023 224 891
Second outlet of the popular riverside café is in BKK. Has a similar feel and menu to its fore-runner including the same excellent coffee. Open 7am to 7pm. **A/C** 🍷

Café Living Room
9 Street 306,
Tel: 023 726 139
Set in a stylish villa, Living Room has healthy salads and snack plates, plus a great coffee menu. Has a kid's playground and baby changer room. Uses organic and fair trade produce. Open everyday from 7am to 8.30pm. **02 A/C** 🍷

Café Jejj
170 Street 450, (near the Russian Market), Tel: 012 543 360
Quiet, cosy café serving bistro-style western cuisine, with extensive range of coffees. Good pasta dishes, a wide selection of pannini and wraps and fabulous cheesecake make this an ideal spot to escape the bustle of the nearby Russian Market. Air-conditioned dining upstairs. Open every day from 8am to 5pm. **A/C**

Corner 33
33E2 Sothearos Blvd., Tel: 092 998 850
First-floor café overlooking the Royal Palace. Asian & Western meals served for breakfast, lunch and dinner with a nice selection of wines, cocktails, smoothies, and coffees. Four computer terminals allow customers to surf while they chill. **A/C** 🍷

Fizz
42 Street, 178, Tel: 015 609 909
Possibly the first authentic juice bar in town. An excellent range of original juices is on offer as well as some Khmer and Thai dishes. Also has coffee and ice cream.

Java Café & Gallery
56 Sihanouk Boulevard,
Tel: 023 987 420
Great coffees, salads, mix-and-match sandwiches and juices served in an elegant setting. The relaxed inside dining area has a small gallery attached to it. Open 7am to 10pm. **A/C** 🍷

Java Tea Room
Monument Books, 111 Norodom Blvd.

Second outlet of the popular Java Café located in the rear of Monument Books. Has comfortable mismatched sofas and antique-look décor. A small lunch menu is available along with an extensive tea and coffee menu. **A/C**

La Gourmandise Bleue Patisserie
159 St 278, Tel: 023 994 019
Delightful French patisserie with a touch of the middle-east, offering chocolates, macarons, pastries, baklava along with coffee and tea. The menu now includes breakfast, salad and couscous (order one day in advance). Open from 7am to 8pm. **02 A/C**

The Coffee Maker
50 Sihanouk Blvd.,
Tel: 023 987 721
Recently opened, modern café overlooking Hun Sen Park, serves coffee, juices and light refreshments. Already popular with middle-class Khmers, this is a great place to watch the early evening exercises.

The Melting Pot
168 Street 155, Tel: 092 223 301
Cute, cosy café with Parisian owners located diagonally across from the Russian Market's NYEMO. Good coffee and lunch spot specialising in French crepes. Open 8am to 5.30pm.

The Deli
13 Street 178, Tel: 012 851 234
Chic delicatessen, bakery and small restaurant serving excellent bread and pastries. Take-away menu includes sandwiches from US\$2.50 and salads from US\$3. Open from 6.30am to 10pm (closed Sundays). **A/C**

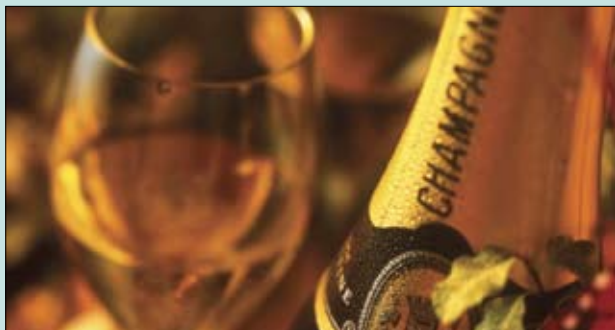
Two Fish Gallery Studio
2D Street 302, Tel: 016 368 700
www.twofish-gallerycafe.com
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Five Star Christmas



■ RAFFLES HOTEL LE ROYAL

Le Royal is sparing no effort this year. At Café Monivong for US\$65 (children 6 to 12 half-price) you can choose from a wide range of seasonal favourites while listening to jazz piano. At Le Royal a set menu is offered at US\$65 for three and US\$79 for four courses with live classical music. Come the grand day itself, at Café Monivong they will be serving you all the Christmas favourites such as smoked salmon, roast turkey, prime roast beef and Christmas pudding while Santa will surprise all children with gifts. Brunch is US\$65 and dinner US\$60 (children 6 to 12 half-price). They also serve both lunch and dinner through a Christmas menu, with a wide selection of wine and live classical music. Both lunch and dinner are US\$65, US\$79 and US\$95 for a 3- 4- or 5-course menu. For New Year's Eve there is a seafood buffet at Café Monivong with jazz piano (US\$75, children 6 to 12 half-price) while Le Royal has live classical music and serve gourmet delicacies (US\$145 for a 7-course menu). The celebrations progress to the Conservatory for the big countdown.

Raffles Hotel Le Royal, Street 92, Tel: 023 981 888

■ INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL

Le Royal is sparing no effort. Not to feel left out of all the festivities, the InterContinental's Regency Café is offering a Boxing Day brunch with a special New Year's Eve gala dinner that will be held in the InterContinental Grand Ballroom with rock 'n roll and live 60s and 70s

music. On Dec. 8 the Victorian Surimoun Choir will sing Christmas carols in the hotel's lobby lounge (8pm). For more details and prices, please call the hotel.

Intercontinental Hotel, 296 Mao Tse Tung Road, Tel: 023 424 888 (ext 3562).

■ HOTEL CAMBODIANA

From Dec. 18 to 25, carol singers will fill the lobby area of the Hotel Cambodiana from 6pm onwards. On Dec. 24 the hotel is offering a gala buffet overlooking the Mekong from 7pm. Chef Song Teng has flown in oysters from France, and there is a salad bar with fresh seafood, tempura station and BBQ with free flowing beer for US\$35+ (US\$12+ for children 6 to 12). The Christmas Day brunch from 12pm to 3pm features seafood and shellfish and free flowing soft drinks and beer (US\$ 35+ and US\$18+ for children from 6-12). The countdown to the New Year starts at 7pm with a Mekong promenade party under the stars. For US\$80+ (US\$40+ for children from 6-12), enjoy the fireworks, live comedy, kids hip hop show, resident band UPBEAT and international DJ. The menu includes fresh oysters, U.S. prime rib, whole Atlantic salmon and free flowing beer and soft drinks. Guests receive a glass of champagne at midnight. The hotel also has a New Year's Day brunch buffet from 12pm to 3pm for US\$45 + per person and US\$28+ for children (aged from 6-12).

Hotel Cambodiana, 313 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 218 189. 11



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Phnom Penh

Gastronomic French Cuisine



Beer Gardens

Prum Seila gives an insider's advice on where to find the cheapest beer in town



Tiger Tiger pouring bright: beer gardens offer some of the best value options for sampling Singapore's finest

SINGAPORE MIGHT BE called the 'garden city', but Phnom Penh has become a city of beer gardens. Regardless of any connection to Germany, the home of the beer garden, most Cambodians prefer going to beer gardens to relax after a hard day at work than sitting inside an air-conditioned bar.

■ SBOV MEAS (GOLDEN THATCHED ROOF)

13 Street 184

Located near the Royal Palace, Sbov Meas has both indoor and outdoor activities for local diners. Meaning golden thatched roof, the restaurant has private huts with golden thatched roofs that echo the colour of the harvesting season in Cambodia. The beer garden has a large open-air space surrounded by a small pond with lotus plants replicat-

ing ancient Angkor. Television screens showing live English premier football games ensure that this place gets crowded on a Saturday night. Other nights of the week films from Hong Kong fill the screens to the delight of Asian action movie devotees.

Jug of draught beer US\$2

Mini-keg of draught beer US\$6

■ 54 LANGEADH SROS RESTAURANT

15a Street 178

Situated in a stunning villa beside Sisowath High School on Norodom Boulevard – confusingly not at number 54 – this place gets packed out with NGO staff, businesspeople and rich kids. With a menu in English you can choose between a variety of meat and seafood to barbecue at your very own table. There are also eclectic items on the menu

including large, black ants. The beer girls are so efficient that you might end up consuming more beer than you intended to. This place is so good we've made it our bargain bucket for the month.

Jug of Tiger draught: 10,000 riel

Mini-Keg of Tiger draught:

30,000 riel

■ LUX BEER GARDEN

Cnr. of streets 172 & 23

Tucked around the back streets off Norodom Boulevard behind the Hello building, this beer garden has pretensions of being a karaoke. Hidden behind the large bamboo fence, Cambodian singers perform tracks from the heyday of Cambodian rock each night. They might not be Dengue Fever, but they make for a good night's entertainment.

Jug of draught beer US\$3.25

■ MLUB DEOUM LEAP

Cnr. Street 122 and Street 259

This tree-shaded beer garden is located on the corner of what some locals have donned beer garden street. The open terrace on the second floor provides the perfect perch to watch evening strollers in the moonlit street. The main attraction though is that you can try their special "ice-glass beer," which comes in a frosty glass that cools the beer without the necessity of adding any ice.

Glass of beer with ice US\$0.60

Jug of draught beer US\$2

Mini-Keg of draught beer US\$6

■ BEER GARDEN STREET

Street 259

The 200-metre long Street 259, linking Kamphuchea Krom to Russian Federation Blvd., is full of beer gardens. Try a glass

of draught Anchor in Sen Sok seafood restaurant, or sample some snacks in one of the wooden tree house at Vichet I beer garden, then boogie the evening away on the spacious dance floor at Reatry Sabay Sabay Restaurant and you will be assured of having a "Happy! Happy! Night."

Jug of draught beer US\$2.50 - US\$6

■ **PUNLEOU THMEI**

Cnr of streets 307 & 600
You don't have to be in the city centre to experience the delights of a Cambodian beer garden. Set in an alley in Toul Kork, despite looking more like a pub than a beer garden, this small place is a gem. That is if you like the sound of an orchestra playing Khmer songs each night or the distinctive ambience of private bullock carts decorated with traditional handcraft products, making for a unique dining atmosphere.

Jug of draught beer US\$2.50

■ **MUNICH BEER RESTAURANT**
Sothearos Blvd.

The most recent arrival on the rampant Phnom Penh beer garden scene, Munich's twist is that it brews its own beer. One of only two micro-breweries in the capital – along with Man Han Lou, on Monivong Boulevard – Munich has two brews on offer – stout and amber. Both make a welcome change from the usual suspects you find in other beer gardens. Apart from the beer and the courtyard garden, opposite the fountain in Wat Bothum Gardens, there is no apparent connection with Bavaria. The place is building up a following especially with the Lexus crowd and makes for a good pit stop while the kids are watching the fountains. The food is Khmer, with an emphasis on barbecue.

Stout beer - US\$1.50 (glass), US\$3 (tumbler)

Amber beer – US\$1.10 (glass), US\$2.20 (tumbler) 🍷



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Green Vespa Christmas Day Menu

Prawn and Mango Salad
Vichyssoise Oriental
Traditional Roast Turkey,
Ham off the Bone, Roasted
and Mashed Potatoes,
Market vegetables, gravy,
and cranberry sauce.
Plum Pudding & ice cream
Mince pies and fresh coffee

\$29.50 per head. kids \$14.50

2pm and 6pm Sittings

Bookings Essential

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Saturday Night Fever at the Heart

bar stool guide

key to symbols

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Tiger Super Cold



Live Music and DJs

Cadillac Bar & Grill

219E Sisowath Quay, Tel: 011 713 567
Air-conditioned riverfront bar which promises a hassle-free drink. Mixing up burgers, pasta and some Asian food with Blues and rock and roll, this American-style bar serves good hearty food. Open 8am to 1am. **A/C**

Cathouse Tavern

4 Street 51
The longest standing of Phnom Penh's bars, which was the only bar in town during the U.N. days. The large curved bar invites you to sit and chat with the welcoming barstaff. Open 4pm to midnight. **A/C**

Chow

277 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 224 894
Contemporary and sophisticated riverfront restaurant that serves southeast Asian cuisine, a wide range of cocktails, juices andilly coffee. Great place to have a drink during its half-price 4pm to 8pm happy hour. Open 7am to 11pm. **A/C**

Diplomat's Bar

69 Street 566, Tel: 017 456 116

Set in a beautiful 1960s wooden Khmer house directly above Sarika Restaurant, the Diplomat's Bar exudes the elegance of Asian colonial times, yet has a refreshingly chilled out atmosphere. Has two VIP rooms and live music is played Thursdays to Sundays from 7pm to 11pm. **A/C**

Dodo Rhum House

42C Street 178, Tel: 012 549 373
Bar named after an extinct bird, which is brave considering the turnover rate in town. Nicely decorated with strong, wooden bar and chill-out room at the back. Has a good specials menu and tapas as well as over 20 different flavoured rums created by bar's owner. Open 5pm to late.

Elephant Bar

Raffles Hotel Le Royal, Street 92, Tel: 023 981 888
Pleasant bar, popular with expats especially during the two-for-one happy hours (4pm to 8pm). A flamboyant carpet,

comfortable wicker chairs and hotel pianist provide a sense of a time gone by. Has many signature cocktails, including its more illustrious sister hotel's trademark Singapore Sling. (Open 2pm to 12am Monday to Friday & 12pm to 12am Saturday & Sunday). **A/C**

Elsewhere

175 Street 51, Tel: 023 211 348
A beautiful garden with palm trees, a bath-sized swimming pool and luxurious reclining couches makes you feel anywhere else than in the centre of town. Great jazz-funk and ambient soundtracks make this the optimum place to chill. Has Friday night parties once a month with DJ and a good clothes shop upstairs. Closed Tuesdays.

Etcaetera Bar

38 Street 118, Tel: 092 538 385
Classic, small, black bar owned by Memphis owner, Bona Thiem has a large range of cocktails and daily specials. True to Memphis tradition, live music is played every Sunday night from 8pm to 11pm. Happy hour is 5pm to 8pm. Open from 10am to late, closed Mondays. **A/C**

Equinox

3A Street 278, Tel: 012 586 139
Cool French hang-out that overlooks Street 278. Upstairs bar has a nice open balcony, good cocktails and music. Has the best foosball table in town with regular tournaments. Also has a second street-level bar. Open 10:30am to late.

Factory Lounge

83 Street 240
French-run bar with eclectic paintings and good range of cocktails. Good place to chill after shopping along the street. Open 5pm to late.

FCC Phnom Penh

363 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 724 014

The first stop for newcomers and it's easy to see why. Set in a beautiful colonial house with sumptuous views across the river on one side and the National Museum to the other. It's best to come at sunset when the streets below are most crowded, the cocktails are half price and draft beer goes for US\$1. Open 7am to midnight.

Flavours

Cnr. Street 51 & 278, Tel: 012 175 896
Relaxing restaurant and popular bar run by two Quebecois with comfortable chairs that fall out onto the street. The mix of Asian and western cuisine has proved so popular that they have a copycat restaurant opposite. Open 7am to late.

Freebird

69 Street 240, Tel: 023 224 712
Air-conditioned American bar with neon lighting, a variety of memorabilia, comfortable seats, rock music. The menu is international with good lunch offers and an excellent range of bottled sauces. Be prepared for some good solid R&R. WiFi is available, but there is a charge. Open 7am to midnight. **A/C**

Gasolina

56/58 Street 57, Tel: 012 373 009
The largest garden bar in town. Extensive menu includes a Saturday brunch and BBQ, and Sunday brunch with crêche facilities. Open from 11am to late.

Green Vespa

95 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 012 887 228
The walls of this popular expat haunt are strewn with photos of vespas and VIPs. Has an excellent selection of single malt whisky, and does a US\$10 special combination of food and drink. Good music, especially if you are an 80s throwback. Open early till late. **A/C**

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Bar Talk: Festive Celebrations



■ CHRISTMAS TIME

The Winking Frog offers a special Christmas set lunch for US\$20 consisting of a choice of starters followed by traditional turkey with all the trimmings and Christmas pudding. A free glass of wine is thrown in. A disco and live band will guarantee you get into the right spirit.

Green Vespa is one of the few places celebrating Boxing Day (Dec. 26) with a recovery bloody mary US\$1 all day. There's also a traditional Christmas roast with glass of port and mince pie for US\$15 on Dec. 24 and a five-course dinner (US\$29.50) on Dec. 26 – sittings at pm and 6pm.

One More Pub is holding a Champagne gourmet dinner on Christmas Eve. Numbers are restricted to 24 so it's reservation only, before Dec. 16.

Long-standing French restaurant, **Comme a la Maison**, will introduce a festive menu from Dec. 19.

Choose between a salmon and swordfish gravlax or duck foie gras, followed by roast lamb medallions, or beef fillet with foie gras, and round the three-course meal off with a tiramisu. All for only US\$39.

Open Wine is going full steam ahead with an extensive 'Carte de Fêtes' between Dec. 21 and Jan. 3 with such treats as oysters, oven roasted lamb and trimmed calf escalopes au Serrano.

For US\$45 a person, **Pacharan** serves a special four-course dinner on Dec. 24 and festive lunch and dinner on Dec. 25. The set menu includes a glass of cava and oysters imported the same day from Vietnam, as well as other delicacies such as crispy Iberian ham and grilled French lamb with port sauce and stuffed red peppers.

Both **FCCs**, in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, celebrate Christmas with a special dinner menu on Dec. 24, and lunch

and dinner on Dec. 25. The festive three-course menu with Kir Royal is US\$30.

If all this joy tends to make you feel suicidal, there's only one solution – the **Chocolate Shop**. There you can eat Christmas into oblivion with a wide choice of chocolate Santas, snowmen, trees and stars, and seasonally flavoured pralines such as cinnamon and calvados. The neighbouring **The Shop** will also be having special seasonal drinks and Christmas cakes.

■ NEW YEAR'S EVE

If you want to dance into the New Year with a view on the city, then join **Chow's** midnight rooftop party with cocktails and canapés on Dec. 31. If it's food you're really after, their five-course holiday degustation menu from Dec. 21 to 31 costs US\$25 for food only or US\$35 including matching wines.

Green Vespa has a 70s and 80s night on Dec. 31 with bubbly at midnight. The following day, the bloody marys are US\$1 all day once more.

The Winking Frog will have the same band playing on New Year's Eve where the Frog will offer you a free drink and bacon sandwich at midnight. Cheap rooms at reduced rates are available for people who want to drink and crash in a bed instead of against a tree.

Around the corner at **One More Pub**, Dinner à la carte is offered on New Year's Eve and the bar stays open until the early hours. If you stay late enough you might make it in time for the all-you-can-

eat gourmet brunch on New Year's Day from noon onwards. The brunch will range between US\$12 to US\$14, including a bloody mary to wash away all of your sins.

Pacharan's New Year's Eve menu is US\$90 per couple and includes a matching glass of wine with every course.

On New Year's Eve, a DJ will be mixing it up from 10pm at **FCC Phnom Penh** while in Siem Reap they'll have a Tropical Winter Party with seafood buffet at US\$35, followed by DJ Solo and DJ Illest doing a spin-off challenge.

For more action, dance away the year at **Elsewhere** who will host what will be their last New Year's party! *Bookings are recommended for all locations.*

Chow, 277 Sisowath Quay,

Comme a la Maison, 13 Street 57

Elsewhere, 175 Street 51,

FCC, 363 Sisowath Quay

Green Vespa, 95 Sisowath Quay

One More Pub, 16Eo Street 294

Open Wine, 219 Street 19

Pacharan, 389E1 Sisowath Quay

The Chocolate Shop, 35 Street 240

Winking Frog, 128 Sotheaors Blvd

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Grapevine: Wine Chic

As we approach the festive season, Darren Gall has decided it's time to brush up on what's hot and what's not in the world of wine for the coming season.



■ WHAT'S HOT:

New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc / New Zealand Pinot Noir

As the global trend towards lighter bodied wines continues New Zealand now finds itself one of the trendiest, premium wine producing countries in the world. Seen as the pre-eminent producer of Sauvignon Blanc – particularly from the Marlborough region, which produces wines that often strike the perfect balance of ripe tropical/passion fruit flavours and grassy/herbaceousness – it is also quickly gaining recognition for its Pinot Noir wines, particularly from the regions of Central Otago, Waipara and Wairarapa.

Pink Champagne

Champagne never really goes out of fashion, as Madame Lilly Bollinger famously stated: "I drink it when I'm happy and when I'm sad. Sometimes I drink it when I'm alone. When I have company I consider it obligatory. I trifle with it if I'm not hungry and I drink it when I am. Otherwise I never touch it, unless I'm thirsty." But within the classification of Champagne and the wider international classification of sparkling wine, there are many different styles and types. The once trifled with 'Rose' Champagne is now the hottest ticket in sparkling wine -under the guise 'Pink' Champagne as its new devotees prefer to call it.

Bordeaux 2005

The 2005 Bordeaux has become one of the most hyped vintages by the world's most famous wine critics, judges, brokers and reporters in living memory. Ideal growing conditions have produced some of the best wines the region has ever seen – if you believe the pundits. Rest assured that anyone providing a bottle of 2005 Bordeaux amongst friends will be able to dazzle them with Parker Notes and lavish quotes from some of the world's most famous wine critics. Select a top wine from a minor region like Saint Foy, Côtes de Castillon, Lalande de Pomerol or Haut-Médoc and your guests will stand in awe of your shrewd and intimate knowledge of the vintage.

Albarino

Delicate, tongue-tingling, musky apricot fruit with a lingering mineral and spicy finish, Albarino has become achingly trendy – and deservedly so. This is the perfect seafood match. Again in line with the global shift towards lighter bodied wines another ancient and unusual variety is finding favour.

■ WHAT'S NOT

Merlot

Although I am a fan of good wines no matter what the variety or where it comes from, the fact remains that

varieties and regions do go in and out of fashion with the wider wine drinking public. The noble Merlot variety has taken a bit of a hiding in recent years from critics, consumers and even in movies – Sideways. While the best examples remain sublime wines, a veritable ocean of cheap, light, fruity and simple Merlots flooded many markets in the nineteen nineties – and were terribly, terribly fashionable at the time. It has since been relegated to the slow-moving aisles, where it will remain for at least a few more years.

Chardonnay

Once there was the 'Chardonnay set' in the late eighties and early nineties, during which, Chardonnay wines went from being, the drink to be seen with, to the drink that everybody was seen

with. Then came the 'ABC crowd' (ABC standing for Anything But Chardonnay), which followed the common market principle that as soon as there is too much of something people will move on to something else.

So there you have it, you are now in the know and up to the minute on the latest in wine trends and fashions for the coming season, go forth and dazzle your friends and colleagues with your wine savvy selections and remember to drink well is to enjoy but not to excess.

Darren Gall is a 20-year veteran of the wine industry with experience from brand ambassador to winemaking and grape growing. He has worked in over 20 countries and is currently based in Asia as a market consultant. You can contact him at: darren_gall@yahoo.com



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Gym Bar

42 Street 178, Tel: 012 815 884
The best sports bar in town with more wide screens than sense and a good nine-ball pool table to boot. Ideal for watching Premiership football or any other sport. The food is good and there's a non-sports quiz every Tuesday. Open 11am to late. **A/C**

Hope and Anchor

213 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 991 190
Well-located restaurant and bar on the front with seats stretching out onto the street. Wide screen TV for watching football. Open 6am to 2am.

Howie's Bar

32 Street 51
Air-conditioned and open until very late, this is the Heart's unofficial chill-out bar although the sound system could give the Heart a run for its money. Tends to be a popular late hang-out, especially around the pool table. Open 7pm to 6am. **A/C**

Huxleys

Cnr. of Streets 136 & 5, Tel: 023 986 602
The wood-panelled interior decorated with posters of famous British screen personalities and sportspeople helps to create the atmosphere of a Covent Garden bar. Well-stocked bar with fantastic cocktails. Not to be missed. **A/C**

K West

1 Street 154 (Cnr. Sisowath Quay)
Tel: 023 214 747
Air-conditioned bar and restaurant with a good value happy hour from 6pm to 8pm Fridays. Renowned for excellent mojitos. Open 6.30am to midnight. **A/C**

Liquid

Street 278, Tel: 012 765 896
Welcoming Metroesque bar on the popular Street 278 run by the same owner as Flavours. Serves food and good cocktails. Has one of the best pool tables in town. Happy Hour from 5pm - 8pm. **A/C**

Maxine's

Over Japanese Bridge, Tel: 012 200 617
Stirring eclectic bar right on the river, boasting the best sunset views in Cambodia. Across the Japanese Bridge, Maxine's - or Snow's Bar - is well worth seeking out for it's laid back ambience and old Indochine charm. Open Tuesday to Sunday from near sunset til late. **J**

Memphis Pub

3 Street 118, Tel: 012 871 263
The only permanent rock venue in town with a house band that plays covers with Filipina singers. Band plays from 9pm to 12.30am (weekdays) and 10pm to 2am (weekends) and guests are always welcome to join in. Also has open mike sessions. Open 5pm to late, closed Sundays. **A/C**

Meta House

6 Street 264, Tel: 012 607 465
www.meta-house.com
This multi-media arts centre established by German Nico Mesterham opened in January. Has a very cool terrace bar with barbecue. Closed Mondays.

Metro Café

Cnr. Sisowath Quay & Street 148.
Tel: 023 222 275
Stylish and swish, Metro has much more than a cool décor and changing light boxes. Reasonably priced Tiger and house wines and a great range of Martinis, try the Espresso. Open 10am to 2am. **A/C**

One More Pub

16E Street 294, Tel: 017 327 378
English-style bar with comfortable wooden bar stools, filled with traditional paraphernalia and enough flags to make the UN envious. No hip hop nor techno music, instead hearty Teutonic fare. Has elegant, terracotta-tiled terrace and four guest rooms upstairs (US\$22 to US\$30). Open from 5pm to late, happy hour from 5pm to 7pm, closed Tuesdays. **A/C**

Open Wine

219 Street 19, Tel: 023 223 527
Large wine shop with well-priced wines from around the world. Has an outside dining area with occasional wine tastings. Open from 9am to 11pm every day. **A/C**

Pacharan

389 Sisowath Quay,
Tel: 023 224 394
Barcelona comes to Phnom Penh via London's Mayfair in this exquisitely up-market bodega. Specialising in tapas and fine Spanish wines, this air-conditioned restaurant and bar is set in a beautiful colonial building with great decoration, an open kitchen and sweeping views of the river. Open from 11am to 11pm. **A/C**

Pickled Parrot

4-6 Street 104,
Tel: 012 633 779
Air-conditioned bar with excellent 9-ball pool table, that's a popular late night hang-out with expats. Reliable international cuisine is available at the bar, free internet and 24-hour cable sports channels. Clean well-kept guesthouse upstairs with 15 rooms. Open 24 hours. **A/C**

Pontoon Lounge

River end, Street 108, Tel: 012 889 175
Phnom Penh's only floating bar, stylish, funky drinking spot and late night venue. Favourite among the expat scene, Pontoon sometimes hosts party nights with visiting DJs. The friendly staff mix excellent cocktails at the beautiful amber bar. Unbeatable location. Open 11.30am until midnight (weekdays) and until late at the weekend.

Revolution

96 Street 51, Tel: 012 393 392
Welcome addition to the Street 278 bar scene, just round the corner on Street 51. Happy hour from 4pm to 7pm. **A/C**

Rising Sun

20 Street 178, Tel: 012 970 719
English-style pub with reliable breakfast, meat pies and hamburgers. Has a regular following around the bar at night especially on Fridays. Great posters of British films and TV classics adorn the walls. Ideal for that touch of nostalgia and the fish and chips are good, although not wrapped in newspaper. Open 7am to 10pm.



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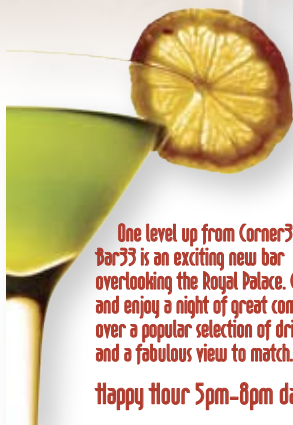
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Riverhouse Lounge

6 Street 110,
Tel: 023 220 180

Set above a sophisticated restaurant, the Lounge has become the alternative dance venue for both expats and young Khmers, its key advantage is its location, with a self-contained air-conditioned dance room and great balcony to chill out and watch the river float by. Actually varies its music, featuring some of the best DJs in town. Monday night is Retro, Thursday is House and Hip-hop is on Tuesday & Friday. Open 4pm to 2am. **A/C** 🍸🍷

Rory's Irish Pub

33 Street 178,
Tel: 012 425 702

Most Irish of the Irish bars in town with the barmaids dressed in emerald green. Good place to talk to local expats or try the Irish stew. Open 7am to midnight or 2am at weekends.

Rubies

Cnr. Street 19 & 240, Tel: 012 823 962
Small corner wine bar with warm wood panelled interior and loyal following. Happy Hour from 5.30pm to 7.30pm. Open 5.30pm til late, closed Mondays.

Salt Lounge

217 Street 136
In addition to being Phnom Penh's first openly 'gay' bar, has probably the most contemporary design in town. It also welcomes straight customers. Open 6pm to late. **A/C**

Saffron

11 Street 278, Tel: 012 247 832
Pakistani and Middle Eastern café, restaurant and wine bar. The curries are excellent and not too spicy, and come with a range of breads and chutneys. The wines have a bias towards the antipodes, including possibly the best range of wines by the glass in town. Open 11am to 11pm. **A/C** 🍷🍸

Scoop Bistro Bar

2-6A Regency Square, Mao Tse Tung Blvd., Tel: 023 216 130

Elegant, chic bistro with a simple, yet refined black and white design with comfortable, high-backed dining chairs providing seclusion from other diners. Slightly raised lounge area is ideal for cocktail or coffee. Has three private rooms. Open from 11.30am to midnight, closed Sundays, reservations recommended. **A/C** 🍷🍸

Sharky Bar

126 Street 130,
Tel: 023 211 825

Biggest and most famous of Phnom Penh's bars is set on the first floor with countless pool tables and a large balcony to look out over the street. Guaranteed to be lively, a place where anything can happen. Serves surprisingly good food, especially the Mexican. Open 4pm to 2am. **A/C** 🍷🍸

Talkin to a Stranger

21B Street 294

Elegant bar with nice gardens set in the heart of NGO town. Excellent place for post-work drinking or indulging in their vast array of cocktails. Good food and

one of the few places in town putting on events and live music. Has a trivia quiz every second Tuesday. Don't be a stranger. Open 5pm to late, closed on Mondays. **A/C** 🍷🍸

Teukei Bar

23B Street 111,
Tel: 012 707 609

Long-standing French bar with an extremely chill feel and good ambient music, serving reasonably-priced Asian and French cuisine. Upstairs has a red pool table and smoker-friendly balcony. Open 5pm to late.

Velkommen Inn

23 Street 104 Tel: 092 177 710

This comfortable hotel restaurant and bar, just off the riverfront, offers a wide selection of western dishes as well as several Scandinavian specialities with a full bar, draught beer, wine and sprits. Open 7am till late. **A/C** 🍷🍸

Walkabout

109 Street 51, Tel: 023 211 715

If nowhere else is open in town then you can always depend on the Walkabout. Plenty of women to offer males some company, but if you find yourself here then you should really be thinking it's time to go to bed. Open 24 hours. 🍷🍸

The Winking Frog

128 Sothearos Blvd. Tel: 023 356 399

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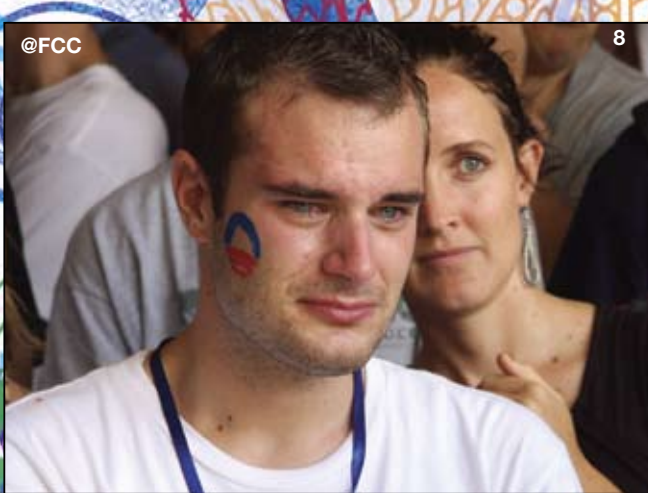
UPBEAT

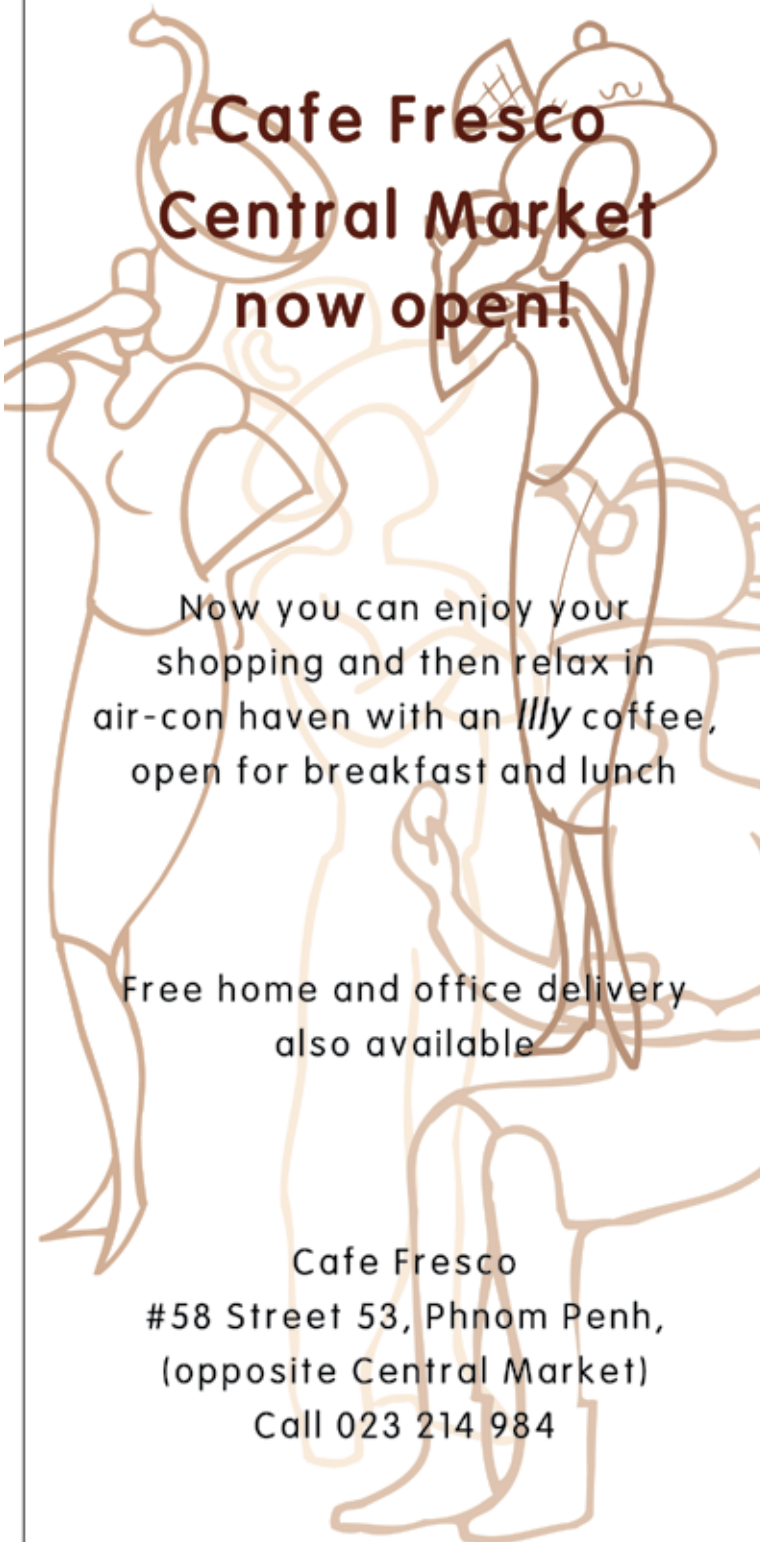


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10

■ CAPTION COMPETITION
Provide a caption for any of the above photos and you could win a meal for two with a bottle of wine at the **Gym Bar**. Simply SMS to 012 261 449 or email: asialife@phnompenh@gmail.com. Best caption wins. *Entries by Dec. 15.*

kaleidoscope

Human Rights Week

Sixty years after the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the French Embassy is coordinating a week of events in celebration. **AsiaLIFE** previews the event.



This piece by James Nachtwey depicting a South African boy is part of the Human Rights exhibition

YOU CAN'T KEEP A good dog down. No sooner will the first international photography exhibition in Phnom Penh – Photo Phnom Penh – close than the team at the French Cultural Centre (CCF) is at it again, organising another ground-breaking exhibition. This time the theme is one

particularly pertinent to Cambodia – human rights. “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was signed sixty years ago in Paris on Dec. 10,” explains the CCF’s director, Alain Arnaudet. “Also, France currently has the presidency of the European Community, that is why everywhere around the world,

France is leading the event, especially in Cambodia.”

■ HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENTARIES

The French Embassy is coordinating the series of events that are taking place between Dec. 9 and 13, in cooperation with the other European embassies and

We want to give people the opportunity to think about how we can struggle for our rights and be successful.

the EU. Needless to say the French Cultural Centre will be one of the three venues hosting events – the other two are the University of Rights and Economics and the Bophana Institute.

According to Alain, one of the week’s highlights is a screening of the classic 1955 documentary of the Nazi concentration camps ‘Night and Fog’ by the great French director Alain Resnais at the CCF’s cinema on Dec. 12. This will be introduced by Sylvia Lindeperg, a professor in history from the Sorbonne in Paris.

Although the film will be screened in French with Khmer sub-titles, the six other documentaries are

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Price: US\$60.00+
Children (6-12 years) US\$30.00+

New Year’s Eve Seafood Buffet

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Price: US\$75.00+
Children (6-12 years) US\$37.50+

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4-course menu: US\$79.00+
5-course menu: US\$95.00+

New Year’s Eve Culinary Highlight Menu

Dinner: 7:30pm - 11:30pm
7-course menu: US\$145.00+

Dress Code: Smart Casual

either English-language originals or in French with English sub-titles. These tackle subjects as wide ranging as the death penalty in France and the U.S., boy soldiers in Sierra Leone and the arrest of Chile's former Leader General Pinochet. Although none of these are based in Cambodia, the parallels between the Nazi death camps and S-21, and the boy soldiers in Sierra Leone and the fighting cadres of the Khmer Rouge are unmistakable.

"We want to give people an overview of human rights through the ages," explains Alain.

■ CONFERENCES AND PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

Not that the whole week is purely historical. A series of conferences, running alongside the documentaries, will consider the present day situation of human rights. One will consider the role of micro-credit in helping to reduce poverty, another the promotion of human rights within Asia and the third will consider the state of human rights within Cambodia.

"We want to give people the opportunity to think about human rights in the world," says Alain. "How we can struggle for our rights, and be successful."

In conjunction with the documentaries and the conferences, an exhibition of photographs from photo agency VII will be on display at the CCF from Dec. 9 to 13. Each photograph depicts one of the human rights. The photographs will also be projected onto the walls of the CCF, as a slide show. ■

Phnom Penh Panto Players

Marcus Burrows finds out what treats await us this Christmas.

IT'S THAT TIME OF THE YEAR again. Where men dress in stockings, daub themselves in thick waxy coloured grease-paint, slap on a wig and stilletoes and belt out some show-tunes in a garish frock whilst milking some of the worst puns in history with the wink of a mascared eye for smutty innuendo. OO-er!

Or maybe you're not British? Let me explain, It's Panto season!!! Traditionally performed around Christmas and very loosely based on a traditional children's story, the panto is a hugely popular form of theatre incorporating song, dance, buffoonery, slapstick, in-jokes, audience participation and mild sexual innuendo. The plotlines are usually very simple: The girl dressed as a boy who is the son of a man dressed as a woman, will win the other girl (surprisingly dressed as a girl), with the assistance of a person(s) dressed in an animal skin. Well, try explaining that to an American, German or indeed a Cambodian!

Hot on the high heels of last year's 'Hamlet: The Musical, A Panto.' The Phnom Penh Players proudly present their latest addition to their growing impressive repertoire 'Alladin Under The Sea'. It's set to the beat of some great Beatles tunes, with five live musicians, helped out by musical director Andy Hawkings.

Auditions this year were crowded to capacity and transcended the expectations of even the show's director Berry Schipper.

"We had to turn away about 15 people, that's never happened before," he says. "It was so encouraging to see so many enthusiastic actors, young and old, show up but in the end there were more people than we could give parts to."

The script, written by a British reverend's wife Judith Dickson, has been whipped into shape by five members of the Players to bring a further contemporary edge to the festive jollities.

"Scriptwriting was very entertaining," says Berry. "It's amazing how salacious five men can be when writing jokes over a few beers for a Christmas panto – it's a shame that we had to cut most! We did slip in a few rabbit punches about Republican U.S. policy for topicality, so we've definitely packed in enough to keep the adults amused."

Risqué double entendres are all part of the fun festive package, frequently wringing mild innuendo out of perfectly innocent phrases. This is, in theory, over-the-heads of the children in the audience.

It's all part of the great British institution of comedy. The gals get to play guys and the guys get to play girls, gender

reversal, thigh-slapping innuendo, a little slapstick – all good clean fun. The audience is always encouraged to 'Boo' and 'Hiss' the dastardly villain at each of their entrances, and protectively warn the heroes "He's behind you!" if they're ever in danger. This can lead to a good-natured screaming hysteria, akin to a 1960s Beatles concert.

"There's an art to keeping the balance of keeping the kids entertained with familiar fairy-tale characters and plenty of audience participation whilst including a level of 'knowing' humour to keep the adults chuckling along," explains Berry. "It's seriously just as much fun for the adults."

Another intention is to bring a bit of camp Christmas fun into Phnom Penh. "There's not much live entertainment here," says Stewart who directed Hamlet: The Musical last year. "Our aim is to raise money for more local performing arts."

Alladin Under The Sea will be performed at iCan International School at Sothearos Blvd. on Dec. 13 and Dec.

14. Tickets are available from ISPP, Java Café, Talkin to a Stranger and Garden Center Café (US\$10 adults, US\$5 children under 18, Cambodians half-price).

For more information email: phnompenhplayers@hotmail.com

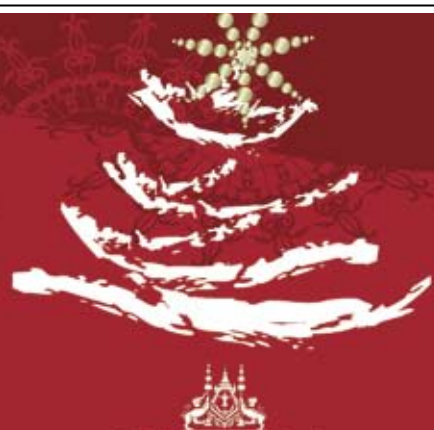
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On The Shelf

Andrew Nette reviews a book available at Phnom Penh's Monument Books

NEW IN CAMBODIA

Phnom Penh: A Cultural and Literary History

Milton Osborne, Signal Books, 2008

AUSTRALIAN HISTORIAN Milton Osborne's *Phnom Penh: A Cultural and Literary History* is the latest title in a series by Oxford-based Signal Books entitled 'Cities of the Imagination'.

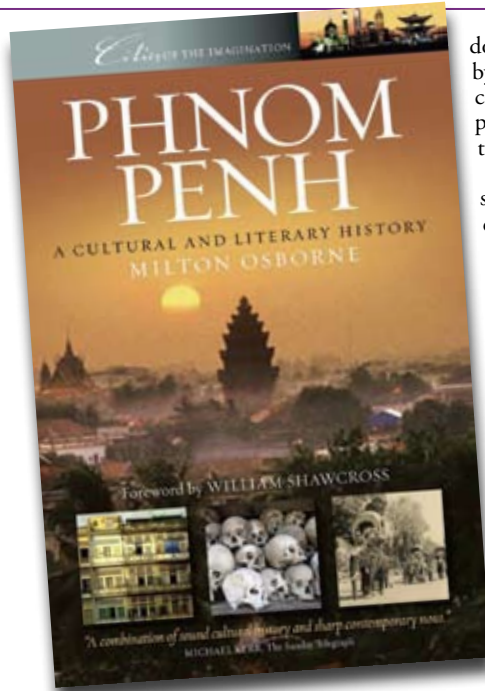
Although not on the same scale as many of the cities previously profiled, Phnom Penh is a welcome addition given it is only the third Asian city, after Hong Kong and Calcutta, to be given a title.

While Osborne has his work cut out given the huge changes Phnom Penh has undergone, he largely succeeds in pulling off a highly readable people's history of the city.

He takes us through the various stages of the city's history, from its earliest beginnings, to its time as the capital of a French colony, and its transformation in the sixties.

Osborne also looks at the 'three years, eight months and twenty days' when the city was largely depopulated by the victorious Khmer Rouge, its gradual rebirth in the eighties and the arrival of the United Nations in 1991.

Detailed historical research is supplemented by a review of the available literature for each period, as well as the author's



observations as a frequent visitor to the city.

Osborne first visited Phnom Penh as a young Australian diplomat in April 1959. Still a geographical backwater, the country was on the verge of major historical change as a result of the brewing conflict in Vietnam.

Although independent the French still exercised a discreet but powerful influence over events. The monarchy was the

dominant, although by no means politically uncontested, power throughout the country.

The book is strongest when dealing with Cambodia's history up to 1975.

It includes some fascinating insights into the early history of the city, one example being its bit part in the seaborne expansion of the Spanish and Portuguese empires, an aspect of Phnom Penh's history almost completely unknown today.

Osborne also succeeds in catching the duality of Phnom Penh in the late fifties and early sixties.

Referred to by many as the city's 'golden age,' Phnom Penh in the early sixties underwent an artistic and physical transformation under the guidance of King Norodom Sihanouk.

Largely out of sight of most in the capital, the rest of the country was mired in poverty and the secret police ruthlessly

prosecuted political opponents of the monarchy, many of whom subsequently formed the nucleus of the Khmer Rouge leadership that emerged from the jungle victorious in 1975.

Although much has been written about Cambodia's time under the Khmer Rouge, Osborne succeeds in providing some new insights by examining life in the largely but not completely deserted city, and the gradual transformation that took place after the Vietnamese invaded in 1979.

The book's biggest disappointment is its failure to deal with contemporary Phnom Penh, other than remarking in broad terms on the challenges facing the city.

This is a major omission given that the physical and cultural changes wrought by Cambodia's rapid integration into the global economy are every bit as significant as changes in earlier times.

That the literary aspect of the history is also at times disappointing is not the fault of the author.

Critics will argue this point but with the exception of some war reporting in the sixties and early seventies and a few other titles, foreign writers have produced little literature of significance with Phnom Penh as its backdrop, while the majority of Cambodian writing remains unknown to outside audiences because it has not been translated. ■

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Arts Diary

■ OPENING THIS MONTH

Photo Phnom Penh

International photography exhibition organised by the French Cultural Centre runs from Dec. 1 to Dec. 7. See page 14 for details.

Human Rights Week

Series of exhibitions, conferences and documentaries organised by the French Embassy to mark the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will be at various venues from Dec. 9 to Dec. 13. See page 18 for details.

Tensions in the Performance of Music

Photo exhibition by Thomas Wannhoff opens at the Art Café on Dec. 1 at 7pm, runs through the month.

Looking Forward

Photos about HIV by Khmer journalists opens at 5.30pm on Dec. 1 at New Art Gallery, 20 Street 9. Runs to Dec. 15.

Visual Makers

Collective works of photo-agency Asia Motion opens at Equinox on Dec. 5 at 8pm, runs through to Feb. 4.

Red Corner

Exhibition by AsiaLIFE photographer Virginie Noel opens at Café Living Room at 5pm on Dec. 6, runs through to Jan. 4.

I Feel Pretty

Exhibition at Ek Gallery, 3 Street 130, opens on Nov. 29, runs through to Dec. 28.

The Yi in the Wild

Exhibition by photographer Wang Gang opens at Chinese

House, 45 Sisowath Quay on Dec. 3 at 7.30pm, running through to Dec. 21.

Heng Ravuth

Exhibition of the works of the Khmer photographer opens at Java Café on Dec. 5 at 6pm, running through to Dec. 28.

Bodies

Exhibition featuring expat and Cambodian artists, curated by Leah Newman, runs at 2 Fish Studio throughout the month.

Frederic Lecloux

Exhibition showing the photographer's travels through Afghanistan opens at the Meta House on Dec. 2 at 6pm.

Tschautze

Exhibition by Austrian artist Ronald Kodritsch opens at the Meta House at 6pm on Dec. 13.

McDermott Gallery 2

Three exhibitions will run at the McDermott Gallery 2, The Passage, Siem Reap from Nov. 21 to Jan. 15. 'Burma: A Flameless Inferno' by James Whitlow Delano; 'Rohingya Refugees' by Munem Wasif; and 'Life is Elsewhere' by Sohrab Hura. www.mcdermottgallery.com.

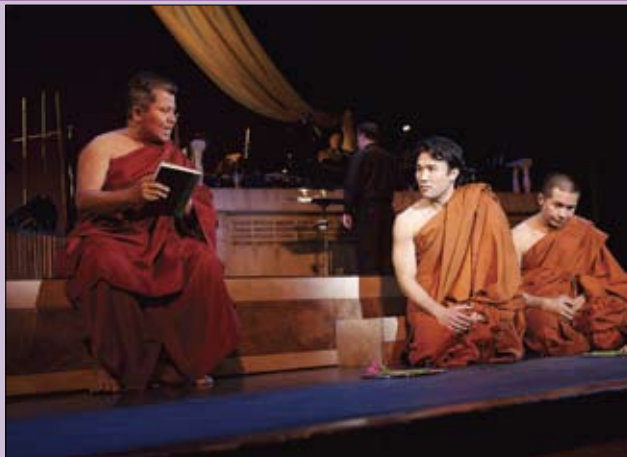
■ MUSIC, EVENTS & PERFORMANCES

Where Elephants Weep

Khmer rock opera by Him Sophy will be performed at the Chenla Theatre, cnr. of Mao Tse Tung & Monireth blvds., from Dec. 5 to Dec. 7.

Book Reading

Crime novelist Angela Savage will read from her novel, Be-



Where Elephants Weep at the Chenla Theatre

hind the Night Bazaar, at Café Living Room, on Dec. 11 from 7pm to 9pm. For information contact Louise: 012 385 542.

Cambodian &

Western Performing Arts

Music and dance performances at the Art Café from 7pm, each Friday and Saturday, for details visit: www.artcafe-phnom-penh.com.

Cambodian Performing Arts

Sovanna Phum has weekly performances of shadow puppetry and traditional dance, each Friday and Saturday at 7.30pm. Entrance is US\$5 for adults and US\$3 for children.


Art for Kids

Art lessons for children each Wednesday at Café Living Room. Classes are from 3.30pm to 5pm for kids aged 4 to 12. Contact Leah on 012 242 301 for details.

■ FILM

Rooftop Cinema

Each month the Meta House shows films, documenta-

ries and hosts events on its rooftop terrace. This month's screenings include (8pm unless stated): Dec. 3 (6pm) – The Gendered Lens; Dec. 3 (8pm) UXO Special, short films and Q&A session with Alex Hiniker from UNDP; Dec. 4 to Dec. 7 – Gender Filmfest: Dec. 4 – The Power to Change; Dec. 5 – Up the Yangtze; Dec. 6 – Football under Cover (director David Assmann will be there for Q&A session); Dec. 7 – Persepolis; Dec. 9 (7pm) – Cambodia 1965; Dec. 9 (8pm) Shadow over Angkor; Dec. 10 (6pm) – Equity TV, Human Rights Day; Dec. 11 – Dogora; Dec. 12 – New Year Baby; Dec. 13 (7pm) – Super 8 Program (Derek Jarman), Brian Eno's Video Paintings; Dec. 14 – Wardance; Dec. 16 – If God Will Send His Angel, Moto Thief; Dec. 17 – Terror's Advocate; Dec. 18 – Kampuchea, Death and Rebirth; Dec. 19 – The Post; Dec. 20 – Nice Hat!; Dec. 21 – Driving with My Wife's Lover. 



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Bootleg

AsiaLIFE takes a look at some of the DVDs available in a shop, or stall, near you.

■ QUANTUM OF SOLACE

Marc Forster (2008)
The new Bond (Daniel Craig) is back and this time it's personal, as the film begins just as Casino Royale left off with an exhilarating car chase that sets the brisk pace for this bone-crunching action spectacle. Marc Forster, the director, somewhat theatrically includes stunts involving air, water and terra firma, with more motor-bikes, speedboats, jet fighters and expensive cars sent to the scrap yard than even a council estate lottery winner could manage. Quantum of Solace is more serious Sean Connery than slapstick Roger Moore, but the plot is still rather linear and the villain, Dominic Greene (Mathieu Amalric) is underused. Judi Dench puts in a solid turn as Bond's bulldog-faced boss, M, though Q is conspicuous by his absence.

■ PINEAPPLE EXPRESS

Jan Stuart (2008)
Nothing fosters camaraderie so much as intoxication, an easy formula this air-brained comedy takes advantage of. Featuring the pursed-lipped antics of brillo-haired funnyman Seth Rogen as Dale Denton, a process server, and his lank-haired dealer Saul (Star Wars' bad boy James Franco), this is certainly no cerebral drama. With a thin plot barely linking

together contrived scenes, Pineapple Express should be unwatchable, but Rogen's affability and well-observed stoner humour raises the film's standard, at least to Cheech and Chong level. Many marijuana references may fly over the more-alert heads of the non-inebriated, so Pineapple Express is probably best enjoyed with a little of the herbal remedy the film is so obsessed with.

■ COFFEE AND CIGARETTES

Jim Jarmusch (2003)
A series of eleven short black and white vignettes centered around coffee and cigarettes, this is another of Jarmusch's attempts to push the boundaries of film. With its 'non-linear' sequencing – recurring esoteric references to such diverse topics as Tesla's theories and the dangers of caffeine – this experimental project is not everyone's cup of tea. But Jarmusch's reputation as a revolutionary mould-breaker has attracted an impressive cast, including Steve Buscemi, Iggy Pop, Tom Waits, William Rice, Taylor Mead, Renée French, Cate Blanchett (playing both herself and a fictional and non-famous cousin named Shelly), Jack and Meg White, Alfred Molina, Steve Coogan, and perhaps more remarkably, GZA and RZA of the Wu-Tang Clan in a scene with Bill Murray. **F**



Billboard



Album reviews by LOVE FM's Julian Grant

■ OASIS

Dig Out Your Soul



This seventh studio album from the Manchester band was recorded in part at Abbey Road. The Beatles influences are ever-present and although it was cool 15 years ago, I find it all rather predictable now. The album offers no inspiration from a band that I hoped were re-inventing themselves. Bag It Up is a highlight and experiments with a little psychedelic feel and touches of Indian spice. I'm Outta Time is a distinctly Lennon style song, although perhaps more Julian than John. It's the best song on the album. The lead single The Shock Of The Lightning may lack a catchy melody but with its loud driving force it sounds unmistakably like an Oasis record. Overall Dig Out Your Soul is not going to change too many people's opinions on how good the band really is.

■ SASH!

The Best Of



This compilation of 'best' recordings currently in the U.K. top 10 has given me the opportunity to play some tracks by the German DJs. The opening track, Encore Une Fois was a groundbreaking hit – I remember thinking at the time it was pretty hardcore

stuff – now it sounds tame. Mysterious Times featuring Tina Cousins introduced understandable lyrics – it was easy to mix but enjoyed only a short time of dance floor popularity. Most of the highlights are the remixes on disc 2. What is missing unfortunately is their brilliant remix of OMD's classic Enola Gay. The music is European in the same vain as Abba were. It may be considered 'cheesy' to many but for me it's good clean dance music.

■ ELVIS PRESLEY

Elvis' Christmas Album



The world's biggest selling Christmas album is, along with Phil Spector's Christmas Gift for You, arguably the finest rock and roll Christmas album. The first of two seasonal albums recorded by Elvis was released in 1957. Most of the songs are 'traditional' Christmas offerings. White Christmas is not sung in the famous Crosby style but in the manner of Clyde McPhatter, riding along in a finger-snapping tempo. Real standouts are the bluesy Santa Claus Is Back In Town "riding in a big black Cadillac" – the sexiest Christmas song ever recorded. Blue Christmas, his own personal favourite, is sung as only he could. Santa Bring My Baby Back (to me), the most commercial song, is a personal favourite and was the single choice from the album. Here Comes Santa Claus has a rockabilly feel giving the album touches of everything that ever influenced Presley's own style. Fifty-one years on it sounds as great as it ever did. **F**

Top of the Bops



ALL TIME U.K. TOP 10 BIGGEST SELLING CHRISTMAS SINGLES

- 01 Do They Know It's Christmas? **Band Aid**
- 02 Mary's Boy Child **Boney M**
- 03 Last Christmas **Wham!**
- 04 Mary's Boy Child **Harry Belafonte**
- 05 Do They Know It's Christmas?
Band Aid 20 (2004 remake)
- 06 Merry Xmas Everybody **Slade**
- 07 White Christmas **Bing Crosby**
- 08 The Millennium Prayer **Cliff Richard**
- 09 When A Child Is Born **Johnny Mathis**
- 10 Mistletoe And Wine **Cliff Richard**



U.K. CHRISTMAS NUMBER 1 ALBUMS OF 1970S

- 1970 Andy Williams Greatest Hits **Andy Williams**
- 1971 Electric Warrior **T. Rex**
- 1972 20 All Time Hits Of The 50s
Various Artists
- 1973 Goodbye Yellow Brick Road
Elton John
- 1974 Elton John's Greatest Hits
Elton John
- 1975 A Night At The Opera **Queen**
- 1976 20 Golden Greats **Glen Campbell**
- 1977 Disco Fever **Various Artists**
- 1978 Grease Original Sountrack
- 1979 Greatest Hits Vol. 1 **Rod Stewart**



TOP 10 MOST REQUESTED SONGS AT LOVE FM, 97.5

- 01 Crush **David Archuleta**
- 02 7 Things **Miley Cyrus**
- 03 I'm Yours **Jason Mraz**
- 04 Even Heaven Cries **Monrose**
- 05 Whatever You Like **T.I.**
- 06 When I Grow Up **The Pussycat Dolls**
- 07 Take A Bow **Rihanna**
- 08 Better In Time **Leona Lewis**
- 09 T Shirt **Shontelle**
- 10 Tied Together With A Smile **Taylor Swift**



These charts are provided by LOVE FM, 97.5 Phnom Penh and are for the week ending Nov. 30.

ONE TO WATCH! – Take Back The City **Snow Patrol**

JULIANS TOP PICK – Raindrops (Encore Une Fois)
Sash! featuring **Stunt**

Cinemas

Le Cinema

French Cultural Centre
218 Street 184 Tel: 023 213 124
100-seat cinema shows international art house and mainstream movies. Occasional films in English. Children's cinema on Saturday mornings at 10am.

Meta House

6 Street 264 Tel: 012 607 465
Movie shorts and documentaries from Cambodia and the rest of Asia. All movies start at 7pm, closed Mondays.

Galleries

Art Café

84 Street 108 Tel: 012 834 517
Elegant bistro and art gallery in the style of a European coffee house with rotating exhibitions. Music played Friday to Sunday. Open from 11am to 11pm.

Café Living Room

9 Street 306, Tel: 023 726 139
Has regular exhibitions as well as art classes for adults and kids. Open every-day from 7am to 8.30pm.

Dori Thy Gallery

9 Street 278 Tel: 012 661 552
Features the black and white photographs of German photographer, Doris Boettcher is open from 10am to 6pm.

French Cultural Centre

218 Street 184 Tel: 023 213 124
Large space in the grand floor of the cultural centre has changing exhibitions and hosts special talks and events.

Happy Painting Gallery

FCC; Cambodiana Hotel; Domestic Airport
Open since 1995, these aircon art shops sell the colourful and positive works of iconic artist Stef. Accepts all major credit cards. Open from 8am to 10pm.

Java Café & Gallery

56 Sihanouk Blvd., Tel: 023 987 420
www.javaarts.org
Contemporary art gallery with regular exhibitions of Cambodian and international artists. Website has details about Cambodia's contemporary art scene.

Meta House

6 Street 264,
Tel: 012 607 465
Multimedia arts centre on three floors has regular exhibitions, interviews with filmmakers and short films, closed Mondays.

Reyum

47 Street 178, Tel: 023 217 149
Small gallery with regular exhibitions of Cambodian artists. Part of an NGO established for preserving traditional and contemporary Cambodian arts.

Two Fish Gallery Studio

2D Street 302 Tel: 016 368 700
Gallery space, art & Chinese calligraphy classes, reflective meeting space. Open 11am to 5pm (Closed Sunday & Monday).

Performing Arts

Amrita Performing Arts

Tel: 023 22 0424
www.amritaperformingarts.org
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Phnom Penh, CAM
7d/wk 7am - 10pm
023 222 087

Java Express

56e1 Sihanouk Blvd
Phnom Penh, CAM
M - Sa 7am - 3pm
092 289 126

Java TeaRoom

At Monument Books
111 Norodom Blvd
Phnom Penh, CAM
7d/wk 8am - 8pm
092 451 462



two fish studio
house 2D, street 302 phnom penh

leisure & wellness

Sportscene with Mark Eastty

Over the next few months, sports fanatic and Manchester United fan, **Mark Eastty** will take a regular look at the local sporting scene. This month he features the ANZ Royal Angkor Tens and the Suzuki Cup. Photo by **Joe Garrison**.

■ ANGKOR TENS

The Angkor Tens international rugby tournament entered its eighth year last month. Popular for both its on field development of the game in Cambodia and social gatherings, both stalwart supporters of the event and debutant teams were greeted by two days of perfect weather for the tournament on Nov. 7 and Nov. 8.

Friday saw the veterans take to the field with three teams from around the region, and the visiting Aoucou Old Boys from Toulouse, arriving in Asia on a ten-day tour, competing in a round robin contest. Due to the advanced ages of some of the players the rules were considerably changed with the primary goal of the game being to promote friendship, fair play and fraternity. The fact that tackling was not mandatory was largely ignored, but sportsmanlike conduct ensured all the teams had a great day of rugby. Aoucou took the Angkor Old Boy's trophy at the end of a hot and sweaty day.

Saturday saw the main event, the ANZ Royal Angkor 10s Tournament, which began with two pools of four teams. Pool A featured Pilliers de Angkor, an all-Khmer team featuring many players from the Cambodian national team; the Phnom Penh Renegades; and two French Asia Barbarians teams, featuring French expats from all over Asia. Les Pilliers dominated the pool, matching significantly larger packs in the scrums, and showing devastating speed on the break.

The other pool comprised of reigning champions Bedok Kings from Singapore; Stade Khmer, a local team backed by NGO Pour un Sourire d'enfant; the Billabong Sharks, a mix of expats and Sisowath Knights players; and the Dubai Exiles RFC. It



A try-saving tackle!

was the hard battling Sharks that progressed, blending the size and strength of their foreign players with the agility of the Cambodians to good effect. This set up a scintillating final between two teams hailing from Cambodia.

Som Malen of the Billabong Sharks opened the scoring in the first half, receiving the ball from the scrum and dashing in untouched for a try. Failing to capitalise further on their first half dominance, the half ended 5 - 0.

Shortly into the second half, Lach Sopheara leveled the score by completing a flowing move, running in from 15 metres. Les Pilliers looked to have found a path through the Sharks line and came close to scoring with two similar moves that ended with them giving away penalties. Towards the end of the half though, a tough drive from the Sharks looked to have won the game

when a penalty was given away 15 meters out. With seconds left on the clock, fly-half Greg Eggins sliced his kick wide of the posts sending the game into extra time.

After three minutes centre Out Vuthy capitalised on a loose ball and charged across the try line to give Les Pilliers a deserved win, making them the first all-Cambodian team to win the tournament.

■ SUZUKI CUP

Cambodia met Brunei in their final game of the Suzuki Cup qualifying tournament held in Phnom Penh's Olympic Stadium, towards the end of October. They went into the game with four points, knowing they would need a win to progress to the finals. A buoyant crowd of around 15,000 supported the national team.

Cambodia had the better of the first half possession and

opened the scoring, only to concede a weak goal on the counter close to half time. Cambodia kept on attacking throughout the second half. They got their just reward when striker Khim Borey smashed the ball into the back of the net in the 73rd minute, to a jubilant crowd.

The national team will now join Singapore, Myanmar, and co-hosts Indonesia in Group A of the Suzuki Cup this month. Stand-in manager, Prak Sovanara, commented that defense was the team's greatest weakness. It will be put under far greater pressure in the finals. Cambodia will however gain considerable experience playing in front of huge crowds in the two football mad host countries Malaysia and Indonesia. Malaysia will play in Group B with qualifying group winners Laos, Vietnam and Thailand. **■**

leisure & wellness

amusement

Kambol Cart Raceway

Tel: 012 232 332
A few kilometers west of the airport is Phnom Penh's flashiest go-cart track. Boasting a 900m international standard size track complete with hairpin turns, a cart costs US\$7 for a 10-minute round. The track can also be rented by the hour, half-day or the entire day.

Parkway Square

113 Mao Tse Tung Blvd,
Tel: 023 982 928
Ten-pin bowling alley with lanes costing between US\$6 and US\$9 per hour, depending upon the time of day. It also has a dodgem track, for those who haven't had enough of close shaves on the streets of Phnom Penh.

Phnom Penh Water Park

50 Street 110,
Tel: 023 881 008
Traditional mix of slides and wave pools. Entrance is US\$2 weekdays (US\$3 at weekends). Open from 9.30am to 5.30pm.

Phnom Tamao Wildlife Park

Phnom Tamao,
44 kilometres out of the capital along Highway 2, lies Cambodia's best wildlife centre. All the animals are either rescued from traders or bred at the centre. Many of the animals are critically endangered. Open from 8am to 4pm.

Sorya Centre

Corner Street 63 & 142
The top floor of Phnom Penh's original shopping centre has a rink devoted to roller-skating and roller-blading. Hiring the skates or blades costs between US\$1 and US\$2.

beauty products

Angkor Soap

16 Street 374,
Tel: 023 223 720
www.angkorsoaps.com
Specialising in handmade soaps and natural spa products.

U-Care Pharmacy

26-28 Sotheaeros Blvd.,
Tel: 023 222 499
14 Sihanouk Blvd.,
Tel: 023 224 099
High quality western-style chemist and pharmacy that sells the full range of beauty products, including international brands. Open 8am to 10pm.

Pharmalink

11 Street 254, 14 Street 432
20D Street 184, Tel: 023 215 727
Modern, western-standard pharmacy on the way to the Russian Market. Staff speak English and have a range of western products on sale. Open from 7.30am to 8pm (Monday to Saturday).

chemists

classes

Cambodian Cooking Class

Frizz Restaurant, 67 Street 240
Tel: 012 524 801
The first and only Khmer cooking school for travellers and expats in Phnom Penh. Courses cost US\$20 for a full day, including transport to the market and a colourful 16-page recipe booklet.

Capoeira

Two Fish Studio, 2D Street 302
Tel: 012 458 167
Lessons in this rhythmic Brazilian cross between dance and martial arts, cost

US\$2. Held every Tuesday and Thursday from 6.30pm to 8pm. Contact Michel.

Kids Create

Living Room, 9 Street 306
Fun art classes for kids aged 4 to 12 on Wednesday from 3.30pm to 5pm. Call Leah Newman on 012 242 301.

Little Maestro

Living Room, 9 Street 306
Bring the Mozart out of your tot (0 to 6). Classes from 9am to 10am on Sundays. Call Melinda Burgess on 012 693 498.

Photography Tours

126 Street 136,
Tel: 092 526 706
www.nathanhortonphotography.com
Weekend photography tuition and guided tours to Kampong Chhnang and Udong, covering technical and creative considerations in the context of travel photography.

Qigong

Living Room, 9 Street 306
Qigong practice group meets every Monday and Wednesday at 5.30pm to 6.30pm For more information contact, Phil 012 892 249.

Scuba Nation Dive Center

18E0 Sotheaeros Blvd.,
Tel: 012 715 785
Learn to scuba dive in Phnom Penh. The academic part of the course takes place in the Plaza Hotel pool, while the real diving is over a weekend in Sihanoukville. Total cost for a course is US\$395.

dental

European Dental Clinic

160A Norodong Blvd.,
Tel: 023 211 363
French-run dental practice since 1994 which provides full dental hygiene services with modern equipment. Open 8am to 12pm and 2pm to 7pm (closed Sundays).

SOS Dental Clinic

161 Street 51, Tel: 023 216 911

International quality dental clinic, fully equipped with the latest equipment including dental cameras. US dentist explains the process of what is going on with your teeth and has multi-lingual staff.

education

Khmer School

for Expats and Travellers
35 Street 288, Tel: 012 867 117
Khmer-language lessons given on a one-to-one tuition basis only, costing US\$10 per hour, a typical course lasts for 30 hours.

Khmer School of Language

52G Street 454, Tel: 023 213 047
Khmer-language lessons given at the school for US\$4 per hour or for US\$5 in the privacy of your own home or office. All the teachers are experienced and trained at the school.

My First Khmer

PO Box 1498,
Tel: 012 342 315
A network of university students offering language, translation, and interpreting services. Professional, affordable, and experienced. Call for a free lesson.

gyms

Clark Hatch Fitness Centre

Intercontinental Hotel,
3/F Mao Tse Tung Boulevard,
Tel: 011 380 769
Well-equipped fitness centre run by a regional gym company that even has a rowing machine. Membership is US\$90 per month or US\$10 per day (US\$15 at weekends). Open 6am to 10pm (weekdays), 8am to 8pm (weekends)

Fitness One

Himawari Hotel,
313 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 214 555
Small, well-equipped gym with outdoor swimming pool. US\$6 per day for use of pool or US\$10 for pool, gym, steam room and jacuzzi. Prices rise to US\$8 and US\$12 at weekends.

The 13th Angkor Wat International Half Marathon 2008



07 December 2008



06 December 2008

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- > 80 Km Bike Race
- > 30 KM Cyclo Race
- > 30 KM Fun Ride
- > 30 KM Bike Race

Angkor Wat Int'l Half Marathon 07 December 2008

- > 21 KM Int'l Half Marathon
- > 10 KM Road Race
- > 05 KM Road Race
- > 03 KM Fun Run
- > 10 KM Artificial leg
- > 21KM Wheel Chair

Deadline of Application: 20 November 2008

c/o PM Green Travel Co., Ltd. (Marathon Registration)

79c, St. 155 Sangkat Toul Tompoung I, Phnom Penh.

Tel: 023 213-525 / 016 628-788 / 012 894-960

E-mail: greensales@online.com.kh; coop@angkoramarathon.org

Organized by:

- Running : National Olympic Committee of Cambodia
- Khmer Amateur Athletics Federation
- Angkor Wat International Half Marathon Committee
- NPO/NGO Hearts of Gold

Bike Race: Village Focus International

Cooperated by :

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- Handicap International Belgium
- Cambodia Joho Service Inc.
- CHEMS
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- Go Adventure Asia Co., Ltd.
- Free the Bear Fund Inc.
- JTB Corp.
- ANA Sales Co.,Ltd

Siem Reap: Tel: 063 964-470 / 012 868-104

E-mail: pmg_rep@online.com.kh

Website: <http://www.angkoramarathon.org>

Bike Race: # 12c, St 308 Sangkat Tole Bassac, Phnom Penh.

Tel: 023 221-748 / 012 615-883

E-mail: bike@villagefocus.org > Website: www.villagefocus.org

European Dental Clinic

160A, Norodom Bd (across ISPP South Campus)

Deborah Moore (UK) Dentist
 Eric Le Guen (FR) Dentist
 Channarith Penh (KH) Dentist
 Angela Clifford (AU) Hygienist

Secretary : 023 211 363 / 012 893 174



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House No. 4C, Street 57, Sangkat Boeung Keng Kang I, Khan Chamkarmon,
 Phnom Penh, Kingdom of Cambodia. H/P: 012 222 898 / 016 540 454

Beauty Spot: Angkor Soaps



ANGKOR SOAPS ARE LUSH. As soon as you step through the door to the small shop the aroma of various essential oils and other ingredients engulfs you. Once you get a bar of soap in your hand you can't help but keep sniffing at it. As the bars look like fudge you may find yourself thinking about eating them too.

Though Malaysian-born director Shirley Wong started her business a bit more than a year ago, she has been producing and selling handmade soaps and various lotions to friends for a number of years. Her interest in natural beauty products stems from personal skin problems, for which she found relief through aromatherapy. What started off as a hobby, producing her own lotions and potions has slowly transformed itself into a business.

Unlike commercial soaps, Shirley uses the traditional cold-process production method. This retains the all-important glycerine that locks moisture into the skin. In the production of commercial soaps, the valuable liquid is generally removed and sold at a high price for other purposes. The difference is noticeable. Lathering up with Angkor Soap really leaves your skin feeling more supple and moisturised. Unfortunately the glycerine also makes the soap softer than commercial counterparts, meaning that they might not last quite as long. To

extend the life of your soap, Shirley advises you place it on a well-drained soap dish.

While most base ingredients for the soaps are imported, Shirley is keen to use Cambodian botanical products to create a variety of bars that according to her hold hidden therapeutic properties. Thus there is beer, silk, wild honey, and traditional herbs soaps, plus eight other types, including one made using Cambodian red wine. Most soaps can be used for both the face and the body, except for lemongrass and ginger, which should not be applied to the face.

Mondulkiri coffee and the organic rice soaps are said to be excellent exfoliators. Without fail, they all smell and look gorgeous.

Each bar, handmade by Shirley, costs US\$7.80, and can be purchased either in the shop – where they are also produced – at Living Room Café and a few other souvenir shops in town. In her shop, Shirley also sells facial creams on demand, but you had better call ahead for a consultation to get the right combination of essential oils. These cost US\$15 for 70g. You also have to wait three days. Products for babies and expecting mothers are also available on demand.

Angkor Soaps, 16C Street 374, Tel: 015 888 666, is open from 8am to 5pm – Nora Lindstrom ☺



Sam Moffett: Vain Glorious – Want a Sexy Perky Bum?

WHETHER YOU ARE A GUY or a girl, one part of your anatomy that others notice most is your bum. A nice firm derriere looks great in jeans or on the beach, and to many is a sign of youth and fitness. And it's not that hard to get there.

Collectively your buttock muscles are called "glutes". They consist of three gluteus muscles – the maximus, medius and minimus, for Latin scholars. The gluteus maximus is the largest of the

three muscles and is used for hip extension, outward rotation, leg adduction and leg abduction. The gluteus medius and gluteus minimus are the muscles on the sides of the hip that are used for the internal rotation of the thighs.

Strong glutes help us in daily activities like climbing stairs or squatting to pick something up. They are essential in most sports, especially cycling and jumping sports such as football, rugby and tennis.

If your glutes aren't quite what you'd like them to be, it's probably because the muscles are less developed and there is a layer of fat covering them. The remedy is simple – lose what fat you can by a combination of cardio and diet, then build up the muscles.

For cardio, general exercises such as walking, running or cycling is a start. If you have access to a gym, step machines or a stair master are even better for

shaping those buttocks. But to get that really firm round perky shape most would love to have, you'll have to go further with weight resistance exercises like squats, dead lifts and lunges.

In a nutshell it's all about losing the fat first, then working the muscles. You may be amazed at the results.

Sam Moffett is manager of Clark Hatch Fitness Centre, Hotel InterContinental, 3/F Mao Tse Tung Blvd.

Paddy's Gym

635 National Road 5, just past the Japanese Bridge, Tel: 012 214 940
Bearing the air of an American boxing gym, Paddy's offers an honest workout with recently imported equipment. Good range of free weights, boxing ring, boxing bags and aerobics. Entrance is US\$3 or US\$45 per month. Open from 6am to 8pm.

Raffles Amrita Spa

Raffles Le Royal Hotel, Street 92, Tel: 023 981 888
Modern gym and pool in Phnom Penh's most elegant hotel. Use of gym, pool, sauna and jacuzzi costs US\$10 weekdays (US\$15 at weekends). Open from 6am to 10pm.

Physique Club

Hotel Cambodiana, 313 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 012 810 432
Most modern of the five-star fitness centres with reasonable selection of equipment, although has a small changing area. Membership is currently US\$56 per month or US\$7 per day. Open from 6am to 10pm.

VIP Club

Norodom Boulevard, Tel: 023 993 535
Large sports complex with gym, outdoor swimming pools, sauna, steam room and tennis courts. US\$6 per day for use of all facilities, monthly membership is US\$50 to US\$60. Open from 6am to 9pm.

hairdressers

De Salon Hair Spa
31D Sihanouk Blvd., Tel: 023 223 938

Fancy new hair salon opened in late June by the same group that run Nata Spa.

Image Beauty

57Eo Street 240, Tel: 012 455 239
Khmer, English and Thai speaking stylists trained in hair, facial and nail treatment. L'oreal Professionnel products available. Free WiFi, tea and coffee provided.

New Jack Holt International

38 Street 57 (at Champei Spa), Tel: 023 350 788
Contemporary hairdressers with a French-trained Khmer stylist. Offers the full range of hair treatments as well as nails and waxing.

medical

American Medical Center

Ground Floor Cambodiana Hotel 313 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 991 863
www.amc-cambodia.com
Team of international and Khmer doctors that provide general practice services to clients, including the American Embassy. Can arrange emergency evacuation. 24-hour service.

International SOS Medical Clinic

161 Street 51, Tel: 023 216 911
Globally renowned provider of medical assistance and international health care. Team of expat and Khmer doctors offer general practice, specialist and emergency repatriation services. Has multilingual staff. Members have access to SOS clinics around the globe. Has on-site laboratory and dental facilities. 24-hour service.

Naga Clinic

11 Street 254, Tel: 023 211 300
French-Khmer run clinic with a team of international and Khmer doctors. Impressive range of modern facilities. Has a 24-hour pharmacy on site and can perform minor surgery. 24-hour service.

optics

Eye Care

166 Norodom Bvd., Tel: 016 556 602
Modern opticians with ophthalmologists on hand to check prescriptions. Have an interesting range of glasses and lenses. Frames from under US\$100.

Grand Optics

71 & 75 Norodom Bvd, Tel: 023 213 585
Modern opticians with the latest equipment including free computerised eye test. Makes prescription glasses and contact lenses at prices much cheaper than in the West.

pools

Asia Club

456 Monivong Bvd., Tel: 023 721 766
Beautiful swimming pool tucked around the back of Man Han Lou Restaurant near Caltex Bokor. Use of pool costs US\$10 per day for either individuals or small groups of people. Members (US\$50 per month) also get a 15 percent discount on both Man Han Lou Restaurant and Master Kang Health Care Centre.

Fitness One

Himawari Hotel, 313 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 214 555
Outdoor hotel swimming costs \$6 per

day or US\$10 for pool, gym, steam room and Jacuzzi. Prices rise to US\$8 and US\$12 at the weekend.

L'Imprevu Resort

Highway 1, 7km past Monivong Bridge, Tel: 012 655 440
Peaceful resort complex just outside of the city has bungalows, tennis court, table tennis, boules and a beautiful swimming pool. Pool costs US\$2 on weekdays and US\$4 at weekends, children for free.

Raffles Amrita Spa

Raffles Le Royal Hotel, Street 92, Tel: 023 981 888
Attractive pool in Phnom Penh's most elegant hotel. Use of gym, pool, sauna and jacuzzi costs US\$10 weekdays (US\$15 at weekends). Open from 6am to 10pm.

The Billabong

5 Street 158, Tel: 023 223 703
www.thebillabonghotel.com
Sheltered garden hotel with an excellent outdoor swimming pool good both for lengths and relaxation. Daily usage costs US\$5 and WiFi weighs in at US\$5 per 24 hours. Swimming hours from 8am to 8.30pm.

The Club at Northbridge

1km off National Road 4, (on the way to the airport), Tel: 023 886 012
International school has a pool costing US\$5 per day. Membership is US\$200 per family for three months or US\$100 for individuals. Open every day, there are also tennis courts and playground for kids.

Open Palm Studio

12 Street 101, Tel: 012 633 278
The first official Spinning facility in Phnom Penh. US\$10/single, US\$100/12 classes Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8.15am. Call to book in advance.

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Laura Watson: Medical Gifts



IF YOU FIND YOURSELF searching for gift ideas for a medical member of your family or someone who is serious about health this holiday season, you could consider one of the following incredible advances and inventions.

■ MEDICAL GADGETS

How about a video capsule endoscopy set for the private clinic? This is the perfect way to visualise the small intestine, an otherwise hard area of the body to image. It consists of a lozenge-sized, free-floating capsule that the patient swallows. It has a tiny camera device embedded in it, which is programmed to take a series of photos over time. The capsule sends these by radio waves to a box strapped to the patient's stomach. After time nature takes its course and the

capsule will leave the body. Thankfully they are designed to be single use only. The images can then be downloaded from the receiver box and a diagnosis made.

Or there is the new infrared vein viewer that uses near-infrared light technology to enable health workers to 'see' the veins under the skin. No more multiple stab attempts to find that elusive vein which could be a relief to both doctor and patient.

■ STAYING ALIVE

A low budget option could be the finger pulse oximeter. This is a clever little device that uses a beam of light to measure the amount of oxygen in a person's blood, as well as their pulse rate. The device is slipped onto a finger tip and usually comes attached to a large box with a

readout. This clever micro version is tiny and could make a handy key ring for anyone likely to be caught unexpectedly in an emergency situation. If you ever do use one of these things just be careful that you don't have any nail varnish on as this can give artificially (and worryingly) low readings.

If you are on an even tighter budget how about a CD of 'Stayin' Alive' by the Bee Gees? Recent research has shown that this song is played at exactly the right tempo for performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The music improves health professionals' ability to keep to the optimum rhythm while doing chest compressions, which ought to improve the effectiveness of the rescue attempt.

■ SANITARY PRESENTS

While dining around town a handheld ultraviolet disinfection scanner could be useful. Manufacturers claim that a 10 second scan is enough to kill potentially harmful staphylococcal and salmonella bacteria along with viruses that may be lurking on your cutlery or plate. On a similar theme if you know anyone who owns a supermarket you could buy them a sparkling new shopping cart sanitiser device that looks a little like the metal detector you walk through at an airport. When a shopping cart is pushed through it is sprayed with a fine mist of disinfectant, thus removing that virus-laden, toddler dribble or

the bacteria from the hands of the last trolley user.

■ STAR TREK CURES

Still under development but remaining on my wish list is the P.L.E.A.S.E. or painless laser epidermal administering system. Star Trek fans might recognise this device from when Dr. McCoy cured crew members infected with some hideous alien disease by injecting them painlessly and without a needle. It works by using air to force tiny holes in the top layer of the skin. At present this just creates a better surface for the absorption of drugs through a patch but the idea at least has potential. It might one day even provide my husband with a way to take his Christmas dinner Brussels Sprouts without the misery of actually tasting them.

So P.L.E.A.S.E think generously when buying gifts for the medic in your life this year, enjoy the holiday season safely and remember to match your gifts with donations towards basic vaccines for those that wouldn't otherwise get them, or clean water supplies, or some other equivalent scheme.

Acknowledgements: www.coollest-gadgets.com, the Beegees and Gene Roddenberry.

Laura Watson is a general practitioner at the International SOS Medical Clinic in Phnom Penh. For more information please email: sue.kemp@internationalsos.com. 📧



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PHARMALINK NAGA CLINIC	#11, street 254 - Phnom Penh	24/7
PHARMALINK BOEUNG TRABEK	#14Eo, street 432 - Phnom Penh	MON-SUN > 7:30 AM - 8:00 PM

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 http://www.hotel-imprevu-resort.com
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 Phnom Penh - Kingdom of Cambodia
 Open 06:30 - 21:00

VIP Club

Norodom Boulevard, Tel: 023 993 535
 Large sports complex with gym, outdoor swimming pools and tennis courts. US\$6 per day for use of all facilities, monthly membership is US\$50 to US\$60. Open from 6am to 9pm.

spas

Amara Spa

Cnr. Sisowath Quay & Street 110, Tel: 023 998 730, 012 873 999
 Fax: 023 998 731

www.amaraspa.hotelcara.com
 A unique & comprehensive Day Spa providing a wide selection of facials, body massages and treatments; arranged into four storey sophisticated modern facility. Massages start from \$10 - \$55, facial from \$42 - \$68 and package from \$75-\$95. Open from 11am to 11pm

Amret Spa

3 Street 57, Tel: 023 997 994

Stylish spa with treatments in individual rooms. Also has rooms for couples with Jacuzzi. Massages from US\$8 to US\$30. Open from 9am to 9pm.

Aziadee

16AB Street 282, Tel: 023 996 921

Very relaxing, air-conditioned massage parlour with individual rooms. Massages start from US\$8, with aromatherapy from US\$18.

Bliss

29 Street 240, Tel: 023 215 754

Health spa at the back and upstairs in this beautiful French colonial building. Have a massage, facial, body scrub or simply wallow in the beautiful flower bath. Massages start from US\$20, facials from US\$35 and packages range from US\$40 to US\$75. Open 9am to 9pm, closed Monday.

Champey Spa & Salon

38 Street 57, Tel: 012 670 939
www.champeyspa.com

Beautiful spa in the heart of Boeung Keng Kang 1 district. Has a full range of massages from US\$8 and body treatments US\$6 to US\$25. Open from 9am to 11pm.

Dermal Spa

4C Street 57, Tel: 012 222 898

Spa offering beauty salon, foot massage and body massage services. Specialises in dermatologica skin and beauty products.

In-Street

63 Street 242, Tel: 023 214 621

Set in beautiful villas, the lovely gardens and revitalising café that greet your entrance indicate that this is more than just a spa. Full range of massages and beauty treatments with an emphasis on the Balinese.

Kropom Chhuk

29 Street 200, Tel: 011 668 455, 012 222 898

Khmer owned with Thai trained masseurs. Same ownership as Dermal spa. In a large old house centrally located. Salon Open from 9am to 9pm

Master Kang Health Care Centre

456 Monivong Blvd., Tel: 023 721 765
 Large health centre next to Man Han Lou Restaurant. Offers foot massage in either public or private rooms downstairs, with both Chinese and oil massage (US\$12 per hour or US\$20 per 2 hours) upstairs. Downstairs also has a grand piano which is played in the evenings.

Miss Care & Spa

4B Street 278, Tel: 023 221 130

Small beauty parlour and spa set on the Golden Street. Well-priced massages range from US\$7 to US\$16 and beauty treatments are from US\$4.

Punarnava

Ayurveda Centre Spa, Hotel Cambodiana, 313 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 012 810 432
 Traditional Indian-style Ayurveda massage and healing that can provide relief

to a range of physical ailments. All staff are professionally trained.

Sawasdee Massage

6B Street 57, Tel: 023 996 670

Oil, Thai-style and foot massage are available from trained masseuses in this excellent parlour, which also does beauty treatments. For a few dollars more than the dorm-style mattress massages, you can have the privacy of your own room. Massages start from US\$13.

Seeing Hands Massage

6 Street 95, 209, 246, 253 Street 53
Tel: 016 856 188

String of massage parlours where the service is provided by the blind at a very reasonable price.

sports general

Cambodian Federation of Rugby

cambodianfederationofrugby.com

Proper 15-a-side rugby league with four senior teams as well as kid's touch and women's rugby teams. Contact Larry at khmer_rugby@yahoo.co.uk for more details.

Cambodia Golf & Country Club

Route 4 Tel: 023 363 666

International standard, 18-hole golf course, which has green fees of US\$43 for a round.

Cricket

Infrequent fun games played at a school off Street 360, near Street 63, on Sunday mornings. No equipment required and little prior knowledge of the rules is also ok. Cost is US\$5 which includes drink and barbecue. Contact Majid at Saffron Wine Bar on 012 247 832.

Football: The Bayon Wanderers

www.bayonwanderers.com

Mixed Khmer and western team. Training sessions at the International School of Phnom Penh on Tuesdays from 5pm and Thursdays from

6.30pm. Cost is from US\$1 to US\$15. Contact Billy Barnaart on 012 803 040.

Hash House Harriers

The Hash meets at the railway station every Sunday at 2.45pm. An ideal way to see the countryside either walking or running, and then to make a public (school) exhibition of yourself. Costs US\$5 for the pleasure. Contact 012 832 509 for details.

Pangolins Rugby Club

Expat rugby team that plays others in the region. Also has female rugby team called the Apsaras. Mixed touch rugby at Northbridge School on Saturdays at 3.30pm. Contact Greg Eggins on 012 810 900.

Royal Cambodia

Phnom Penh Golf Club

National Road 4

The other international standard golf course that charges US\$40 for 18 holes (weekdays).

tennis

The Club at Northbridge

1km off National Road 4,

Tel: 023 886 012

Use of the excellent tennis court costs US\$2.50 per person per hour. Book in advance.

Narmada Sports Centre

Imperial Garden Villa & Hotel


315 Sisowath Quay,

Tel: 023 219 991 Ext. 1021

Daily use of the tennis courts plus other facilities including sauna, pool and gym costs US\$7 during the week and US\$9 at weekends. Monthly membership is US\$72.

VIP Sport Club

Norodom Boulevard, Tel: 023 993 535

Membership to the sports club which includes usage of the tennis courts is US\$40 per month. The club also sells coupons for single and repetitive visits. Hourly rate is US\$7. 



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next generation

Bright lights, big city

Sunset's the time when Cambodian people get ready to take their toddlers on outings, not put them to bed. Mother of a vivacious three-year-old **Angela Savage** finds two good reasons to go native.



The fountain in Wat Bothum Park

'ENJOY PHNOM PENH PARK' say the red neon letters in Khmer script over the entrance to the riverfront fairground just south of the port.

It's both a business name and an invitation to have fun. And every evening around sunset motorbike loads of Cambodian families answer the call.

Surveying the crowds from his perch in the ticketing booth is manager Dara, who has worked five years for the company behind the park.

'I love my job,' he says. 'I get to watch people have fun. If I couldn't come here to work every evening, I'd be sad.'

Phnom Penh Garden has been operating on Sisowath Quay just north of Street 90 since early 2008, having moved from its previous location near the Nagaworld.

Our three-year-old has been known to happily ride the electric train five times in a row while a miniature signal box beside the tracks plays 'Frère Jacques' over and over

■ THE FUN OF THE FAIR

Among the selection of rides are rotating planes and jeeps, two electric trains – one with carriages shaped like ducks – a merry-go-round, small Ferris wheel, dodgem cars and a small roller coaster.

There are also a jumping castle with built-in slides, wading pools where kids can angle for plastic fish, and the ever popular token-operated rides in the shape of various

animals, not to mention a child-sized armoured tank.

Despite the words 'United States' written on the side of one electric train, all the equipment comes from Vietnam.

With few exceptions, the rides swing, sway, rotate and/or undulate at a toddler-friendly pace, accompanied by tinny music and flashing fairy-lights. Some seatbelts are functional, and many rides are safe enough for toddlers to tackle on their

own, thereby satisfying their need for independence.

With most rides costing 1,000 riel and 2,000 riel, you can afford to indulge that other great craving toddlers have – repetition.

Provided she gets to be in the driver's seat, our three-year-old has been known to happily ride the electric train five times in a row while a miniature signal box beside the tracks plays 'Frère Jacques' over and over. She can't get enough of it.

The operators will direct you to the relevant ticket booth if you can't figure out where to pay for specific rides. You can buy a wad of tickets and cash in unused ones before you leave. I've even seen operators return tickets to families whose crying child had to be pulled from a ride before it got underway.

Dara says foreigners visit the fairground, but it's Cambo-

next generation guide



A network protecting children from all forms of abuse. www.childsafe-cambodia.org.

cafés & restaurants

Annam
1C Street 282,
Tel: 023 726 661
In addition to serving excellent Indian food on a beautiful terracotta terrace, this Indian restaurant also has a playroom with a trained member of staff to ensure your little one gets up to no harm while you eat your chicken korma.

Café Fresco II
Cnr. streets 51 & 306,
Tel: 023 224 891
Let your children play with puzzles and Lego on beanbags or watch films like the Lion King looked after by a trained member of staff as you enjoy your cappuccino.

Café Living Room
9 Street 306,
Tel: 023 726 139
The playroom is stocked with books, games, wooden dollhouse and even a rattan crib, while the kid's menu has bite-sized portions. In addition to art classes there are plans to hold story-telling lessons.

Gasolina
56/58 Street 57,
Tel: 012 373 009
Has weekly Saturday and Sunday brunches from 10am to 3pm for parents and their children. Also has the biggest garden in town for kids to wander around in.

Intercontinental Hotel
296 Mao Tse Tung Blvd.,
Tel: 023 424 888
The five-star hotel has a special activities corner for kids to play while parents enjoy Sunday Brunch from 11.30am to 3pm, including free-flowing Moët & Chandon champagne. A nanny is on-hand, and under-6s get to eat for free.

Java Café
56 Sihanouk Blvd.,
Tel: 023 987 420
Kid's menu includes chicken nuggets and pizza bagels and there are colouring pages and crayons to keep the kids amused. High-chair is available on request and baby-changing facilities are in the toilet.

Java Tea Room
Inside Monument Books, 111 Norodom Blvd., Tel: 092 451 462
Cheerful children's reading room has picture books, puzzles, art supplies and occasional story-telling sessions. Open from 8am to 8pm.

Le Jardin
16 Street 360,
Tel: 011 723 399
This garden retreat has a great kids' area with playhouse and sandbox. Specialises in birthday parties, with cake, decorations, toys and drawing materials provided for US\$7 per child.

Romdeng
74 Street 174, Tel: 092 219 565
Large garden and swimming pool provides kids with plenty of opportunity to work off all that energy. Many of the Khmer dishes can be ordered in half-portions. If your kids like creepy-crawlies, they might just take on the crispy tarantulas.

Kids Create
Café Living Room, 9 Street 306,
Tel: 023 726 139
Art classes with Leah Newman each Wednesday at Café Living Room, from 2.30pm to 3.25pm for 2 to 3-year-olds and from 3.30pm to 4.15pm for 4 to 6-year-olds.

Khmer
Gecko & Garden Pre-school,
1 Street 282, Tel: 092 575 431
Khmer classes for children from 2.5 to 6-year-olds from 3pm to 5pm on Wednesdays and Fridays, costs US\$96.

Yoga
Gecko & Garden Pre-school,
1 Street 282, Tel: 092 575 431
Yoga lessons with Georgina Treasure for 3 to 5-year-olds from 3pm to 4pm on Tuesdays. Drop-ins welcome (US\$6)

Kabiki Hotel
22 Street 264, Tel: 023 222 290
The first hotel designed specifically for families, Kabiki has a salt-water swimming pool and large garden for kids to ride around on bicycles in. Menu has child-friendly dishes like chicken nuggets. Swimming is free so long as you spend US\$5 in the restaurant.

Kambol Cart Raceway
Tel: 012 232 332
A few kilometers west of the airport is Phnom Penh's flashiest go-cart track. Boasting a 900m international standard size track complete with hairpin turns, a cart costs US\$7 for a 10-minute round. The track can also be rented by the hour, half-day or the entire day.

Parkway Square
113 Mao Tse Tung Blvd, Tel: 023 982 928
Ten-pin bowling alley with lanes costing between US\$6 and US\$9 per hour, depending upon the time of day. It also has a dodgem track, for those who haven't had enough of close shaves on the streets of Phnom Penh.

Phnom Penh Water Park
50 Street 110, Tel: 023 881 008
Traditional mix of slides and wave pools. Entrance is US\$2 weekdays (US\$3 at weekends). Open from 9.30am to 5.30pm.

Phnom Tamao Wildlife Park
Phnom Tamao,
44 kilometres out of the capital along Highway 2, lies Cambodia's best wildlife centre. All the animals are either rescued from traders or bred at the centre. Many of the animals are critically endangered. Open from 8am to 4pm.

Sorya Centre
Corner Street 63 & 142
The top floor of Phnom Penh's original shopping centre has a rink devoted to roller-skating and roller-blading. Hiring the skates or blades costs between US\$1 and US\$2.

Villa Langka
14 Street 282
This family-friendly boutique hotel has a large pool where kids are allowed to splash about. The menu has a short children's section and use of the pool is free so long as adults spend US\$8 and children US\$5 at the restaurant.

pre-schools

Gecko & Garden Pre-school
1 Street 282, Tel: 092 575 431
This not-for-profit pre-school, established ten years ago, emphasises learning through creative play in a supportive environment. The Kids Club, for 18 months to 5-year-olds, is from 3.15pm to 4.45pm on Mondays, Wednesday and Thursday and costs US\$80 per child (Sep. to Dec.). Also has yoga and Khmer classes.

Giving Tree Preschool
17 Street 71, Tel: 017 997 112,
www.thegivingtreeschool

Play-based programme in both English and French includes storytelling, music, theatre, role-play, dance and gym with large outdoor play area, playground with sandbox, and swimming pool. Takes kids from 18 months to 5 years, either half-day (8am to 12pm) or full-day (8am to 4.30pm).

Kindercare
60 Street 322, Tel: 023 214 890
Kindergarten set in the heart of Boeung Keng Kang district I.

Tchou Tchou
13 Street 21, Tel: 023 362 899,
www.tchou-tchou.com
Kindergarten and pre-school for 18 months to 5-year-olds, open from Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 12pm. French is the main language, although English and Khmer is also practised.

international schools

ICan International School
85 Sothearos Blvd, Tel: 023 222 418
www.ican.edu.kh
International school teaching the English national curriculum to over 230 pupils. Has spacious and modern facilities.

International School of Phnom Penh
146 Norodom Blvd, Tel: 023 213 103
www.ispp.edu.kh
Not-for-profit international school founded in 1989, ISPP has 395 students from pre-school to Grade 12. It is the largest international school in Cambodia, and the only authorized IBO school in the country.

Lycée Français René Descartes
Street 96, Tel: 023 722 044
www.descartes-cambodge.com
French school offering primary and secondary level education, extra-curricular activities include basketball, football and rugby.

Northbridge School
1km off National Road 4 on the way to the airport, Tel: 023 886 000
www.niscambodia.com
Quality international school with curriculum for students from pre-school to high school as well as good sports facilities.

Zaman International School
2843 Street 3, Tel: 023 214 040
www.zamanisc.org
International school that teaches a full curriculum to children from four to 18. Facilities include basketball and volleyball courts, a football field and a science lab.

shops

Jolly Baby & Kids
108-110 Kampuchea Krom, Tel: 012 995 795
Wholesale and retailer store that sells clothing and toys for children.

Farlin Showrooms
129 Monivong Blvd,
175A Mao Tse Tung Blvd., Tel: 023 228 222 / 012 875 222
Sells a variety of products for babies and mothers imported from Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Kid's World
112 Sothearos Blvd., Tel: 012 661 168
Bright and cheery children's store selling an extensive range of real Lego, from small pieces up to elaborate box sets such as build-your-own Ferraris. The store also features a small play table. A range of baby products under the 'Nuk' label are also available.

Monument Toys
111 Norodom Blvd., Tel: 023 217 617
To the rear of Monument Books is a well-stocked toy section. It features an excellent range of well-known board games and toys including Barbie dolls, Transformers, Magic 8 balls and more. It has to be the best place in the city for brand name toys and games.

Willi Shop
769 Monivong Blvd., Tel: 023 211 652
All products are imported from France, including bébé brand baby products, the range includes prams, baby care, coats and toys. Open from 8am to 8pm. **F**

dian families who are the main patrons. It's the sort of place where you bump into tuk-tuk drivers from your neighbourhood out for the evening with their kids in tow.

'Enjoy Phnom Penh Park' is open from 5pm to 10pm (Monday to Saturday) and from 4pm - 10pm on Sundays. Provided you're not paranoid about safety standards, it's a wonderful place to mingle with Cambodian families and keep toddlers and smaller children entertained.

DANCING FOUNTAIN

If you're in the mood for more mingling and your toddler still has energy to burn, head south along Sothearos Boulevard towards the Cambodia-Vietnam Friendship Monument.

Here in the park opposite Wat Bothum Votey is a Chinese-built fountain, which looks nondescript by day. But on festive evenings, it explodes in a spectacular show of multi-coloured lights and special effects, jets of water spraying, twisting and leaping metres into the air in choreographed routines.

With luck there'll be loud music pumping out of huge speakers to the side of the park - think Vanessa-Mae does the 1812 Overture - making it seem as though the fountain is dancing.

Like 'Enjoy Phnom Penh Park', the fountain is popular with Cambodian families and a great place to hang out with the locals.

Sunday nights when it's not raining and festival days offer the best chance of seeing the dancing fountain in action. Show starts around 6pm to 6.30pm. **F**



shopping & fashion

Do They Know It's Christmas Time?

Finding the perfect gift for him, her or the little one is not as easy in Phnom Penh as in the more commercialised West. **Michelle Gilkes** provides some Christmas shopping hints.

YOU ONLY HAVE TO WALK into the International Book Centre (IBC) on Monivong Boulevard to be reminded that the holiday season is upon us – a 5'8" Santa gyrating to the tune of jingle bells welcomes shoppers. With locations on Monivong and Sihanouk Boulevards, IBC is the first to prepare for the holiday offering Christmas trees three to five feet tall with prices ranging from US\$6 to US\$38.50. It is fully stocked with holiday cards, lights, wrapping paper, garlands, Santa outfits for men, women and children, coloured gift bags and a variety of tree ornaments. Most impressive is the giant plastic snow globe within which snowflakes cascade over two friendly carrot-nosed snowmen.

■ FOR THE KIDS

If whining and begging are already underway Monument Toys located at the back of Monument Books on Norodom Boulevard will put nagged parents out of their misery. Standing the test of time Barbie has not only survived but thrives with a section of her own. She comes with accessories for every occasion – Barbie princess, Barbie's wedding day (they also sell Ken in a tux), Barbie in bikini, Barbie in winter garb, Barbie with Starbucks latte in hand, and even Barbie with her own barbecue grill and table-set.

For boys three to eight there is an impressive selection of toys which include Ben 10 items, Master Railway Royal Express train set, Kung Fu Panda, Transformers, Dino Valley Adventure Heroes, Hot Wheels and action heroes Spiderman, Aquaman, Batman and – nestled nicely between Spidey and the caped crusader – Wonder Woman. Pirate costumes can be found along with L'Ordre des Chevalier, which includes armour, helmet and sabre. Items range between US\$8 and US\$45.



dashing through the . . .

The section for younger children features Calinou's racially diverse baby dolls with accessories and a wide variety of Fisher Price items for children between 6 and 36 months. Stuffed favourites like Barney, Elmo and Cookie monster are also on display along with Dora the Explorer and Talking Dora Surprise. Little ones showing musical promise can start early on the Music Junior Drum Set (US\$37) or practice on their first banjo. Hug Me Dolls, the hand-made stuffed dolls are sold at many venues around town including Monument (US\$29).

Toy Café on Mao Tse Tung carries a wide variety of Lego, porcelain dolls (US\$15 to US\$20), battery operated vehicles your toddlers can climb into and brave oncoming traffic. Educational items such as a colour notebook teaching English, maths and science is perfect for six-year olds or older. There are also learning computers for three-year olds up, plus a learning globe that teaches basic geography.

Le Rit's on Street 310 has created an absolutely darling collection of animal dolls sporting wonderful Asian outfits from an assortment of fabrics.

■ WHAT DOES SHE WANT?

If you can't afford jewellery from Mr. Sit Down on Sihanouk get yourself to Sasa Cosmetics at the Sorya mall for fragrance brand names – Lolita Lemicka, Daisy by Marc Jacobs, Kenzo's Flower, Elizabeth Arden, Anna Sui's Flight of Fancy or Bvlgari (between US\$55 and US\$78).

Located near Russian Market, Rajana has a lovely gift-pack collection of scented soap made from lemongrass, tea tree and jasmine, handmade Christmas cards and wrapping paper, and inexpensive jewellery. They win the prize for interesting tree ornaments with their assorted package of miniature Cambodian bamboo fish traps which include palm leaf stars and bullet bells (US\$4.50). A miniature traditional 'Srak' or food carrier is filled with coffee beans and palm sugar, tea with ginger and tea with lemon, a great gift idea and only US\$7.25.

Anything from Couleur's D'Asie is sure to please as they carry magnificent scarves and other items by Eric Raisina, sexy bikinis, fun and funky jewellery and watches plus an interesting assortment of home décor items that can make a fancy gift. Le Rits also offers many

household items and colourful handicrafts such as pillows, beaded hair-clips and silk curtain panels.

When in doubt chocolate is always a safe bet and The Chocolate Shop on St. 240 is making it easy with special chocolate snowmen and Santas. Canapés for parties are available by special order along with Christmas logs, angel-shaped cookies and Christmas trees. Special gift packages will be available along with the chocolate fountain display for free tasting.

■ WHAT TO GET HIM

For the DIY man, power and leatherman tools are available at the Russian Market. Here you can also find binoculars as well as on the fourth floor of Sorya.

If he's particularly eccentric he may like the old stamp and coin collection from Monument Books' 100 years of French Indochine stamps and coins. Guy Fashion on the ground floor at Sorya sells decent cotton shirts for men, belts, colourful underwear and leather wallets. Sasa Cosmetics carries fragrance for men including a nifty box set of popular Calvin Klein scents (US\$78). Ties are readily available at Couleurs D'Asie in silk, and cotton sets coming with matching cuff-links.

So enjoy the holiday shopping and have a very merry Christmas.

Le Rit's

14 Street 310

Rajana

170 Street 450

The Chocolate Shop

39 Street 240

Monument Toys

11 Norodom Blvd.,

International Book Center

250 Monivong Blvd.,
154 Sihanouk Blvd.

Couleurs D'Asie

33 Street 240

shopping guide



A network protecting children from all forms of abuse. www.childsafe-cambodia.org.

art

Happy Painting Gallery

FCC; Domestic Airport
www.happypainting.net
Open since 1995, these popular aircon art shops sell the extremely colourful and positive works of iconic artist Stef. Accepts all major credit cards. Open from 8am to 10pm.

books & cds

Carnets d'Asie

French Cultural Centre (FCC)
218 Street 184, Tel: 012 799 959
French-language bookshop that has sections on Cambodia and Asia as well as general fiction. Good range of French magazines and newspapers. Open from 8am to 8pm (closed Sundays and holidays).

D's Books

12E Street 178 & 79 Street 240
Tel: 092 675 629
Over 20,000 copies. Most are second-hand, but some are originals. Heavy emphasis on best sellers, National Geographic past-issues and travel books. Open 9am to 9pm.

Monument Books

111 Norodom Blvd., Tel: 023 217 617
Extensive range of new English-language books in town including recent releases and sections on Asia, Cambodia, travel, cuisine, design and management. Good children's section as well as a wide choice of magazines and newspapers. Open from 7:30am to 7pm (7.30am to 5.30pm Monday).

Open Book

41Eo Street 240
A welcoming reading room open to anyone to drop in, with a good range of children's books in English, French and Khmer. Apart from the library books, there's a range of illustrated children's books in multiple languages for sale. You may need to ask a staff member for assistance, as the books for sale are locked in a cupboard.

crafts & furniture

Artisans D'Angkor

Craft Centre Tel: 063 963 330
Silk Farm Tel: 063 380 375
Specialising in stone and wood carving, lacquering and silk paintings. All items are hand made by the students at the training centre. Both the training centre and the silk farm are open to the public for tours and workshops.

Bazar Art de Vivre

28 Sihanouk Boulevard, Tel: 012 776 492
Elegant furniture and home fittings shop that specialises in antique furniture, furnishings by Bloom Atelier and Cambodian silks. French-Vietnamese owner Mai also specialises in calligraphy and design. Open from 9am to 6pm (closed Sunday).

Beyond Interiors

14e Street 306 Tel: 023 987 840
This interior design showroom, managed by Australian designer Bronwyn Blue, can provide the ultimate design solution to your interior dilemma. All products from Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia and Cambodia are made with travel in mind and have been treated to withstand any climate. Open 7days, 9am to 7pm

Chez l'Artisan

42D Street 178, Tel: 012 869 634
Quaint shop with high-quality wooden furniture and lampshades that also produces made-to-measure goods on request. Just make sure you don't trip over the dog on the way in. Open from 10am to 6pm.

Hidden Treasures

9 Street 148, Tel: 012 717 212
Antique shop tucked just around the corner from Riverside Bar. Has a surprisingly large selection of antiques.

I Ching Decor

85 Sotheaeros Blvd., Tel: 023 220 873
www.ichingdecor.com
Boutique interior design shop offering advice on architectural work and interior design, as well as providing custom-made furniture, home accessories, kitchenware, lighting and bedroom suites.

Le Rit's

14 Street 310, Tel: 023 213 160
Restaurant and boutique handicraft shop run by the NGO NYEMO, set in a beautiful garden. Open from 7am to 5pm, closed Sundays.

Pavillon d'Asie

24 - 26 Sihanouk Blvd., Tel: 012 497 217
Antique lovers dream, with a large array of well-restored furniture and decorative objects. Wooden cabinets jostle for space with Buddha statues and old wooden boxes. Upstairs are pieces from the French colonial era. Open 9am to 6pm. Closed Sundays.

computers

S.I. Computer Technology

43-45 Street 43-45, Tel: 023 216 699
93 Sihanouk Blvd., Tel: 023 218 880
Top quality computer show room for company that deals in latest computer equipment. Retailers a range of Fujitsu LifeBooks, including the U1010, T2010, T4220, S7111 and the award-winning S6410.

fashion

Ambre

37 Street 178,
Tel: 023 217 935 / 012 688 608
High-end fashion designs created by Cambodian designer Romyda Keth that are popular all over the world. Beautiful colonial building with colour-themed rooms makes the perfect setting for the city's most glamorous design shop. Open 10am to 6pm (closed Sunday).

Beautiful Shoes

138 Street 143, Tel: 012 848 438
Located near Tuol Sleng Museum, this family-run business measures your feet and designs the shoe exactly as you wish. The shop also caters for men. Open from 7am to 6.30pm.

Bliss

29 Street 240, Tel: 023 215 754
A beautiful colonial building houses this exquisite shop with funky patterned cushions, quilts and an excellent clothing line. The health spa at the back of the shop also sells Spana beauty products. Open from 9am to 9pm (closed Monday).

Eric Raisina

53 Veal Village, Siem Reap
Tel: 012 965 207 / 063 963 207
Accessories, home decorations, textiles and clothing created by Malagasy-born and French-trained designer. His amazingly vibrant designs have collected quite a following throughout the fashion world.

Jasmine Boutique

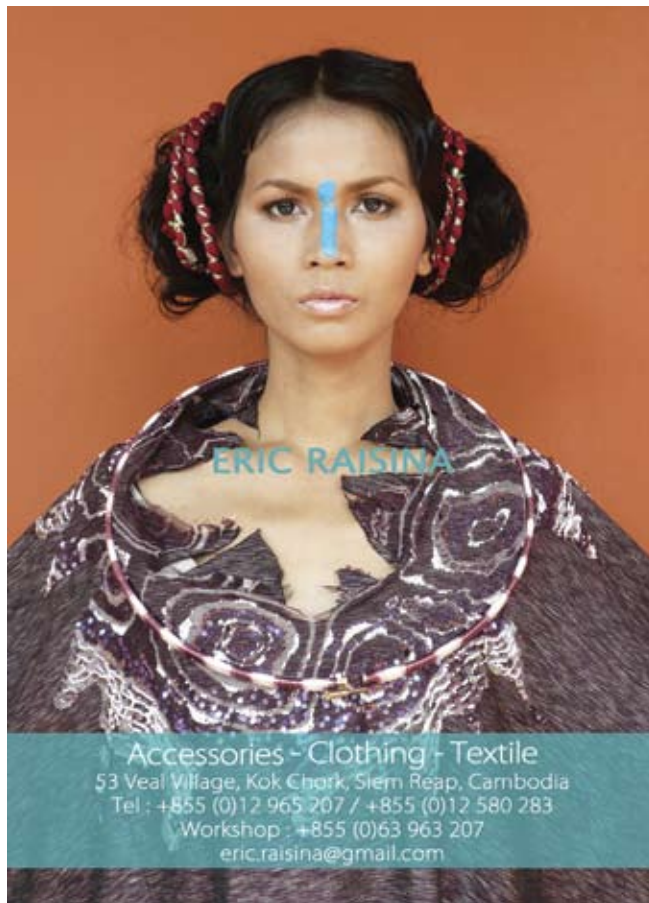
73 Street 240, Tel: 023 223 103
www.jasmineboutique.net
Established in 2001 by Kellianne Karatau and Cassandra McMillan, this boutique creates its own collection of designs twice a year using hand-woven Cambodian silk. Open 8am to 6pm.

Kambuja

165 Street 110, Tel: 012 613 586
Stylish fashion outlet with clothing designed to fuse west with east.

Keo

92 Street 222, Tel: 012 941 643
Haute couture fashion house run by Sylvain Lim, the grand master of Cambodian fashion. Has some pret a porter too.



Accessories - Clothing - Textile
53 Veal Village, Kok Chork, Siem Reap, Cambodia
Tel : +855 (0)12 965 207 / +855 (0)12 580 283
Workshop : +855 (0)63 963 207
eric.raisina@gmail.com

beyond
interiors



SHOWROOM No. 14, ST. 306. BKKI

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L'Armoire
126 Street 19,
Tel: 012 830 551
Designer Alexandra Barter describes her collection as "Cambodian tropical". With women's fashion, accessories and homeware, Alexandra's range is stylish and wearable, ideal for expats in Cambodia. Open from 10.30am to 5.30pm, closed Mondays.

MDSF
151B Street 199,
Tel: 017 467 986
www.wpp-we.org/mdsf
Small garment factory produces simple clothes and bags. Proceeds go to support women living with HIV and their children in Cambodia.

Sapors
11 Street 59,
Tel: 012 900 470
Modelling agency, training school for housekeeping, as well as a beauty training school.

Threads
56 E1 Sihanouk Boulevard
(behind Java Café),
Tel: 012 768 248
Unisex boutique tucked away behind Java Café that sells the designs of owner Linda.

Water Lily
37 Street 240,
Tel: 012 812 469
Eclectic shop run by Christine Gauthier selling her distinctive range of colourful unique necklaces (US\$10 to US\$500), beads, earrings, flamboyant hats (from US\$26) and bags (US\$35). Open 8am to 5.30pm (closed Sunday).

Zoco
22B Street 278,
Tel: 012 175 5964
Fashion boutique run by the Spanish-born Nurie, sells dresses, skirts, bags and accessories, with dresses from US\$10. Has another store on the way to Serendipity Beach in Sihanoukville.

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No.16C, Street 374, Chamkarmon, Phnom Penh, Kingdom of Cambodia
E-Mail: admin@angkorsoaps.com WEB SITE: www.angkorsoaps.com
Tel. & Fax: (855) 23 223 720

Also available at: Kravon House, Living Room, Sab Bay

Smateria
8Eo Street 57,
Tel: 012 647 061
Boutique specialising in accessories made from recycled materials including a range of bags and wallets made from old fruit juice cartons, plastic bags and mosquito nets.

Spicy Green Mango
4a Street 278 Tel: 012-915-968
29 Street 178 Tel: 023-215-017
Now open in two locations, designer Anya Weis offers a very different style of clothing to any other shop in Phnom Penh with imaginative, colourful skirts, trousers, t-shirts, belts and shoes.

SONG
75 Street 240,
Tel: 092 985 986
www.songresort.com
Franchise of the Vietnamese-based SONG label owned by Keo Sophea who used to manage Kambuja. Features casual wear for both men and women designed by Valerie Gregori McKenzie.

food

Alpine Trading
13 Street 90, Tel: 012 961 084
This quality European beer importer supplies restaurants, cafes and bars.

AusKhmer
125 Street 105, (between Streets 348 & 330),
Tel: 023 214 478
Excellent source of Australian beef and lamb and also has groceries, wines, beers by the case or six pack, plus a great range of imported cheeses. This major supplier of cafes and restaurants is also open to individuals who can check out the warehouse style store and coolrooms.

Bong Karem
Tel: 092 235 336
Italian gelato delivered to your door! Also available at Kabiki, Meta House, La Veranda, Living Room, Cafe Yelj. Delivery available from 12pm to 5pm.

Jasmine Boutique

Kingdom of Cambodia www.jasmineboutique.net

#73, Street 240, Phnom Penh, t: +855 (0)23 223 103
FCC Angkor, Pokambor Ave, Siem Reap, t: +855 (0)63 760 610
e: jasmineboutique@online.com.kh

Butcher & Co.

219 Street 19, Tel: 023 223 527
Quality French butchers in the same building as Open Wine. The meats here are some of the finest cuts in the city.

Camory - Premium Cookie Boutique
167 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 224 937
www.camoryfoods.com

Makes cookies using agricultural produce from the provinces such as cashew nuts from Kampong Cham and Mondulkiri honey. A portion of the profits helps fund education for a local orphanage. Open 9am to 8.30pm.

Comme a la Maison

13 Street 57, Tel: 023 360 801
Decidedly sophisticated French restaurant with a beautiful outdoor terrace area at the front, yet secluded from the street. Small delicatessen and bakery at the back of the restaurant. Open from 6am to 10.30pm.

Dan's Meats

51A Street 214, Tel: 012 906 072
Phnom Penh's man of meat, Lanzi, supplies his strictly non-vegetarian products to many of the restaurants and bars around town. A good range of quality products is for sale at his butcher's shop.

Kurata Pepper

Cnr. Streets 63 & 322, Tel: 023 726 480
Selling organic Koh Kong pepper and associated products, Kurata is one of the more unusual shops in town. Watch the workers shift through the peppercorns in a room near the front entrance.

Smokey da Boar

Tel: 012 836 442
Kiwi run wholesale butchers specialising in sausages, ham on the bone and burger meat. Phone orders only.

The Deli

13 Street 178, Tel: 012 851 234
Café and bakery with a good range of take away breads, sandwiches and pastries. Now has a second outlet on Street 51. Open from 6.30am to 6.30pm, delivery service (within 30 minutes) is only from 7am to 11pm.

Veggy's

23 Street 240, Tel: 023 211 534
One of the few shops catering for western tastes - marmite, Branston pickle, cereals, Barilla pasta, Lao coffee and other expat essentials. Good range of cheeses, salad and meats are stored in the walk-in cold room at the back. Open 8am to 8pm.

silks & accessories

Couleurs d'Asie

33 Street 240, Tel: 023 221 075
www.couleursdasiae.net
Aircon shop selling French-designed silk and linen bags, scarves, cushions, pillow cases and quilts. Has a selection of soaps and bath salts from Senteurs d'Angkor, Amata beauty products and Eric Raisina's unique textiles and clothing. Open Mon.-Sat. 9am to 7pm, Sun. 9am to 3pm.

Friends 'n' Stuff

13 Street 215, Tel: 023 426 748
A colourful shop with unique products designed by Mith Samlanh/Friends students and parents of former street kids. Range includes clothes, necklaces, purses and 2nd hand goods. Also has a nail bar run by students from the beauty class. Open from 11am to 9pm 7 days.

NYEMO

14 Street 310, Tel: 023 213 160
NGO handicraft store on the grounds of Le Rit's training restaurant. Fun, funky and a bit different to the norm, their silks and accessories are in fantastic bright colours. Also has a great range of children's toys and hanging butterfly and bird mobiles. Second outlet on the eastern edge of the Russian Market.

Sayon Silk Works

40 Street 178, Tel: 023 990 219
www.sayonsilkworks.com
Since 2001 self-taught Cambodian designer Sayon has created all her own handbags, cushions, scarves and quilts from Cambodian silk. A nice selection of goods on sale. Open from 9am to 7pm.

Silk & Pepper

33 Street 178 & Amanjaya Hotel
Range of contemporary silk home interior products inspired by Asian and western designs. Sells all kinds of tailor made silks and linens. Also sells Kampot pepper. Open daily from 8.30am to 7pm.

Sobbbhana Boutique

24 Street 144/49, Tel: 023 219 455
A not for profit organisation founded by Princess Norodom Marie, offering a range of colourful, handwoven silk products. Profits help to support local women by funding the training, medical care and education of weavers.

Wine

Celiers d'Asie

635 National Road 5, Tel: 023 986 350
Wine supplier with the largest quantity of retail stock in town, the Celiers d'Asie group has been providing wine to most of the top hotels and restaurants in town for over ten years.

Open Wine

219 Street 19, Tel: 023 223 527
Aircon wine shop and tasting gallery. Sells wines, severac and calvados and meat. Has occasional free wine-tastings.

Quarto Products

30 / 31 Street 108, Tel: 023 221 772
email: yuthana@quarto-products.com
Fine food and wine distributors with large range of wines from around the world. Arranges frequent wine dinners and events.

Red Apron

15 Street 240, Tel: 023 990 951
Home of wine enthusiasts in Phnom Penh is both a wine boutique and tasting gallery. With around 300 wines the boutique has far more range for a special occasion than the supermarkets.

Sobbbhana Boutique
No. 23, St. 144/49, Sangkat Phsar Thmey III, Khan Daun Penh, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
Phone: (+855 23) 219 455
Email: sobbbhana@sobbbhana.org
www.sobbbhana.org

Siem Reap Angkor International Airport
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(Behind Java Café)

The Hot Seat: The Banker

ANZ Royal's CEO has been in the country since May, **AsiaLIFE** asks **Stephen Higgins** how his first six months have gone.

AsiaLIFE: What made you decide to come to Cambodia?

Stephen Higgins: I have been in Cambodia since May this year. The opportunity here work-wise was too good to refuse, with ANZ Royal Bank being ANZ's biggest retail operation outside of Australia and New Zealand. The big bonus has been finding out what a great place Cambodia is to live.

What experience do you have with ANZ?

I've been with ANZ for about 15 years, with that time spent in various roles including Corporate Banking, Leasing, Sales & Marketing, and Investor Relations.

What is your initial impression of the business environment in Cambodia at the moment?

The environment here is actually a lot more pro-business than I expected, and a lot more than for other countries in the region. However, there needs to be a lot more investment in infrastructure and in human resource development.

How do you see the banking sector developing over the next few years?

It should remain fairly competitive, but I think you can expect some consolidation and generally fewer banks prior to 2010 when the NBC's new minimum capital rules come into effect.

What are ANZ's plans for 2009? What new features should customers experience?

My biggest focus will be on really trying to make ANZ Royal Bank "easy to do business with" for our customers. Customers feel we are the strongest and safest bank here, with international standards, but we don't always make it as easy for customers as

I would like. In terms of new features etc, watch this space!

We have a big focus now on education, because our business is heavily reliant on people capital. Obviously for a miner they might be more focused on the environment.

ANZ Royal has been one of the leaders in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Cambodia, why is that so?

Both of our shareholders are committed to be active participants in the communities in which we operate. On top of that, our customers want to put their money with a bank that supports Cambodia, our staff want to work for a company that makes a real

The Man and his File

contribution to Cambodia, so it's not really a hard decision.

Do you feel that more companies should follow your lead and commit greater resources to CSR?

We aren't the only company committing resources to CSR in Cambodia, and I think it is really encouraging to see how



much is done here in Cambodia. I would advise any company to invest in CSR, but they also need to do it in a way that is right for them. For example, we have a big focus now on education, because our business is heavily reliant on people capital. Obviously for a miner, they might be more focused on the environment.

What measures would you like see taken to improve the banking sector in the Kingdom?

I think the banking sector is in pretty good shape, and the regulator, the NBC, is doing a very good job. We do a lot of market research, and one of the interesting things to come out of that, is how much the trust that the community has in the NBC has grown over the last three years. The biggest change that was needed was to increase the minimum capital requirements, and they've just done that.

On a darker side, how do you see the global downturn affecting investment in Cambodia?

In most other countries, it has been the banking sector that has been impacted first, which has then flowed through to the real economy. In Cambodia though, the banking system is fairly well insulated from the rest of the world, and the first impacts are likely to be felt directly by the real economy. A global recession is almost certain, and this is bound to impact sectors like tourism and garments.

We are also seeing some significant impacts in countries that have been investing a lot in Cambodia, such as South Korea, and that is likely to flow through here, particularly into the property market. ■

business

advisory services

Alcoholics Anonymous
20B Street 286,
Tel: 092 974 882
www.aaphnompenh.org
AA meets on Friday at 7pm, Wednesday at 12pm and Sunday at 12pm.

Narcotics Anonymous
20B Street 286,
Tel: 012 990 937
Meet every Monday at 8pm, Thursday at 8pm and Saturday at 7pm.

Architecture & Design

Architecture in Asia
245 Monivong Blv., I.O.C. Building. 6th Floor Rm 4, Tel: 012 221 348
Architect with 15 years of experience in interior and architectural design in Asia

bikes & mechanics

The Bike Shop
31 Street 302,
Tel: 012 851 776
www.phnompenhbike.com
Specialises in repairing trusty steeds as well as renting them out in the first place. Also provides dirt bike tours.

Dara Motorbike Shop
339 Street 110,
Tel: 012 335 499
More of an off-road bike specialist, which also arranges Sunday trips into the wild.

Emerald Garage
11 Street 456,
Tel: 023 357 011
Mechanics specialising in maintenance and repair of vehicles, including oil changing and body painting. The place to go if you want to buy a jeep.

building

Bizzy Beez
Tel: 012 755 913
Company that promotes itself as the city's premier handyman service. Does renovations, construction work, electrics, plumbing, painting and landscaping, as well as general handyman work.

business groups

Australian Business Association of Cambodia (ABAC)
9 Mao Tse Tung Blvd,
Tel: 023 215 184
www.abac.com.kh

British Business Association of Cambodia (BBAC)
124 Norodom Blvd,
Tel: 012 803 891
senaka.fernando@kh.pwc.com

Chambre de Commerce Franco-Cambodgienne
Office 13A Ground Floor
Hotel Cambodiana, Tel: 023 221 453
www.cccfCambodge.org

International Business Club of Cambodia
56 Sothearos Blvd,
Tel: 023 210 225
zirconium@online.com.kh

Canadian Trade Commissioner Service
Canadian Embassy, 9 Street 254
Tel: 023 213 470 Ext 417
www.infoexport.gc.ca/kh/

BCC / Malaysian Business Council of Cambodia
Unit G21, Ground Floor,
Parkway Square 113, Mao Tse Tung,
Tel: 023 221 386
mbcc.secretariat@gmail.com

Singapore Business Club (Cambodia)
92, Norodom Blvd, Tel: 023 360 855
singcamb@online.com.kh

Embassies

Australia
Villa 11 Street 254
Tel: 023 213 470

Belgium
Hotel Cambodiana
Tel: 023 214 024

Canada
Villa 11 Street 254
Tel: 023 213 470

China
156 Mao Tse Tung Boulevard
Tel: 023 720 920

Denmark
8 Street 352 Tel: 023 987 629

France
1 Monivong Boulevard
Tel: 023 430 020

Germany
76-78 Street 214 Tel: 023 216 381

Japan
75 Norodom Boulevard
Tel: 023 217 161

Laos
15-17 Mao Tse Tung
Tel: 023 983 632

Malaysia
5 Street 242 Tel: 023 216 176

Myanmar
181 Norodom Boulevard
Tel: 023 223 761

Philippines
33 Street 294
Tel: 023 215 145

Singapore
92 Norodom Boulevard
Tel: 023 221 875

Sweden
8 Street 352 Tel: 023 212 259

Thailand
196 Norodom Boulevard
Tel: 023 726 306

United Kingdom
27-29 Street 75
Tel: 023 427 124

United States
1 Street 96 (Wat Phnom)
Tel: 023 728 000

Vietnam
436 Monivong Boulevard
Tel: 023 726 283

commercial banks

Advanced Bank of Asia
148 Sihanouk Blvd.,
Tel: 023 720 435
www.ababank.com.kh
Commercial bank, managed by Koreans and Cambodians, established in 1996. Has branch office on Mao Tse Tung.

ANZ Royal Bank
Main Branch, 20 Street 114
www.anzroyal.com
Cambodia's major commercial bank has brought international standards of banking to the country. Has a large number of ATM machines around Phnom Penh and can arrange money transfers.

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CV

Stephen Higgins
Company:
ANZ Royal Bank

Position:
Chief Executive Officer

Nationality: Australian

Qualifications:
Bachelor of Economics,
Master of Applied Finance,
MBA

Trevor Keidan: Pay Yourself First... and other Lessons to Live By



ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PILLARS of any personal finance strategy is to pay yourself first. However, for many of us this simple approach to our finances appears to be the hardest to master.

The phrase "pay yourself first" is by no means new. In fact it is right up there with "take care of the pennies and the pounds will take care of themselves" and other such idioms. However, the advice really does work and should be the foundation of any personal finance plan.

If we were to really examine our finances we would find that we actually often pay ourselves last. We pay all of our outstanding debts to other people first and then if there is anything left over we pay ourselves. This is absolutely the wrong way round!

So, how much should we pay ourselves? The answer to the question is that it is up you. A good rule of thumb is that you should pay ourselves at least 10 percent of your salary. Try it! It's easier than it sounds.

■ STICKING TO A BUDGET

Once we have mastered the 'pay ourselves first' approach we can then tackle budgeting. For many of us creating and sticking to a budget is boring. However, it is essential if we are to reach our aspirational lifestyle goals.

The key to being able to budget successfully is an ability to look at saving in a different light. Instead of focusing on the means – the chore of saving, we should look at the ends – the result of saving. The result could be anything from buying a new car to booking a special holiday to enrolling at a top university – anything that has special value for us.

As soon as we realise that money is the means by which we are able to achieve our financial goals then budgeting becomes a lot easier. In fact, it becomes a mere tool to assist us in reaching our lifestyle goals.

■ A COMFORTABLE RETIREMENT

With budgeting under our belt we can now tackle the age-old issue of retirement. As was pointed out in previous columns many of us underestimate the amount of money we need to live comfortably in retirement. Many of us also underestimate our life expectancy upon retirement.

Those who take action over their retirement early have a much better chance of retiring comfortably. So that is exactly what we should do – act decisively and act early!

We should aim to have enough money saved up to enable us to draw 4 to 5 percent of our savings per year over a

25 year-period. For example, savings of US\$800,000 would allow us to withdraw US\$32,000 to US\$40,000 per annum.

One of the best ways to achieve such savings is to contribute to a regular savings plan. In the U.K. and the U.S. tax-free plans are set up for employees. For those of us who do not have such plans we can create our own using mutual funds that allow us to diversify and pool our resources with other investors. We should aim to achieve at least 10 percent return on our investments per year – and we should invest for the long term.

Even if we are already set up with savings and retirement plans we should always consider additional investments as part of our diversified portfolio. And if we are considering further investments exchange traded funds are a good way to go.

They are often set up to track a particular market index such as the Dow Jones or even the developing markets or commodities such as gold. They are simple to understand and easy to invest in.

Trevor Keidan is Managing Director of Infinity Financial Solutions. This company provides impartial, tailor-made, personal financial advice to clients in Cambodia and Southeast Asia. Should you wish to contact Trevor please send an email to tkeidan@infinsolutions.com. ■

Maruhan Japan Bank

83 Norodom Blvd.,
Tel: 023 999 010
First Japanese commercial bank in Phnom Penh.

finance

QnE

21 Street 322,
Tel: 023 993 363
Company that provides financial business solutions, including audit trails and real time business solutions. Free demonstrations available, simply contact Gateway Communications on the above address.

insurance

AG Insurance

Hotel Cambodiana, 313 Sisowath Quay
Tel: 012 195 35 85,
info@ag-service.org
Professional insurance company offering health, home, car, factory, employee and hotel insurance packages.

Asia Insurance Cambodia

5 Street 13, Tel: 023 427 981
email@asiainsurance.com.kh
www.asiainsurance.com.kh
Hong Kong-based insurance company registered in Cambodia in 1996. Offers all types of insurance services.

Forte Insurance (Cambodia)

325 Mao Tse Tung,
Tel: 023 885 066
www.forteinsurance.com
The largest Cambodian underwriters. Established in 1996, specialise in car, accident, property, personal liability, marine, travel and transport insurance.

Infinity Insurance

126 Norodom Blvd, Tel: 023 999 888
Professional insurance company offering motor, property, home, marine cargo, personal accident, healthcare, construction and engineering insurance. Group policies can be customised.

international schools

ICan International School

85 Sothearos Blvd, Tel: 023 222 418
www.ican.edu.kh
International school teaching the English national curriculum to over 230 pupils. Has spacious and modern facilities.

International School of Phnom Penh

146 Norodom Blvd, Tel: 023 213 103
www.ispp.edu.kh
Not-for-profit international school founded in 1989, ISPP has 395 students from pre-school to Grade 12. It is the largest international school in Cambodia, and the only authorized IBO school in the country.

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Airlines



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66 Mao Tse Tung Boulevard
Tel: 023 356 011

Angkor Airways
32 Norodom Boulevard
Tel: 023 222 056

Bangkok Airways
61A Street 214
Tel: 023 722 545

China Airlines
32 Norodom Boulevard
Tel: 023 222 393

Dragon Air
168 Monireth Boulevard
Tel: 023 424 300

Eva Air
298 Mao Tse Tung Boulevard
Tel: 023 219 911

Jet Star Asia
333B Monivong Boulevard
Tel: 023 220 909

Lao Airlines
58C Sihanouk Boulevard
Tel: 023 216 563

Malaysia Airlines
172 Monivong Boulevard
Tel: 023 218 923

Royal Air Services
168 Monireth Boulevard
Tel: 023 881 090

Royal Khmer Airlines
36B Mao Tse Tung Boulevard
Tel: 023 994 502

Shanghai Air
19 Street 106
Tel: 023 723 999

Siem Reap Airways
61A Street 214
Tel: 023 722 545

Silk Air
313 Sisowath Quay (Himawari Hotel)
Tel: 023 426 808

Thai Airways
294 Mao Tse Tung Boulevard
Tel: 023 214 359

Vietnam Airlines
41 Street 214
Tel: 023 363 396

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ANZ Royal

ANZ Royal Branch ATM

Accessible Time: 24 hours

- ANZ Royal Independence Monument Branch: 100 Sihanouk Blvd.
- ANZ Royal Main Branch: 20 Fe-Eo, Kramuon Sar, Corner of Street 67
- ANZ Royal Olympic Branch: 361-363 Sihanouk Blvd.
- ANZ Royal Pet Lok Sang Branch: 1A & 1B Street 271
- ANZ Royal Phsar Derm Thkov Branch: 616A & B Street 271
- ANZ Royal Riverside Branch: 265 Sisowath Quay
- ANZ Royal Teuk Thla Branch: 1Eo & 1E1, Street 110A

ANZ Royal Offsite ATM

Accessible Time: 24 hours

- ANZ Royal: 14 Street 106
- Big A Supermarket: 226-272, Monivong Blvd.
- Caltex Pet Lok Sang: Russian Blvd., Cnr. Street 271
- Flamingos: 32 Street 172
- Hotel Cambodiana: 313 Sisowath Quay
- PPIA-Arrival Luggage Pickup: Phnom Penh International Airport
- PPIA-Cafe Select: Phnom Penh International Airport
- PPIA-International Departure: Phnom Penh International Airport
- Rock Entertainment: 468 Monivong Blvd.
- Street 271: No. A81 Street 271
- Total Avenue De France: Avenue De France
- Total Monivong: Corner of Monivong Blvd and Street 310

ANZ Royal Offsite ATM

Accessible Time: 5am to 12am

- Caltex Boeung Keng Kang: Norodom Blvd, Cnr. of Street 41
- Caltex Boeung Tra Bek: Cnr. of Monivong Blvd. and Street 474

- Caltex Bokor: Cnr. of Monivong and Mao Tse Tung Blvd.
- Caltex Calmette: Cnr. of Monivong Blvd. and Street 86
- Caltex Mondial: Corner of Mao Tse Tung Blvd. and Street 202
- Caltex Phsar Derm Kor: Cnr. of Monireth Blvd., 374 and 384
- Caltex Sokha: Cnr. of Kampuchea Krom Blvd. and Street 139
- Caltex Spark: Cnr. of Mao Tse Tung Blvd. and Street 167
- Total Chateau D'Eau: Sihanouk Blvd.
- Total La Deese: Cnr. of Street 182 and 169
- Total La Gare: Cnr. of Russian Blvd. and Street 108
- Total Phsar Thmey: Cnr. of Street 217 and 316
- Total Takhmao: National Road 2, Sangkat Chak Angre Krom, Khan Mean Chey

ANZ Royal Offsite ATM

Accessible Time: 5.30am to 10.30pm

- Royal Guest House: 91Eo, Street 154

ANZ Royal Offsite ATM

Accessible Time: 8am to 9pm

- Happy Market: 268, Street 182, Tuol Kok
- Lucky Seven Phnom Penh Centre: Cnr. of Sihanouk Blvd. and Street 274
- Lucky Super Market: 160, Preah Sihanouk Blvd.
- Lucky Water Tower: No 37-39 Monireth Blvd.
- Paragon Supermarket: 12 Street 214

ANZ Royal Offsite ATM

Accessible Time: 9am to 9pm

- Pencil Norodom: 15 Street 214
- Pencil Supermarket-Riverside: Sisowath Quay

ANZ Royal Offsite ATM

Accessible Time: 9am to 12am

- The Tamarind: 31 Street 240

ANZ Royal Offsite ATM

Accessible Time: 6am to 7pm

- Meeting Café: 12E, Russian Blvd. and Street 215

ANZ Royal Offsite ATM

Accessible Time: 6am to 10.30 pm

- Lucky Bright Restaurant: H5 Norodom Blvd.
- Seven Bright Restaurant: 6 Street 13, (Opposite Post Office)

ANZ Royal Offsite ATM

Accessible Time: 7am to 9.30pm

- Lucky Burger Monivong: 219 BC, Monivong Blvd.
- Top Ocean Burger: 103 Street 184

ANZ Royal Offsite ATM

Accessible Time: 7am to 9pm

- Asia Europe University: 832 Kampuchea Krom
- Parkway Square: 113 Mao Tse Tung Blvd.

ANZ Royal Offsite ATM

Accessible Time: 8am to 10pm

- U-Care Pharmacy Phnom Penh: Cnr. Street 178 and Sothearos Blvd.

ANZ Royal Offsite ATM

Accessible Time: 7am to 10pm

- Angkor Thom Book Centre: 261, Kampuchea Krom Blvd., Toul Kok

Cambodian Public Bank

- 23 Street 114

Canadia Bank

- 126 Charles de Gaulle Blvd.
- 265-269 Ang Duong
- 394 Sihanouk Blvd.
- Royal Phnom Penh International Airport
- Sorya Shopping Centre, 16-61 Street 63

SBC Bank

- Head Office, 68 Street 214
- 203 Monivong Blvd.
- 168 Street 215
- 327 Sisowath Quay
- 55 Sihanouk Blvd.

Northbridge School

1km off National Road 4 on the way to the airport,
Tel: 023 886 000
www.niscambodia.com
info@niscambodia.com
Quality international school with curriculum for students from pre-school to high school as well as good sports facilities.

Zaman International School

2843 Street 3,
Tel: 023 214 040
www.zamanisc.org
International school that teaches a full curriculum to children from four to 18. Facilities include basketball and volleyball courts, a football field and a science lab.

it & software

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Norodom Blvd.
Tel: 023 362 957
info@conicalhat.com,
conicalhat.com

Software company that specialises in providing highly localised business solutions including accounting, payroll and billing.

legal

Sciaroni & Associates

56 Sothearos Blvd., Tel: 023 210 225

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Main Post Office

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Digital Advertising

60E Street 38, Tel: 023 987 600
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Relocation

Crown

115-116 Street 335, Tel: 023 881 004

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Security Firms

MPA

23 Street 214,
Tel: 023 210 836

Well-established security company that is responsible for keeping many of the town's buildings safe and sound.



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E-mail: emerald-garage@hotmail.com



Shipping

Crown

Hotel Cambodiana, 313 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 986 680, www.crownrelo.com
Global transportation & relocation with over 150 offices in 50 countries, specialises in expat support and household shipment.

Telecoms

Cadcoms

825A Monivong Blvd., Tel: 023 726 680
Communications company with Norwegian connections has launched the qb 3G entertainment network. Has competitive talk packages.

Cambodia Samarat Communication

56 Norodom Blvd., Tel: 016 81001
Internet provider that issues the 016 SIM card.

Camshin

6B-7B 294 Mao Tse Tung Blvd. Tel: 023 367 801
Internet provider that also installs land lines and issues the 011 SIM card.

City Link

170 Norodom Blvd., Tel: 023 220 112
One of the major internet providers in Phnom Penh.

Ezecom

7D Russian Blvd., Tel: 023 888 181, www.ezecom.com.kh
Internet service provider that promises boundless internet packages suited to everyone's needs. Good packages for those looking for unlimited downloads.

Hello

Tel: 016 810 000, www.hello.com.kh
Mobile phone provider that has the 015 and 016 SIM card. Is currently promoting cheap overseas calls.

Mobitel

33 Sihanouk Blvd., Tel: 012 801 801
Largest ISP in the country. Major mobile phone company which issues the 012 SIM card.

Online

60 Monivong Blvd., Tel: 023 727 272
The biggest and most reliable of the internet providers. Watch out for their hotspots around town.

Star-Cell


173 Nehru Blvd., Tel: 023 888 887
Newest of the mobile phone providers in the capital. Has recently established an office within Siem Reap too. Issues the 098 SIM card.

TeleSurf

33 Sihanouk Blvd., Tel: 012 800 800, www.telesurf.com.kh
Internet service provider (ISP) providing 24-hour broadband internet service. Packages start from US\$59 with unlimited fun-time costing US\$64.

Training

WorkShop

128 Street 450, Tel: 092 601 261
French-run company that provides customised training programmes, specialises in team and time management, customer care and effective communication skill training. 



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Getaway: Chiang Mai

Santa Claus and his sleigh bells it might not have, but the ancient northern Thai city of Chiang Mai with its temperate climate and almost Alpine atmosphere makes for the perfect Christmas getaway from Phnom Penh. Words by **Mark Jackson**.



The City Wall in Chiang Mai old town

BACK IN THE FOURTEENTH century when Bangkok was little more than a village, Chiang Mai was already a thriving centre of commerce and travel. The capital of the kingdom of Lanna (literally “one million rice fields”) was founded in 1296 by King Mengrai. Today the ancient walled city of

Chiang Mai remains a relatively well-preserved enclave.

Although much of the wall has now fallen into ruins, fragments of it still survive, particularly along Chang Loh Road. The moat still remains, clearly delineating the old city. This is a great place to stroll. Just follow your nose and you are bound to stumble across one

of the twenty or so wats littered around the labyrinth of medieval sois (lanes).

Intersperse your culture vulturing with a coffee or two in one of the chill coffee houses that outnumber the wats.

■ WHAT'S IN A WAT

Dating back to 1296, Wat Chiang Man (Temple of the Steadfast City) is the oldest wat in Chiang

Mai. Said to be the residence of King Mengrai during the construction of the city, the main attraction here is a small crystal Buddha locals say has the power to bring rain.

Much more striking is Wat Chedi Luang (Temple of the Big Stupa). Don't be fooled by its modest appearance from Phrapoklao Road, behind the more modern wat lies one of the country's more striking wats.

Partially destroyed by the earthquake of 1545, Chedi has been largely restored with the aid of Unesco, although like Ta Prohm part of its charm lies in its damaged condition. The naga staircases are reputed to be some of the finest in northern Thailand. This wat is the major site for observing Buddhist holidays and celebrations in the city.

Built in the grounds of the king's gardens Wat Suan Dok is



PHOTO BY KEITH KELLY

Wat Phra That Doi Suthep National Park



PHOTO BY KEITH KELLY

Hill Tribe children

also well worth a visit. Particularly photogenic, this is the final resting place for many of the Lanna kings.

Wat Phra That Doi Suthep (open 6am to 7pm) is the most famous and impressive of Chiang Mai's wats. It lies outside of the city itself on Suthep Mountain. Legend has it that in 1368, the then ruler of Lanna, King Nu Naone, placed a piece of Buddha's shoulder blade onto the back of a white elephant. The animal charged up the mountain only to collapse and die three-quarters of the way up. Nu Naone ordered that the temple be built at the place where the elephant fell. Buddha's bone is now enshrined in a massive gold-clad stupa.

Whether you believe this story or the more prosaic version that it was built by King Kue-Na in 1384 sans-elephant, what is undeniable is that the view from the temple on a clear day is spectacular. You can take the 12-kilometre journey for 60 baht by truck, although you still have to climb 309 steps once you get there.

■ THE RIVERSIDE AND NIGHT MARKET

Like all great cities, Chiang Mai is set on a river. The Mae Nam Ping is largely responsible for the city's development as a major trading post. The eastern bank of the river, particularly between Nawarat and Nakhon Ping bridges, has many fine examples

of old wooden houses – evidence of the port's mercantile past.

One of these was turned into the Riverside Bar and Restaurant in 1984. With the unmistakable feel of a London pub on the banks of the Thames, this makes for the perfect spot to while away some time watching the river flow by. With acoustic guitar from 7.45pm and three live bands from 9.30pm, it is also guaranteed to be packed seven nights a week. Just along from it is The Old Place no. 89. This beautiful 116-year-old wooden building has been turned into a coffee house and smoothie parlour by its owner, architect Pattanachai, regardless of whether or not you are thirsty, pop in and have a browse. There is also an array of boutique shops and art galleries in this area.

Slightly set back from the opposite bank of the river, is the Night Bazaar (Changklan Road). Both pavements are filled with traders trying to sell all sorts of bargains. A few more permanent market structures flow out from the street into the sois. Nearby, Anusan Market is another option for those who have not had their surfeit of 'Same Same' t-shirts.

■ HOMESTAYS, ELEPHANT RIDES AND ZIP LINES

Just like Luang Prabang in Laos and Sapa in northern Vietnam, part of the appeal of the market is the range of goods made by local

ethnic tribes on sale at the bazaar. Northern Thailand has six main ethnic groups that have migrated to the region over the years from Myanmar, Tibet and China – the Karen, Hmong, Akha, Lisu, Lahu and Mien (or Yao).

Much more satisfying than buying goods from the tribespeople who migrate to Chiang Mai, is to take a trip into the foothills and go on a homestay. The streets around the old city are full of small travel agencies offering trips into the foothills or further a-field into the Golden Triangle to Chiang Rai or across the border (by bus and boat) to Luang Prabang.

Half-day trips include visits to a handicraft centre (200 baht) or to Wat Phra That Doi Suthep (700 baht). Alternatively go to Mae Tang National Park where you can ride elephants, swim in waterfalls, white water raft, go bamboo rafting, and trek for three hours in an exhausting day's trip for 1,000 baht.

The latter can easily be extended by a day, which gives more time to take in the scenery and includes a night's homestay (1,200 baht). Other trips involve visiting five hill tribe villages and the Chiang Dao Cave (900 baht) or the Doi Inthanon Mountain, at 2,565 metres Thailand's highest peak. This includes three waterfalls and yet more hill tribe villages (1,100 baht).

Those more adventurous could opt for The Flight of the Gibbon.

Just an hour's drive away from Chiang Mai, you can walk along a treetop walkway through pristine rainforest, before swinging Tarzan-style through the trees' canopy on zip lines. A three-hour 'flight' should cost around 2,000 baht, although prices vary depending on what time you set off.

■ WINING AND DINING

Ping Ping Seafood Market, behind Anusan Market, is the most popular place for tourists to try some seafood, presumably flown up from Bangkok. This al fresco affair has numerous restaurants competing for trade, many showing their wares in small tanks at the front.

Those wishing to try some local Lanna cuisine, could try Le Grand Lanna in the Mandarin Oriental Dhara Dhevi Hotel, which specialises in northern Thai cuisine.

If your budget doesn't stretch that far, then try Just Khao Soy (108/2 Charoen Prather Road) which does what it says on the tin – only selling the local dish Khao Soy, albeit either in chicken, beef, vegetables or pork (99 baht). This curry soup has both soft and crispy noodles and comes served with a range of side dishes including banana, pickle, chilli paste and onion. This tasty dish would go down particularly well on a cold winter's night.

Fans of tom yam koong shouldn't miss eating at the restaurant on the ground floor of Le Meridien



Lighting a lantern during Loy Krathong



Traditional north Thai dance during Loy Krathong

PHOTO BY KEITH KELLY

Hotel (Chang Klan Road), which has one of the finest spicy, prawn soup dishes this reviewer has ever tasted – complete with two enormous tiger prawns that would make the boldest lobster blush.

As befits a university town, Chiang Mai has a vibrant, chic nightlife away from the market. To the northwest of town, Nimmanhaemin Road is the in-place to go. Warm Up (40 Nimmanhaemin Road) and Monkey Club (Nimmanhaemin Road, Soi 9) are two of the coolest places to hang out – expect to meet a lot of hip, young Thais here. Alternatively The Glass Onion (Rooms), the Boutique Mall, Nimmanheimin Soi 17) with its grand piano, faux waterfall and art-deco swivel chairs is a good place for a pre-dinner cocktail. Those looking for a good glass of vino should head for Darling Wine Bar (49/21 Huay Kaew Road).

Lots of late night drinking haunts spill out onto the streets near the junction of Loi Kron Road and Kotchasarn Road. Strictly hole-in-the-wall joints, these are really much of a muchness – the difference lying in how loud you like your music and how friendly your hellos. Power Bar is probably the loudest.

Tucked around the corner, Number 1 Bar (Loikroh Road, Soi 1) is noteworthy for its extensive range of Belgian beers, including Leffe on tap.

Fans of beer other than Tiger will be pleased to note that there are at least three Irish bars in town, including O'Malleys which is conveniently placed inside Anusarn Market, and has barstaff who know how to pour a pint of the black stuff – although is the Shamrock really de rigueur?

■ LOY KRATHONG

Coinciding with Phnom Penh's Water Festival, is Loy Krathong. The festival, which can be traced back to the Hindu Diwali festival, is a spectacular event – easily one of the best in the region.

Powered by Catherine wheels of wax paper, white paper lanterns (kom loy) sail up into the atmosphere, the burning wax paper illuminating the skies like little stars rising towards the Full Moon. Small floats (loy krathong) – decorated with incense sticks, candles, flowers, coins and strangely toenails – are released onto the river. All bad luck is supposed to float away with the offering, making a fresh start.

At the same time as the waterways and skies are filled

with lights, locals and tourists alike spill out onto the street launching hand-held fireworks into the air and throwing bangers in front of passing tuk-tuks. Despite failing to meet European safety standards, this is an exuberant festival, full of optimism and undeniably the best time to visit the northern Thai gem of a city.

■ HOW TO GET THERE

AirAsia, Thai Airways and Bangkok Airways all fly flights to Chiang Mai from Bangkok. It's possible to get a connecting flight from Phnom Penh, thus avoiding having to stay a night in Bangkok. Thai is currently offering return flights for US\$325. AirAsia is slightly cheaper if you book through their website at www.airasia.com.

■ WHERE TO STAY

DELUXE

Le Meridien

Chang Klan Road,

Tel: +66 53 253 666

www.lemeridien.com/chiangmai

Opened on Nov. 1, Le Meridien has all the facilities of a five-star with the design classic of a boutique hotel. Worth the visit even if you just want to hang around the sumptuous lobby area or

have a drink at the bar. Rooms are from 7,800 baht.

MID-RANGE

The 3 Sis

1 Phrapokklao Road Soi 8

Tel: +66 53 273 243

www.the3sis.com

Elegant boutique hotel set around a central courtyard set in the heart of the old city. Large rooms have flat-screen tvs, safe and air-con. Has WiFi in the lobby area. Rooms from 1,300 baht.

BUDGET

Chor Malee Guest House

124-128 Charoem Raj Road

Tel: +66 53 244 067

www.chormaleeguesthouse.com

Recently opened guest house which has nine rooms, all with air-con and tvs. Conveniently located on the riverside, close to the Riverside Pub. Has WiFi in reception. Rooms from 450 to 650 baht.

■ GENERAL INFORMATION

There are more maps and free magazines in Chiang Mai than wats, the most useful source of information is Chiang Mai 101, which is a quarterly magazine and costs 100 baht.

Currency

1USD = 35 Thai baht ■

Review: Room with a View



IT IS A PHRASE THAT HAS most definitely been worked to death, but most of the rooms at Le Meridien, Chiang Mai, most definitely have a view – that of nearby Doi Suthep Mountain. Check-in late and your first sight will be the spectacular sunset as the sun drops behind the mountain. If you happen to be staying during the Loy Krathong festival, the rooms provide the perfect vantage point to watch the paper lanterns float off into the heavens.

Opened on Nov. 1, the 384 rooms are the ultimate in luxury. The owner's guarantee the signature Le Meridien king-size or twin beds will ensure a good night's sleep. The flat screen televisions have an audio system that follows you into the marble bathrooms with their ultra-cool massaging rain showers. The deluxe studio rooms have bathrooms which overhang the exterior wall of the building making you feel you are floating in mid-air while you wallow in the tub.

■ DON'T LOOK BACK IN ANGER
The chic lobby area encourages guests to linger before they are led to their room. Sit back and enjoy an Illy coffee or cocktail while looking back towards the entrance, which seems to ripple behind a screen of sound and light. The contemporary décor continues to the lobby bar, where solo guests can enjoy a magnificent tom yam koong while surveying their fellow guests arrive.

Walk up the stairs to the viewing point opposite La Favola Italian Restaurant on the mezzanine floor, and you will see that the lobby carpet is actually a map of the old city of Chaing Mai.

■ ALL BUSINESS & MORE PLAY

Although the hotel is marketed at the business sector, with its 1,032 square metre columnless convention hall, 324 square metre ballroom and five meeting rooms, this does not mean that leisure tourists are neglected.

While the infinity swimming pool might be a bit tepid for those accustomed to south-east Asian waters, this just allows more opportunity to soak in the spectacular view of the mountains. The adjoining spa is the perfect oasis for those wishing to pamper themselves after a hard day's trekking in the mountains. Try the signature Chakra massage and let those smooth strokes sweep away any trace of stress. Then spend 20 minutes lying in the hydro baths and discover your path to enlightenment.

Le Meridien Chiang Mai offers the ultimate city retreat, just make sure that you book a room with a view.

Rooms are from 7,800 baht++. Spa packages from 1,200 baht.

Le Meridien Chiang Mai, Chang Klan Road, Chiang Mai, Thailand, Tel: +66 53 253 667, www.lemeridien.com/chiangmai

getaway



A network protecting children from all forms of abuse. www.childsafe-cambodia.org.

battambang

La Villa

East bank of river, Tel: 012 826 186
www.lavilla-battambang.com
Beautifully restored 1930s colonial house with six rooms from US\$45 to US\$50.

Riverside Balcony Bar & Restaurant

West bank of river, Tel: 012 437 421
Traditional wooden house with great views of the river and good food. Open from 4pm to midnight.

chau Doc (vietnam)

Victoria Chau Doc Hotel

32 Le Loi, Tel: +84 76 865 010
www.victoriahotels-asia.com
A few kilometres on the Vietnamese side of the border, Chau Doc's finest has great views of the Bassac River, a swimming pool, restaurant serving both international and Vietnamese cuisine and great massages. Rooms from US\$180 a night.

kampot

Blissful Guest House

Kampot, Tel: 012 513 024
Small guest house, with 11 rooms, set in a quiet part of town. Downstairs restaurant and bar, and communal TV room upstairs. Rooms are from US\$4 to US\$7.

Bodhi Villa

Across the river, Kampot
Small guest house just across the old bridge in Kampot. The few basic rooms are extremely cheap and there are bugalows overhanging the river too. Most definitely a place to chill like the lotus eaters.

Bokor Mountain Lodge

Riverfront, Kampot, Tel: 033 932 314
www.bokorlodge.com
Beautiful French colonial building situated on the riverfront with well-fitted air-conditioned rooms ranging from US\$20 to US\$35. Also has a good restaurant and bar with some outside seating overlooking the river.

Epic Arts Café

Old Market, Kampot
Employing deaf staff, this café next to the old market has a good range of bagels, shakes, brownies and coffee. Open from 7am to 6pm.

Jasmine

House 25 Riverside Road, Kampot
Tel: 012 927 313
Run by the friendly Jasmine and her husband Mark, this café/restaurant is a stylish addition to the Kampot riverfront.

Serves tasty Thai, Khmer and café fare, it also has photography decorating the walls, and dark wood furniture including two large tables for groups.

Les Manguiers

2km north of Kampot, Tel: 092 330 050
Small resort with bungalows and rooms set in beautiful gardens overlooking the river. The three rooms cost US\$15 and the four bungalows US\$20 to US\$25. Also has a restaurant with daily changing, freshly prepared food. Best to book up in advance especially at weekends.

Little Garden Guest House

Riverside Kampot
Good value guest house well located near the old bridge on the riverside. Good sized rooms cost between US\$10 to US\$18. Also has a restaurant open from 7am to 10pm.

Rikititavi

Riverfront, Kampot, Tel: 012 274 820
rikikitavi@asia.com
Superb western food is served up in massive portions in this river-facing restaurant, bar and three room guesthouse. A more upmarket venue for Kampot, the upstairs seating affords great sunset views. Rooms range from US\$25-35 and are the most stylish in town. Restaurant and bar closed on Mondays.

Rusty Keyhole

Riverfront, Kampot
This riverside British pub is the place for expats to chew the fat over a pint in town. Friendly British owner has created as close to the atmosphere of a rural pub as you can in Kampot. Live premiership games, sunset happy hour, daily BBQs and a strict 'no missionaries' policy make this a must. Open 8.30am to midnight.

kep

Beach House

Opp. Kep Beach, Tel: 012 240 090
www.thebeachhousekep.com
Small hotel with pool in an excellent location, directly opposite Kep's mermaid statue. Relaxed café, and tasteful western-style rooms all with sea view. Can organise trips to nearby Rabbit Island or further afield to Bokor Mountain. Rooms from US\$30 to US\$45 per night.

Champey Inn Resort

Tel: 012 501 742
Sea-fronted resort with fan-cooled bungalows at US\$60 per night. Has a swimming pool, a restaurant, a bar and a pleasant garden.

Le Bout Du Monde *Kep, Cambodia*

Come and get some fresh air at our guest house "Le Bout du Monde" in KEP

website: www.leboutdumondekep.com tel: +855(0)11 96 41 81 mail: contact.leboutdumonde@ymail.com

Keplodge

Tel: 092 43 53 30 www.keplodge.com
Six nicely decorated, private bungalows with a big veranda, pool table, swimming pool and WiFi. Also has a bar and restaurant with Khmer and western food. Bungalows with queen size beds and hot water cost US\$23-US\$28 (low season) and US\$30-US\$36 (high season), breakfast included.

Knai Bang Chatt Resort

Tel: 012 879 486
www.knaibangchatt.com
Exclusive seaside resort just along from the crab stalls, which has opened up its doors to the public. Elegant swimming pool, air-con, gym, library and fantastic gardens, this resort is the ideal place to get away from Phnom Penh. Good restaurant with fantastic views of the sea. Check for special offers.

Le Bout du Monde

Keptel, Tel: 011 964 181
www.leboutdumondekeptel.com
Individual and separate bungalows in traditional Khmer architecture located at top of a hill with good views and nice gardens. Serves French and Khmer cuisine. Rooms have hot water, mini-bar, fan and safe from US\$15 to US\$85.

Star Inn

Keptel Beach, Tel: 011 765 999
Hotel overlooking Keptel Beach that has good sized and elegant air-con rooms. Rooftop restaurant serves seafood and cocktails. It stays open to late at weekends. Rooms from US\$20 to US\$50.

Veranda Natural Resort

Tel: 012 888 619,
www.veranda-resort.com
Traditional wooden bungalows set in the hillsides, hot water and breakfast from US\$20. Spacious family bungalows with air-con cost US\$60. Also has a good restaurant and bar with some quite stunning sweeping views down to the coast.

kratien

Cambodian Craft Co-operation
At Wat Roka Kandal
A small craft centre selling wickerwork by local artisans, housed inside Wat Roka Kandal. Funded by a German chamber of trades and crafts. The baskets and handicrafts have marked prices.

Le Relais de Chhlong

Mekong riverside, Chhlong (Kratien Province), Tel: 012 501 742
champyennin@mobitel.com.kh
Beautifully restored colonial house set in a peaceful village with stylishly furnished rooms. Intimate restaurant, swimming pool and river views make this a unique and luxurious place to get away from it all.

Red Sun Falling

Rue Preah Sumarit
Well-established western-run café and bar on the riverfront. One of the few bustling places in the evening, it has tasty food with dishes in the US\$1.50-2.50 range.

Star Guesthouse

Opposite the market,
Tel: 012 753 401
kratiestar@hotmail.com
A hub for arranging transportation and getting travel advice on travel to Ratanakiri, this guesthouse has cheery, colourful and clean rooms for only US\$4 to US\$5 a night. The café serves up some of the most innovative food and drink in town. Has facilities for storing motorbikes also available.

phnom penh - deluxe

Amanjaya
1 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 214 747
www.amanjaya.com
Large hotel with a great central location along the river front. The rooms are spacious and well-equipped with tasteful Khmer decorations. The downstairs restaurant doubles up as the air-con K West bar. Rooms from US\$155 to US\$265.

Cambodiana

313 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 426 288
www.hotelcambodiana.com
Great riverside location with spectacular sweeping views of the confluence of three

rivers. Large rooms with air-con, in-room safes and good bathrooms. Live band plays nightly (except Sundays).

Himawari

313 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 214 555
www.himawarihotel.com
The 115 beautifully-designed suites have aircon, cable TV, IDD, internet, in-room safes and large bathrooms. Nice swimming pool and good gym facilities as well as two good tennis courts. Rooms from US\$113 to US\$306.

Imperial Garden Hotel

315 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 219 991
Large hotel and villa complex next to the Cambodiana. Has a swimming pool, gym and tennis court. Live band plays nightly.

Intercontinental

296 Mao Tse Tung, Tel: 023 424 888
www.ichotelsgroup.com
One of Phnom Penh's most luxurious 5-star hotels. The 346 aircon rooms have all the expected facilities including in-room safes and king size beds. Also has a large swimming pool, a Clark Hatch Fitness Centre, a spa and beauty salon. Rooms from US\$190 to US\$1,500.

Raffles Hotel Le Royal

Street 92, Tel: 023 981 888
www.phnompenh.affles.com
Emanates the same class as its more famous namesake in Singapore. The Elephant Bar is a popular expat haunt during the 4pm to 8pm happy hour. Beautiful gardens with a separate swimming pool for kids plus a reasonably priced apartments for long stays. Rooms from US\$260 to US\$2,000.

Sunway Hotel

1 Street 92, Tel: 023 430 333
www.sunway.com.kh
Luxurious international four-star hotel located close to Wat Phnom with 138 well-sized rooms. Spa, good business centre and meeting facilities. Rooms from US\$80 to US\$540.

phnom penh - mid

Almond Hotel
128F Sothea Blvd, Tel: 023 220 822
www.almondhotel.com.kh
56-room hotel located close to the Royal Palace and the riverfront with spacious rooms with WiFi for US\$40++ and deluxe rooms for US\$70. Downstairs restaurant serves dim sum and Cantonese food. Spa due to open this month.

Anise

2C Street 278, Tel: 023 222 522,
www.anisehotel.com
Small hotel with well-fitted, good size rooms, all equipped with air-con, in-room safe and hot water. Downstairs restaurant serves Asian cuisine. Rooms from US\$29 to US\$60.

Billabong

5 Street 158, Tel: 023 223 703
www.thebillabonghotel.com
Centrally-located mini-hotel with a great swimming pool surrounded by beautiful palm trees. Serves good food. The rooms are a reasonable size with aircon and range from US\$36 to US\$58.

Bougainvillier

277G Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 220 528
Stylish riverfront hotel with 40 rooms, including some impressively large suites. Dark wood antique style furniture and jewel coloured silks create a luxurious ambience, and all the necessary amenities are available. The hotel is also home to a gourmet restaurant. Rooms are US\$65.50 to US\$130.

FCC Phnom Penh

362 Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 724 014
www.fcccambodia.com
Phnom Penh's landmark restaurant has seven rooms with balconies offering views of the river. Each is individually designed and meticulously outfitted with high-speed internet access and the latest mod cons. Rooms from US\$85.

Goldiana

10-12 Street 282, Tel: 023 219 558
www.goldiana.com
Extremely popular hotel for visiting NGO workers presumably due to its close

part
17**The Motorbike Diaries:**

ravelling overland by motorcycle from Vietnam to Europe, Mike Gracey and Lotta Väänänen finally reach Lotta's Finish homeland – but will they make it in time for Christmas?



Home at last – just in time for Christmas

WE FINALLY ARRIVED AT Nynäshamn the following morning and drove a short distance in sunny but extremely cold weather to Stockholm through glorious countryside with road-signs warning us of wandering moose. Once we reached the Swedish capital, we were lucky to catch the night ferry to Helsinki, which left almost immediately after our arrival in the city.

We stood on the deck holding each other tight as the ferry approached Helsinki and could hardly contain our excitement. However we still had to reach Oulu in northern Finland. For the time being we were overjoyed for having reached Lotta's home country!

Due to the ever-increasing cold weather (now -10C degrees) and forecast snow, we decided it would be safer to catch a train to Oulu and place the bikes onboard. We were jumping with joy when we were told there was a car carriage on the same train, however our joy was short-lived when we discovered that all trains due north were fully booked until a night train on the Dec. 23. With little choice but to book a berth for that day, we remained in Helsinki for a few extra days visiting the Christmas fair and getting into the spirit of the holiday season.

We soon boarded the aptly named 'Santa Claus Express'

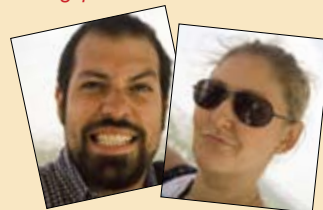
and arrived at Oulu on a dark and wintry Christmas Eve morning. Driving through the slippery winter wonderland and dropping the bike once more on the ice, we headed towards Lotta's family home.

As we turned towards the house, lit candles had been placed along the snowy pathway, and the whole family awaited to greet us – a perfect welcoming – but not before I caused a panic accidentally parking my beloved bike directly on top of one of the outdoor candles! We had completed our journey and made it home for Christmas, just about! With 22,000 kilometres on the clock and ten and a half months on the road with kick-ass bikes – which we have grown extremely attached to – our overland trip is a dream come true!

We want to thank you for following our antics, and hope you have enjoyed the ride!

Merry Christmas!

For further info on Lotta and Mike's trip, go to their blog on www.thebigtripon.blogspot.com.



Mike 'Che' Gracey & Lotta 'Knieval' Väänänen

Getting There



■ BATTAMBANG

GST runs seven buses a day from the Central Market Bus Station to Battambang, starting at 6.45am and finishing at 12.30pm. The journey takes between five and six hours and costs US\$4. Far more comfortable and quicker (four hours) is a shared taxi. Expect to pay US\$40.

■ KEP & KAMPOT

Both Kep and Kampot are served by the same bus service. Buses leave Phnom Penh at 7.30am and 1pm from the bus station 30 meters from the main entrance to the Olympic Stadium. Contact Hua Lian Transportation (Tel: 012 376 807) for details. Other buses leave from the bus station at the Central Market. A one-way ticket costs US\$5 and takes about 4.5 hours. Shared taxis can be found in the morning at the Central Market.

■ KRATIE

Buses departing for Kratie leave from the Central Bus Station next to the Central Market. The seven-hour journey costs between US\$5 and US\$5.50 and buses leave at 7am, 7.30am and 9.30am.

■ SIHANOUKVILLE

Mekong Express buses leave from their office close to the Green Vespa at 87A Sisowath Quay at 7:45am and 2.30pm, stopping at Orussey Market. Price is US\$5 including a snack and free pick-up. GST runs four buses a day (7:15am, 8:15am, 12:30pm & 1:30pm) for US\$4 from Central Market, but offer no pick-up or snack.

proximity to NGO-land and decent prices. Rooms from US\$28 to US\$48. ☺

Kabiki

22 Street 264, Tel: 023 222 290
www.thekabiki.com

Set in a secluded alley around the corner from the Pavilion, Kabiki is the first hotel in Cambodia dedicated to families and children. The two salt-water pools are designed with children in mind. The rooms (US\$45 to US\$70) have a double bed and a bunk bed as well as a small outside area for small children. Free WiFi, bar and restaurant.

The Quay

Sisowath Quay, Tel: 023 224 894
www.chowcambodia.com

Five-storey, 16-room boutique hotel opened on the riverside in April. Stun-ningly designed by Gary Fell, the stand-out features are the roof-top jacuzzi and the very contemporary ground-floor bar and Chow Restaurant with WiFi and a small poolside restaurant.

The Pavilion

227 Street 19 Tel: 023 222 280
www.pavilion-cambodia.com

Beautiful boutique hotel set in a colonial building with 10 large, uniquely-designed rooms, each with either a small balcony or garden. Outdoor swimming pool, free Wi-Fi and a small poolside restaurant. Rooms from US\$50 to US\$65. ☺

Villa Langka

14 Street 282, Tel: 012 449 857
www.villalangka.com

Brand new boutique hotel with restaurant nd beautiful swimming pool. Just a stones throw away from Wat Lanka.

phnom penh - budget

Bodhi Tree

50 Street 113, Tel: 023 998 424

Small guest house with relaxed garden atmosphere and open balcony restaurant with an imaginative menu. Right opposite Tuol Sleng. Rooms from US\$8 to US\$26. ☺

Cara Hotel

18 Street 47, Tel: 023 430 666

Just north of Wat Phnom, a stylish boutique hotel with a great sushi restaurant.

L'Imprevu

Highway 1, 7km past Monivong Bridge
Tel: 024 390 405

www.hotel-imprevu-resort.com
Complex with twenty-four bungalows just outside of Phnom Penh. Tennis courts and excellent swimming pool make this a good break from the city. Bungalows for US\$13 to US\$20.

Sokha Heng Guesthouse

29 Street 178, Tel: 023 990 077

New, modern, clean 25-room guesthouse located conveniently close to the National Museum. Has rooms with air-con and hot water for US\$20 and US\$25.

Tonle Sap Guest House

4-6 Street 104, Tel: 023 986 722

www.tonlesapguesthouse.com

Clean, well-kept guesthouse upstairs with 15 rooms, from US\$15 to US\$30, with air-con, fans, hot water, cable TV. Downstairs Pickled Parrot bar open 24 hours.

Tony's Guest House

180 Street 130,
Tel: 092 289 068

Guest house next door to popular bar that also goes by the owner's name. All the rooms (from US\$15 to US\$25) have air-con, 60-channel cable TV, king-size beds and an en-suite bathroom with hot water.

Velkommen Inn

23 Street 104 Tel: 092 177 710

Just off the riverfront, situated above Velkommen Inn Restaurant is the guesthouse of the same name. The spotless rooms have air-con, with cable TV, minibar, safety box and en suite rooms with hot water. The hotel is located close to the bus stations and the ferry dock. Rooms from US\$20.

The Winking Frog

128 Sotheas Blvd. Tel: 023 356 399

Centrally-located guesthouse with 31 en-suite, air-conditioned rooms from US\$15 to US\$25. Downstairs is a British-run, 24-hour pub with live music.

sihanoukville

Cantina del Mar

Otres Beach, Tel: 012 702 502

Newly opened taco and seafood stall on one of Sihanoukville's most unspoilt beaches. If it is anything like its Phnom Penh older sister, expect great Mexican food and some mean tequila cocktails. Open from 10am.

Holy Cow

Ekreach Street, Tel: 012 478 510

Beautiful restaurant set in a relaxing garden environment on the main street, with terracotta terrace downstairs and wooden dining area upstairs. Well-priced, good cuisine including vegetarian options from US\$1.50 to US\$3, with house wine at US\$2. Open 9.30am to midnight.

House of Malibu

Serendipity Beach, Tel: 012 733 334

Clean bungalows fronting the beach with pleasant garden. Rooms come with air-con or fans and cable TV. Prices are from US\$25 to US\$50, breakfast included.

Independence Hotel

Street 2 Thnou, Sangkat No. 3,

Khan Mittapheap, Tel: 012 728 090
Beautifully restored hotel on Independence Beach, originally opened in 1963, reopened in 2007 following a complete refurbishment. Infinity pool and sweeping ocean views from most rooms. Gym, conference rooms and circular restaurant. Rooms from US\$110 to US\$450.

Le Vivier de 'La Paillette'

Victory Hill, Tel: 012 633 247

Upmarket French restaurant that certainly outshines the other places on Sihanoukville's late night drinking street.

SOKHA HENG
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Open 24 Hours
Rooms have Air-Conditioner, Cable-TV, and Hot Water. Internet service on the ground floor.

Located next to the Royal Palace & National Museum.



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E-mail: Sokha_Heng@hotmail.com

Velkommen inn

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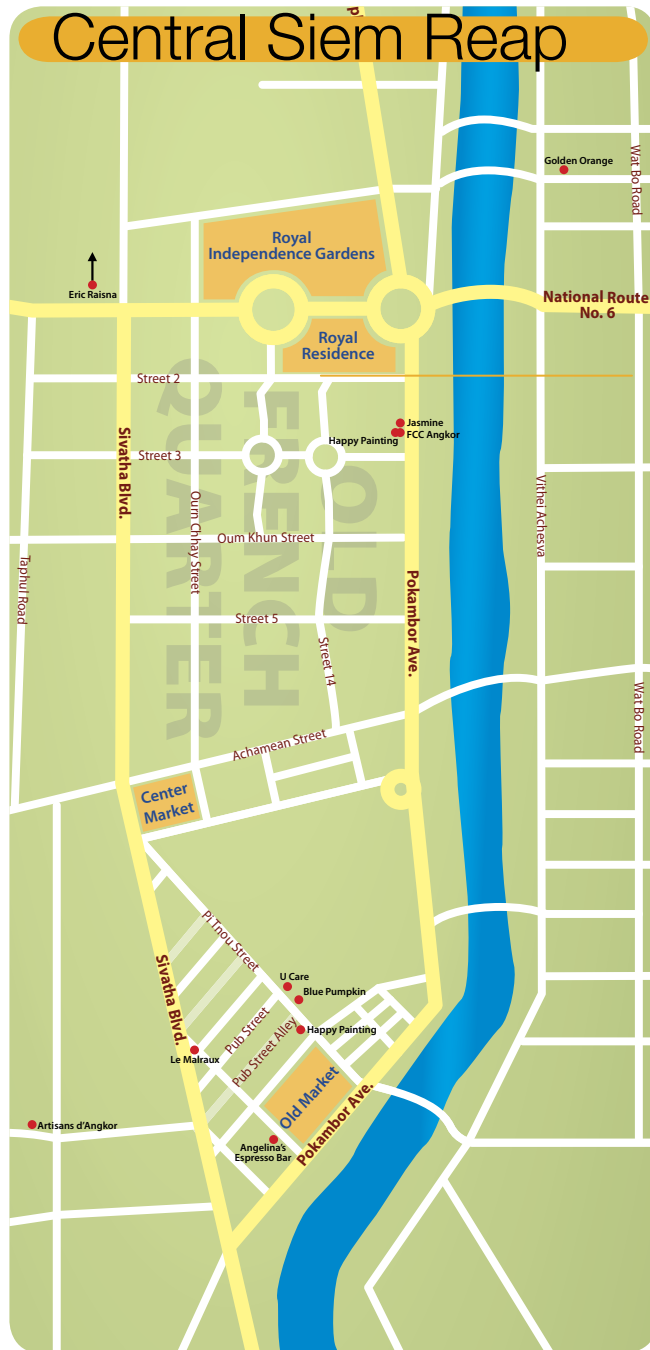
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Central Siem Reap



ATMs

ANZ Royal

- Street 125 (near Old Market)
- National Route 6 (Caltex Service Station)
- Siem Reap Airport

Cambodian Public Bank

- 618 Achamean Street

Canada Bank

- 558-559 Phsar Chas Street (Old Market Street)

SBC Bank

- 18A Sivutha Boulevard

Sophisticated French cuisine in a beautiful garden setting. Open for lunch and dinner.

Luna d'autunno

Ekareach Street, Tel: 034 934 280
Best Italian restaurant in Sihanoukville, serves a similar menu to the one in Phnom Penh, but with a heavier emphasis on seafood. Beautiful roof-top terrace and interior air-con restaurant. Open for lunch and dinner.

Mick & Craig's Sanctuary

From Golden Lion to Serendipity Tel: 012 727 740
Open restaurant serving reliable food, including wood-fired oven pizzas. Bar has a big screen and pool table. The guesthouse has a few rooms from US\$6 to US\$10, a bookshop and is a good source of travel information. Open 7am to late.

Oasis Hotel

Ekareach Street, Tel: 012 638 947
Spacious sports bar with large TV screen showing F1 and movies. Two pool tables often with plenty of willing female opponents. It also has spacious rooms ranging from US\$5 (fan) to US\$20 (air con). Open from 7am to late.

Otres Nautica

Otres Beach, Tel: 092 230 065
Boating company operating off Otres Beach. Has catamarans, lasers, sailing boats, sea kayaks as well as other vessels. Provides lessons and rental for beginner and expert sailors.

Paracambodia

Tel: 012 709 096, www.paracambodia.com
Company that offers powered paragliding, either through a four-to-five-day course for US\$650 or a two-to-three-day conversion course for US\$300.

Reef Resort

Road from Golden Lion to Serendipity Tel: 012 315 338, bookings@reefresort.com.kh
Small guesthouse set around a beautiful pool. Rooms have aircon with in-room safe and cable TV. Family rooms also available. Has a welcoming bar with excellent TV screen and a 9-ball pool table. Rooms from US\$35 to US\$60.

Scuba Nation

Tel: 012 604 680 / 012 715 785, www.divecambodia.com
Five-star PADI centre offering daily trips to the area's many islands and reefs including the decent dive sites at Koh Rung Samloem and Koh Kon. Also run a range of PADI-certified courses. Have offices in Phnom Penh.

Sea Breeze

Independence Beach, Tel: 034 934 205
Australian-run hotel with large air-con rooms opposite Independence Beach. BBQs include freshly caught fish and imported steaks. The bar has a 9-ball slate pool table and a large screen for sporting events. Rooms from US\$10 to US\$40.

Snake House

Near Victory Monument, Tel: 012 673 805
So called because there is a house with

snakes run by some Russians, rather than vice versa. If reptiles are not your scene, then the poolside bungalows and lush gardens provide a great spot to stay. The restaurant serves Russian and European cuisine and the bar can get very lively at night. Rooms from US\$15 to US\$20.

Sokha Beach Resort

Sokha Beach, Tel: 034 935 999
With its own private beach, excellent swimming pool and fine restaurants, Sokha is easily the classiest place to stay in Sihanoukville. A live Filipino band plays around the cocktail bar at night. Rooms are available from US\$85, but only if you try hard.

Starfish Bakery Café

Behind Samadera Market Tel: 012 952 011
Excellent place for a healthy breakfast or lunch set in a relaxing garden environment with good bread, salads, sandwiches, juices and porridge. Has a small shop run by the Rajana Association selling clothes and handicrafts. Good place to go for a massage. Open for breakfast and lunch.

Top Cat

On road from Golden Lion to Serendipity Beach, dabeev@yahoo.com
Opposite the Reef Resort, this luxurious large screen movie house showing DVDs opened in August. The films are free but there is a charge for the air con and comfortable couches.

siem reap - bars

Angkor What?

Pub Street, Tel: 012 490 755
"Promoting irresponsible drinking since 1998," this graffiti-laden bar is the mainstay of Pub Street. A healthy mix of loud rock, punk and grunge, buckets of vodka and red bull for US\$6 and a pool table ensures that you will never feel alone. Open from 6pm to late.

Laundry Bar

Old Market, Tel: 016 962 026, www.laundry-bar.com
Extremely chilled music bar just off Pub Street with great mellow decor and extremely cool t-shirts. Its 243-page music catalogue makes for the perfect respite from the Cambodian obsession with hip-hop, and they can burn 7 CDs for US\$5. Free drink during the 6pm to 9pm washing hours. Open 6pm to late.

Linga Bar

Alley behind Pub Street, Tel: 012 246 912, www.lingabar.com
Laid back, gay-friendly bar with extremely chilled Buddha Bar tunes and some amazing light boxes. Free Wi-Fi. Open from 5pm to late.

Molly Malone's

Pub Street Tel: 063 963 533, www.mollymalonescambodia.com
Obligatory Irish Pub with lots of wood panelling and Irish memorabilia. The Guinness either comes in a cold can or alongside some steak in a pie. Also has a small guest house upstairs with air-conditioned rooms from US\$20 to US\$35. Open from 7am to midnight.

Red Piano

Pub Street, Tel: 063 964 730, www.redpianocambodia.com
Bar set in a beautiful 100-year old colonial building that dominates one end of Pub Street. Lounge chairs spill out onto the street and the upstairs restaurant has great views of the mêlée down below. Open from 7am to 11.30pm.

The Warehouse

Old Market, Tel: 063 965 204
Popular expat bar opposite the old market that plays great 80s music. Good Asian fusion cuisine and with an additional selection of menus from nearby outlets, this is a great place to hide from the hordes along Pub Street and use the free Wi-Fi. Also has a small gallery upstairs. Open from 10am to 3am.

siem reap - cafés

Blue Pumpkin

Old Market, Tel: 012 946 227, www.tbumpkin.com
Popular café with a great range of

សណ្ឋាគារ ច្រូមអង្គ អ៊ាន់ GOLDEN ORANGE HOTEL

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Rooms have air-con, in-room security box, mini-bar,
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Cozy bar, Roof top terrace area.
10 minutes from the airport.



freshly baked breads and pastries. Serves shakes and health drinks for US\$1.75 and Bon Café coffee. Free Wi-Fi. Also has outlets at Angkor Wat and the airport.

Café de la Paix
Sivutha Bld, Tel: 063 966 000
www.hoteldelaixangkor.com

Like the adjoining Hotel de la Paix, this small café exudes contemporary chic. Excellent Lavazza coffee, bagels, salads and free Wi-Fi dished up in air-con surroundings. The sandwiches, salads and pastries are all 50% off after 8pm.

Happy Painting
FCC, Old Market, Domestic Airport
Tel: 012 623 945, www.happypainting.net
Three shops selling the extremely colourful and positive work of iconic artist Stef. Accepts credit cards. Open 5.30am to 11pm.

siem reap - galleries

Carnets d'Asie
333 Sivutha Bld., Tel: 016 746 701
www.carnetsdasie-angkor.com

Set in an arcade, this gallery-cum-bookshop has an extensive selection of photographs and books on Cambodia, including some black and white prints from the early 20th century.

Klick
Alley behind Pub Street, Tel: 063 761 084
Commercial fine art gallery dedicated to the work of Swiss photographer Pier Poretti. Black and white photographs are given a face-lift using hand-tinted water colours. Prints start at US\$40.

McDermott Gallery
FCC Complex, Pokambor Avenue & alley behind Pub Street, Tel: 012 274 274
www.mcdermottgallery.com
The main gallery has a semi-permanent exhibition of the mesmerising photographs of Angkor taken by John McDermott and Kenro Izu. Second gallery features ongoing exhibitions of other photographers alongside McDermott's own work. Open 10am to 10pm.

The Arts Lounge
Hotel de la Paix, Sivutha Boulevard
Tel: 063 966 000
Large space in the ground floor of the hotel that showcases the works of Cambodian and international artists. All pieces focus on Cambodian subjects.

The Red Gallery
FCC, Pokambor Ave. Tel: 092 822 323
A contemporary art space representing a select group of artists based in Cambodia. The Gallery exhibits sculptures, oil paintings, photography and mixed media. Hours: 10am to 10pm.

siem reap - hotels

Amansara
Pokambor Avenue, Tel: 063 760 333
www.amanresorts.com

The ultimate in Siem Reap's chic hotels. The limited number of rooms and high-walled perimeter make this the ideal refuge from the paparazzi for the global Angkor-bound jet set. You'll only be able to get a room if Mr & Mrs Smith are not on a flying visit. ☺

Claremont Angkor
17 Phum Wat Bo, Tel: 063 966 898
www.claremontangkor.com

New reasonably priced hotel with swimming pool, gym and large outside terrace area. Well-located just across the river, but within easy access of both temples and town. ☺

FCC Angkor
Pokambor Avenue, Tel: 023 992 284
www.fcccambodia.com

Boutique hotel with 31 contemporary Asian-designed rooms spread around the garden and swimming pool. Free Wi-Fi for guests both in rooms and around the pool. Rooms from US\$90 in low season. ☺

Golden Orange
Off East River Road, Tel: 063 965 389
Mini-hotel with good sized air-con rooms that tends to have customers when others are empty. Nice outside bar makes for a good place to sit and have a few beers. Rooms from US\$20. ☺

Hotel de la Paix
Sivutha Boulevard,
Tel: 063 966 000
www.hoteldelaixangkor.com
With stoneware bathtubs in the rooms, mini-iPods upon request, flexible reading flashlights above the decadently lavish beds and inset photographic galleries along all the corridors, de la Paix is simply a modern design classic. The Arts Lounge downstairs is a great place to chill and has free Wi-Fi. Special offer rooms from US\$165 a night.

La Residence d'Angkor
River Road,
Tel: 063 963 390
www.residenceangkor.com
Boutique, low-rise resort located across the river from the centre of town. Stylish wooden décor. Good pool and lush garden setting. Rooms are US\$340 to US\$440 a night.

Raffles Grand Hotel D'Angkor
1 Charles de Gaulle,
Tel: 063 963 888
Elegant hotel with opulent gardens and a spectacular swimming pool in its grounds. Has frequent art exhibitions and Apsara dancing on nearby terrace. Rooms are from US\$350 in the high season.

Sokha Angkor
Cnr Sivutha Rd and National Rd 6
Tel: 063 969 999, www.sokhahotels.com
Huge 5 star resort, sister property to Sihanoukville's Sokha Beach Resort. Located just back from the centre of town, it has a large pool, Irish pub and Japanese restaurant. Rooms from US\$250-2000 a night.

Victoria Angkor
Near Royal Gardens,
Tel: 063 760 428
www.victoriahotels.asia
Beautiful hotel with the most luxurious swimming pool and gardens. Rooms from US\$285 per night.

siem reap - leisure

Body Tune
293-296 Pokambor Avenue
www.bodytune.co.th
Heavy grey stone Thai-run spa with selection of massages and facials starting at US\$12. All masseuses work with Thai instructors.

Frangipani
Alley behind Pub Street,
Tel: 063 964 391
Relaxing three-room beauty spa in the heart of town that's popular with expats. Massages are from US\$18. Body treatments and facials start at US\$22.


Phokeethra Country Club
Sofitel Royal Angkor Resort & Spa,
Vithe Charles de Gaulle,
Tel: 056 396 4600,
golf@sofitel-royal-angkor.com
International standard 18-hole, 72-par golf course managed by the Sofitel Royal Angkor Golf and Spa Resort. Situated 16km outside of Siem Reap.

Sokha Helicopters
24 Sivutha Road Siem Reap,
Tel: 012 184 8891,
www.sokhahelicopters.com
Company flies modern French-built helicopters out of Phnom Penh and over Angkor. Licensed to fly helicopters anywhere in Cambodia. Trips over Angkor from US\$50.

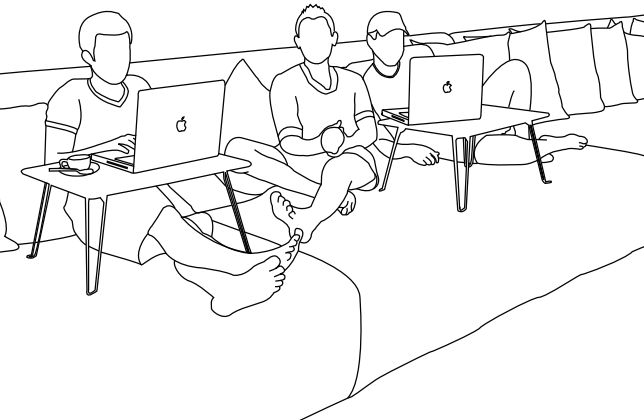
siem reap - restaurants

Burgers Without Borders
The Passage, Old Market,
Tel: 012 482 764
Specialty burger bar, with good burgers made from Brazilian beef and soy shakes. The burgers are between US\$3.75 to US\$4.75 and the shakes are US\$2.75.


Butterflies Garden Restaurant
535 Wat Bo Road,
Tel: 063 761 211
www.butterfliesofangkor.com
Garden restaurant with large netting to keep the infinite number of butterflies within the grounds. Beautiful, relaxing setting and good clean food, but slightly more expensive than the main drag. Small gift shop also on the premises.



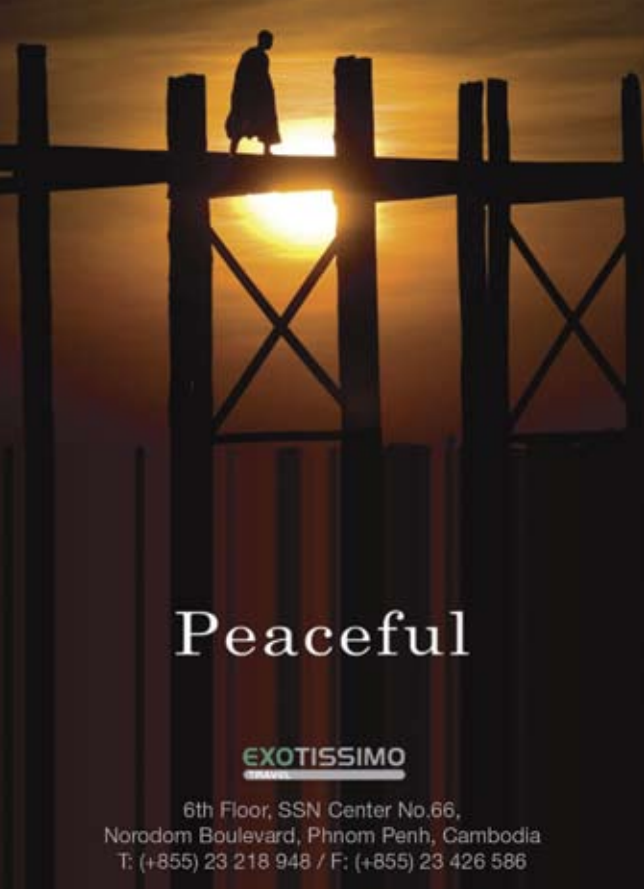
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Lunasihanouk@gmail.com

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Phnom Penh
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lunaphnompenh@gmail.com

Carnets d'Asie

333 Sivutha Blvd., Tel: 016 746 701
At the back of a galleried shopping area is this beautifully shaded high quality restaurant.

FCC Angkor

FCC Complex, Pokambor Avenue
Tel: 063 760 280

The best example of contemporary Asian architecture in Cambodia, the elegant bar and restaurant serve a mix of Asian and International cuisine. The complex includes shops, the McDermott Gallery, Visaya Spa, a boutique hotel and arguably the coolest pool room in Cambodia.

La Noria

Wat Bo Road, Tel: 063 964 242

Beautiful restaurant, set on a raised terrace area surrounded by trees. Serves good international and Khmer cuisine. Has traditional shadow puppet, musical and dance performances on Wednesdays. Open 6am to 10pm.

Le Malraux

155 Sivutha Boulevard
www.le-malraux-siem-reap.com

Sophisticated French fine dining establishment close to the market with good outside terrace and welcoming bar. Has a fine selection of wines.

Le Bistrot de Paris

Old Market Area, Tel: 092 964 790

Parisian-style bistro which opened in December 2006. Heavy wood-pannelled interior with solid bar and aircon provide this restaurant with authenticity. Serves foie gras, croque monsieur, cheese, cold cuts and French wines.

Maharajah

Next to Pub Street,
Tel: 092 506 622

Halal restaurant offering 261 Royal Indian dishes, including a large selection of vegetarian and non-vegetarian specialties. Open from 10am to 11pm with free home delivery.

Meric

Hotel de la Paix, Sivutha Boulevard
Tel: 093 966 000

www.hoteldelapaixangkor.com

Elegant, contemporary restaurant with classically simple yet powerful black and white décor and an open kitchen. Executive Chef Johannes Riviere has devised a daily-changing seven-course traditional Khmer set menu. Try to book one of the swings outside on the terrace.

Singing Tree Café

Wat Bo Road, Siem Reap

Tel: 012 490 265

Vegetarian alternative lifestyle garden restaurant with clusters of foliage surrounding wicker and bamboo seating. Menu includes veggie burgers, quiche, salads, sandwiches and tofu-based Khmer specialties, all costing around US\$2. Also a centre for yoga, meditation and reiki healing.

Tigre de Papier

Pub Street, Siem Reap,

Tel: 012 265 811

The thing that differentiates this place from all the other restaurants along Pub Street is its half-day cookery classes, starting at 9am and costing US\$10. Friendly, helpful French management.

Viroth's

Wat Bo Road, Tel: 012 826 346

Elegant restaurant on the other side of river with excellent terrace garden. A good place to try royal Khmer cuisine including amok and beef Lok lak.

siem reap - shops

Boom Boom Room

Old Market

Boasts a 176-page catalogue of tracks that can be burned either onto CDs for US\$1.25 or mp3 discs for US\$0.75. Also sells its designer t-shirts (US\$6) and hoodies (US\$15)

as well as the Zico fashion label for women. Same chain as in Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville.

Carnets d'Asie

333 Sivutha Boulevard,

Tel: 016 746 701

Set in an arcade this gallery-cum-bookshop has an extensive selection of photographs and books on Cambodia, including some black and white prints from the early 20th Century.

Eric Raisna

53 Veal Village, Siem Reap

Tel: 012 965 207 / 063 963 207

Accessories, home decorations, textiles and clothing created by Madagascar-born and French-trained designer. His amazingly vibrant designs have collected quite a following throughout the fashion world.

Happy Painting

FCC, Old Market, Domestic Airport

Tel: 012 623 945,

www.happypainting.net

Three shops selling the extremely colourful and positive paintings sculptures t-shirts and prints by iconic French-Canadian artist Stef. Accepts credit cards.

Jasmine Boutique

FCC Angkor, Pokambor Avenue

Tel: 063 760 610

Same sophisticated, stylish boutique as on Street 240 in Phnom Penh. The perfect place to come for the ballgown you forgot to bring with you.

U-Care Pharmacy

Next to Old Market,

Tel: 063 965 396

Reliable western-style pharmacist and drugstore that also has two branches in Phnom Penh. Sells health and beauty products. Open 8am to 12am.

travel

Cambodia Uncovered

Tel: 012 507 097

www.cambodiauncovered.com

Offers village and cultural tours in Phnom Penh and surrounds including road trips, Mekong cruises, accommodation, cooking classes and other activities.

Compagnie Fluviale du Mekong

Tel: 023 216 070,

www.cfmekong.com

Luxury cruises all the way from the Mekong Delta to Siem Reap in air-con accommodation. The full trip lasts seven days, with the journey from Phnom Penh to Siem Reap taking three days. Also has a smaller speedboat which does a day trip from Phnom Penh to Siem Reap.

Exotissimo Travel

46 Norodom Blvd,

Tel: 023 219 151

www.exotissimo.com

Excellent French-owned agency specialising in flight bookings, package holidays and a range of well-run tours of South-East Asia. Specialises in adventure tourism in Cambodia. Brochures are available online.

Sokha Helicopters

2 Street 134 Phnom Penh,

Tel: 023 885 773

24 Sivutha Road Siem Reap,

Tel: 012 184 8891

www.sokhahelicopters.com


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Sihanoukville



- 1) Billie Holiday 2) The Blue Angel 3) The Angel of the North 4) Venezuela
- 5) Hark the Herald Angels Sing 6) The Guardian Angels 7) Dan Brown 8) The Good, the Bad and the Ugly
- 9) Drew Barrymore 10) John Travolta 11) Tom Jones
- 12) Bridget Jones 13) Will Smith 14) Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie 15) Alan Jones 16) James Earl Jones
- 17) Robert Smith 18) David Bowie 19) Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade
- 20) Winston Smith 21) The Crimian War (at the Battle of Balaclava) 22) The first moon landing 23) Lech Walesa 24) Alexander the Great 25) Vladimir Putin
- 26) Albania 27) George Bernard Shaw 28) Manhat-tan Project 29) Starting the Great Fire of London
- 30) Katherine Parr

Pub Quiz Answers



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phnom penh: central





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Getting Busted in America

Oun has a brush with the law on a daytrip to the state park with two patients from her nursing home.

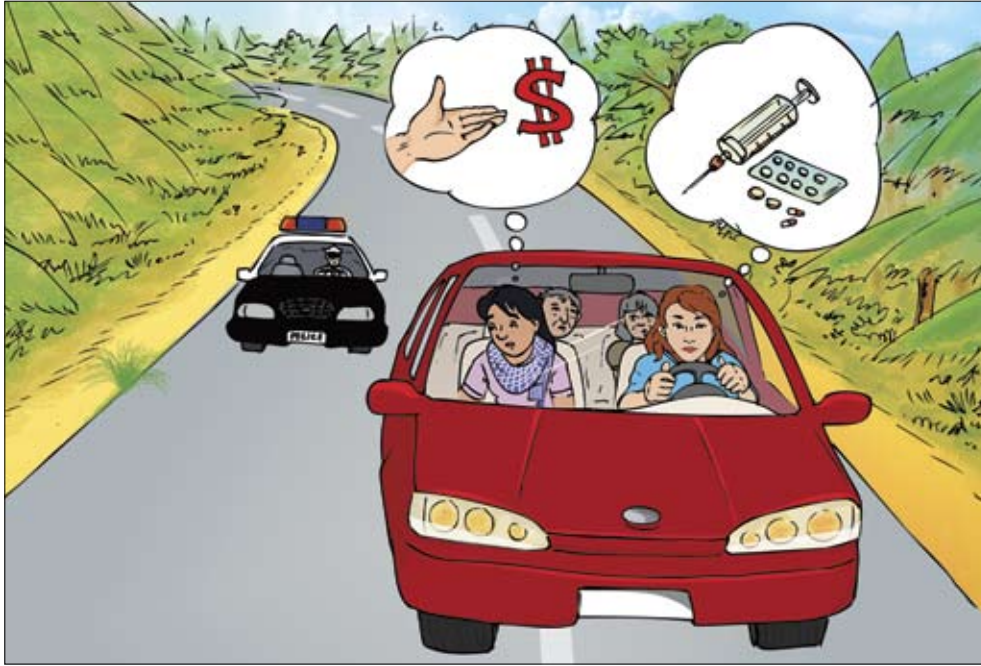


ILLUSTRATION BY VOUTH / OUR BOOKS

IT'S NOT HER NAME, BUT I almost always call my wife "Oun." That means "honey" in Khmer – the term of endearment, not what honeybees make.

I call my wife Oun because it keeps me out of trouble. Love may mean never having to say you're sorry, but marriage means speaking sweet words every chance you get in hopes of smoothing over whatever it is you did wrong – and husbands are always doing something wrong. But whether you left the toilet seat up or lost a thousand dollars in what seemed a perfectly legitimate business investment, words like "honey" are the most effective balms, especially when it's not your fault.

My wife is eager to become a fully licensed nurse in the United States, but that takes a lot of schooling, and college can be very expensive. To help come up with money for nursing school and valuable experience, Oun got a summer job at a nursing home.

Things went well, and while many of her co-workers were a little odd – or at least dazed and confused – she enjoyed taking care of the residents of the nursing home and listening to their stories. One day when she arrived at work, Jenny her supervisor, invited Oun to ride along with several of the nursing home's residents on a daytrip to a state park. Oun agreed, but thought it was strange that Jenny put two of the elderly residents in the backseat of her car while the rest of the residents boarded the facility's bus. But good employees do what the boss orders, so she hopped in Jenny's car too.

On the way out to the state park, a scenic area of waterfalls and forest a 45-minute drive outside of the city, the two employees talked and Oun learned that Jenny's claim to authority was based on being certified as a medical aide, which in the health care industry is similar to being promoted from scrubbing fryers to flipping burgers in McDonald's.

It was about this time that the red-and-blue lights of a sheriff's deputy lit up the road behind Jenny's car. Jenny promptly went white and started shaking. Oun, more familiar with Cambodian police officers' less than pleasant reputation, assumed that this was because American officers were just as bad. Jenny pulled over, and Oun prepared for the worst.

But Oun was pleasantly surprised. The officer was respectful and helpful, everything you could want in a police officer – unless you happened to be on probation for driving under the influence, which Jenny was. Or driving with a suspended license, which Jenny was. Or in possession of illegal drugs, which, as you can probably guess, Jenny was.

Of course, you can do all these things and escape notice of the police, unless you happen to speed or drive recklessly, which Jenny was.

So the officer searched Jenny's bag and found various drug paraphernalia, which only made it worse for Jenny. The police officer

called a truck to tow away Jenny's car and all four were left standing on the side of the road. One of their elderly charges started weeping. The other kept trying to wander off.

It was at this point that Jenny mentioned it was against work policy to take any resident anywhere in a private vehicle for any reason. Jenny, on the side of the road with two nursing home residents with dementia as her car was towed away because she had violated many laws, told Oun they might lose their jobs.

So Oun decided to take matters into her own hands – she tried to call me. I was, quite literally, out to lunch. After trying to call me several times, she called the nursing home and asked them to send the bus. The police officer explained to Oun where they were to the bus driver so the bus could find them.

The officer did offer to give her and the residents a ride to the station, but Oun declined. Being locked in the back of a police cruiser was not likely to lift the spirits of her elderly charges.

The officer left the four waiting on the side of the highway for the bus to arrive. Jenny, who somehow managed to avoid being arrested, took the opportunity to dispose of yet more drugs she had hidden in her bag.

The bus arrived and took them back to the nursing home, the two residents were tucked back into bed, and Oun was thanked for taking care of the residents in that day's adventures. So she went home and gave me a long lecture about how I needed to improve my phone-answering etiquette on the off-chance she was stranded in the Willamette Valley because of junkie antics.

So I apologised profusely. Apparently Jenny did too, because she didn't lose her job.

Will Koenig lives in Oregon with his wife and son. Contact him at: will.koenig@gmail.com. ■

Challenge Nora: Eat Me

Had your fare share of being manipulated, tired of women walking along your back, aromatherapy-ed out? Massage doesn't have to involve a personal touch – or at least not a human one. **Nora Lindstrom** goes for a massage with the fishes.



Swimming with the fishes

THE POOL IS SLIGHTLY bigger than a paddling pool and maybe 50cm deep. In the middle sits a big ornamental fish – an apparent attempt at creating some atmosphere – while the little suckers who await me as their lunch calmly swim about. Except for that they're not little at all – some of the fish are easily the size of a large banana, and, as I learn later, have no problem trying to swallow my pinkie whole.

"If you're still they'll come to you," the woman says as I hesitantly step into the rather cold water. And indeed they do. As soon as I stand still, swarms of them come at me and start nibbling away. It feels weird and the bites tickle a little, but it's not entirely unpleasant.

I slowly work up the courage to sit down in the water, despite my concerns that the coldness of the water will give me a bladder infection.

As the snacking continues, I manage to get a good look at these so-called 'Dr Fish'. Plain, bordering on ugly, they clearly have no manners – what goes in comes out. So I come to the delightful

realisation that not only am I being eaten by fish but swimming around in their excrement too. Fortunately it's just me in the bath – sharing the pool with a bunch of strangers would have been a bit much. At least now it's technically only my own digested skin cells floating about, or so I tell myself.

My eaters have an insatiable appetite, with a particular penchant for scabs and moles. In fact some of the larger aquatic doctors manage to draw blood with their incessant gnawing. I had no idea I was so tasty. It really seems these blood-thirsty fish are ravenous – I wonder what the massage parlour

does when business is slack – sacrifice a member of staff?

Bleeding and cold, I eventually give up. If it weren't for those two factors the experience wouldn't have been all that bad. It's easy to see the benefits particularly on your feet as layers of dead skin have been chewed off. Still, it will take some convincing to get me back among those gory fish. I also think first aid packs should be included in the price.

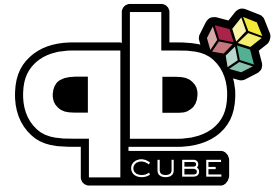
What is apparent though is that the whole thing is rather falsely marketed as a massage, as it actually is more of an exfoliation. This comes as a relief. Fish eating you is just about comprehensible, but fish giving you a massage? That's taking things a bit too far.

Fish Massage treatments cost US\$5 (or US\$8 including sauna), and are best booked in advance to allow time for cleaning the pool. Women are welcome mornings between 10am and 12pm, while men are welcome from 1pm to 11.30pm

Monorom Professional Massage B-87, B-89, B-91 Street 199 (near Sovanna Mall), Tel: 023 351 242.



Next time we'll get some piranhas



លើសពីការនិយាយ MORE THAN TALK®



qb Corner

qb December Horoscope

your month ahead according to the stars, and of course, qb

■ SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 23 – DEC. 21)

Happy Birthday Sagittarius!! Energy, verve, and confidence are with you this month, Sagittarius, until the last week of the month when your life winds down, quite appropriately! Until then, it's hustle and bustle, and matters are definitely working in your favour. Don't be surprised if romantic opportunities find you easily and when you least expect them – it's just that kind of month. A love interest has your best interests at heart just now. A proposal involving money comes to you in the last week of December. Writers and artists are especially inspired during this period.

■ CAPRICORN (DEC. 22 – JAN. 20)

Issues revolving around your family and the past capture much of your attention this month, Capricorn. While others are racing around you, preparing for the holidays, you are enjoying a sense of peace. The last week of the month begins a power period that you take with you into the New Year. Tremendous energy and initiative is with you as you embark on a journey of internal change and personal discovery. It feels like you can move mountains. The key to harnessing this energy is focus – a natural talent for you!

■ AQUARIUS (JAN. 21 – FEB. 19)

December is ripe with opportunity for envisioning new projects and goals for your future, Aquarius. Friends, acquaintances, and groups will certainly keep you busy. Romance, however, is mostly quiet until after the 7th, when Venus, the goddess of love, enters your sign and stays there into the New Year, bestowing beautiful energy for attracting what and who you want into your life. It's a mostly easy month, save for some impulsive energy mid-month, when overspending or speculation could be costly.

■ PISCES (FEB. 20 – MAR. 20)

In most ways, December is a high profile month for you, Pisces, except for on a roman-

tic level, which is satisfyingly private. You may be put "in charge" of a private matter. Secrets are revealed – and revealing. Intense energy comes from a friend in the last week of the month. It's virtually impossible to escape professional attention this month. The 12-16 is especially fortunate for work and financial matters. Your work is recognized and rewarded, you come across as especially competent, and you experience a professional peak of sorts.

■ ARIES (MAR. 21 – APR. 20)

Work is very rewarding this month, Aries, yet you still manage to find ways to break the routine. You are very busy expanding your horizons, whether it's through actual travel or introspection. At times, you may come across as opinionated, but it's more likely enthusiasm for sharing your thoughts. Special attention to romance is important this month. Foster it when you are enjoying non-routine activities. December presents a nice balance of recognition and accomplishment, as well as recreation and love. A stellar romantic opportunity occurs on the 4-6, and professional rewards arrive in the last week.

■ TAURUS (APR. 21 – MAY 21)

Sharing, intimacy, finances, and power plays all figure strongly for you in December, Taurus. In the first three weeks of the month, you are thinking strategically, making plans, and watching others around you more than you are participating. You stand to gain much from your observations! The last week of the month brings with it buzz of travel or educational opportunities, most likely involving a partner, who has been going through a lot of changes recently. Creative avenues open up on the job this month, and your credibility soars.

■ GEMINI (MAY 22 – JUN. 21)

Balancing your needs with those of a significant other involves plenty of negotiating and back-and-forth before arriving at any conclusions this month, Gemini. Times like these require a certain amount of tact and a need to let others take centre stage for the time being. A loan or repayment is likely to make headlines for you towards the end of December. A personal project could bear fruit around the Full Moon on the 12th, which occurs in your sign. An intimate conversation with someone special can be very revealing mid-month.

■ CANCER (JUN. 22 – JUL. 22)

You simply can't wait until the New Year to begin fulfilling your resolutions regarding health, fitness, and lifestyle changes, Cancer. The time is now! You are raring to go, ready to completely rework your routines. You have more energy than usual for work, projects, and anything that involves reorganizing and restructuring. Taking care of details is what's on your mind now. The last week of December brings intense energy to a partnership or significant relationship. The need for changes in your approach to a partnership becomes apparent now.

■ LEO (JUL. 23 – AUG. 22)

The first three weeks of December are exciting and stimulating for you, Leo. This is a decidedly romantic and creative period for you. You have special magnetic appeal, extra energy, and a real yen for excitement now. Creative Leos will be on a roll, producing more than ever, and publishing opportunities may be forthcoming. The last week of December features a job offer or opportunity, possibly a work-at-home endeavour. Don't wait until the New Year to make resolutions regarding

health and fitness – the time is now.

■ VIRGO (AUG. 23 – SEP. 23)

A scurry of activity in and around the home or with family is in store for you this month, Virgo. You are busy with preparations, repairs, and re-organizing – and enjoying every minute of it! It's a fabulous time to get your "nest" in order and functioning smoothly. The last week of December is positively intense for romance and intimacy. An exciting proposal or opportunity regarding love, recreation, and creativity comes your way. The holidays for you in 2008 are likely to be especially magical and memorable. Love is in the air!

■ LIBRA (SEP. 24 – OCT. 23)

An especially busy – mostly pleasantly so – period is in store for you in the first three weeks of December, Libra. It can get a little hectic, with many errands to run, more ideas than you can realistically implement, and plenty of contact with friends, siblings, and neighbours. It's a time of networking, and you're coming across very smoothly. The last week of the month (and year!) is revealing and perhaps intense for family matters. From the 7th forward, great energy for attraction, entertainment, and romance is with you.

■ SCORPIO (OCT. 24 – NOV. 22)

In many ways, December is a "money month" for you, Scorpio. You enjoy extra energy and enthusiasm for increasing your income. It's an excellent opportunity period for a bonus or raise that truly makes a difference in your life! You could be taking on a bigger work-load at the same time. If you're waiting for money in the form of a loan or repayment of a debt to you, it's likely to arrive around the Full Moon on the 12th. December is a banner month for finances, communications, and learning. ■

This Month in History

beginnings, writings, taxes, assassinations



■ A HAMMER AND SICKLE IS BORN

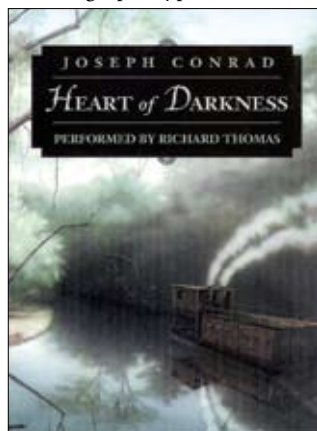
December 30, 1922
The U.S.S.R. (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) was established through the confederation of Russia, Belorussia (Belarus), Ukraine and the Transcaucasian Federation. Sixty-nine years, one world war and one long cold war later, Dec. 26, 1991 would mark the last day of the Soviet Union's existence. Covering no less than fifteen official languages, the geographic boundaries of the U.S.S.R. varied with time. After the Second World War until its dissolution, the Union's boundaries approximately corresponded with those of late Imperial Russia, with the notable exclusions of Poland, most of Finland, and Alaska.

■ OPENING OF THE CHUNNEL

December 1, 1990
Britain was joined to mainland Europe for the first time since the Ice Age. As engineers digging a railway tunnel under the English Channel broke through the last dividing rock, they effectively compromised "the best thing between Britain and Europe", simply known as the Channel. When the tunnel finally opened in 1994, English hooligans would be able to visit French museums and French snobs could cheer on Arsenal players, all in one easy day trip. The tunnel reaches a depth of 240 metres and has the longest undersea portion of any tunnel in the world. In 1996 the American Society of Civil Engineers identified the tunnel as one of the Seven Wonders of the Modern World.

■ BIRTH OF THE HEART OF DARKNESS

December 3, 1857
Polish novelist Joseph Conrad (1857-1924) was born in the Ukraine as Josef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski. For those die-hard fans of Street 51's Heart of Darkness, who believe that Conrad wrote a book about their favourite nightclub, the irrefutable logic of time proves them wrong. Although Conrad could speak no English at age twenty, he went on to become an outstanding novelist, best known for his tales of seafaring life including Lord Jim and, yes, Heart of Darkness which was published in 1899. His works influenced writers such as Ernest Hemingway, Graham Greene and Italo Calvino, and have also inspired many films including Apocalypse Now.



■ MAPLE LEAF NATION

December 15, 1964
Canada adopted a new national flag featuring a red maple leaf on a white background. After its adoption, the Canadian government would send out swarms of backpackers to the four corners of the world, proudly displaying the new flag on their rucksacks. They are still roaming the earth on their long mission to embarrass fellow travellers from countries with less fortunate and much more boring flags such as France, Belgium, Italy, Holland, Luxembourg,

Spain, Germany and countless others featuring tricolour banners. The maple leaf has served as a symbol celebrating the nature and environment of what is now Canada since the 1700s.

■ TAX ON BACHELORS

December 29, 1926
Italian dictator Benito Mussolini introduces a tax on bachelors – possibly the prime reason why so many Italian bachelors have ended up in Phnom Penh. Outlining new measures by the fascist government to increase the population, the tax on bachelors and spinsters, and another tax on married couples not blessed with children, would subsidise maternity homes and encourage people to reproduce. Being a very law-abiding man, Mussolini himself was married twice, had a number of mistresses and innumerable sexual encounters with adoring female supporters.

■ RASPUTIN IS KILLED AGAIN AND AGAIN...

December 29-30, 1916
In the waning days of the Romanov dynasty, Russian 'monk' Rasputin (Grigory Yefimovich Novykh) was assassinated – the hard way. A group of conspirators had lured him to a private home, then poisoned and shot him. Observing their victim's

reluctance to trade the temporary with the eternal, the assassins then tied Rasputin up and threw him into the Neva River in which he finally drowned. Rasputin had gained enormous influence with Russian Emperor Nicholas II and the Empress Alexandra, claiming divine inspiration and the ability to perform miracles, especially in helping young Czar Nicky, a haemophiliac. He also urged severe measures in dealing with the peasant masses and for a time had virtually dictated government policy. His eternal fame has been assured by the Boney M classic "Ra Ra Rasputin," although there is no evidence that he was indeed the lover of the Russian Queen. ❗



■ CELEBRITY BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

Figures in brackets represent the age they will be on their birthday.

Dec. 1 – Bette Midler (63), Woody Allen (73); Dec. 2 – Britney Spears (27), Nelly Furtado (30); Dec. 3 – Brendan Fraser & Daryl Hannah (Both 40), Julianne Moore (48), Ozzy Osbourne (60); Dec. 4 – Tyra Banks (35), Jeff Bridges (59); Dec. 7 – Tom Waits (59); Dec. 8 – Sinéad O'Connor (42), Kim Basinger (55); Dec. 9 – John Malkovich (55); Dec. 12 – Jennifer Connelly (38), Dick Van Dyke (83); Dec. 17 – Milla Jovovich (33); Dec. 18 – Christina Aguilera (28), Katie Holmes (30), Brad Pitt (45), Steven Spielberg (62); Dec. 19 – Jennifer Beals (45); Dec. 21 – Kiefer Sutherland (42), Samuel L. Jackson (60), Jane Fonda (71); Dec. 25 – Annie Lennox (54); Dec. 28 – Denzel Washington (54); Dec. 29 – Jude Law (36); Dec. 30 – Tiger Woods (33); Dec. 31 – Val Kilmer (49)

Alf Taylor: The Publican

Owner of the popular riverfront bar the Monarch, and winner of the Phnom Penh Inside Out award for best pub 2007, **Alf Taylor** shares a few home truths with **AsiaLIFE**. Illustration by **Victor Blanko**.

AFTER WINNING THE Phnom Penh Inside Out award, a lot of people asked me what's the secret of my success. "Well, I'm a true publican," I normally respond with a wink. "And you know what that means?" I add with a slight pause. "The PUBLIC CAN do whatever they f***ing want." Always brings a smile, does that one, especially after a few JB cokes.

Well at least they could in the good old days. That was back in '99 when I opened my first bar – Happy Happy. Not that I won too many awards for the best of anything then. But in those days anything meant everything. The girls would role enormous spliffs on their thighs while massaging customers at the bar – sometimes they'd roll the wrong joint, if you know what I mean. We even had a back room where regulars regularly crashed out after partaking of the Russian Market's happy oregano pizza topping.

The only problem with Happy, Happy was its location. And that's the first rule of business – location, location, location – as I'm constantly telling the latest Pattaya emigree who comes over here hoping to open a bar for the missus. "More chance of finding a matching pair of sleeves for that top you're wearing than keeping 'her indoors', indoors and on the straight and narrow," I tell them before showing them the door. I always keep a 'no prostitutes, no drugs, no singlets and no French' sign over the door to the bogs.

Being a London black cabbie in my previous existence, location is something I thought I knew a thing or two about. Not that it helped me much. Close to both Russian Market and Tuol Sleng, Happy Happy was ideally situated for backpackers. Unfortunately, it was even closer to the open sewer on Street 105, which smelt worse than a backpacker on an overnight bus through India. Most days we had a higher turnover in josticks

than beer. I think I'd had a few too many tugs on the whacky backy when I agreed to take on the lease.

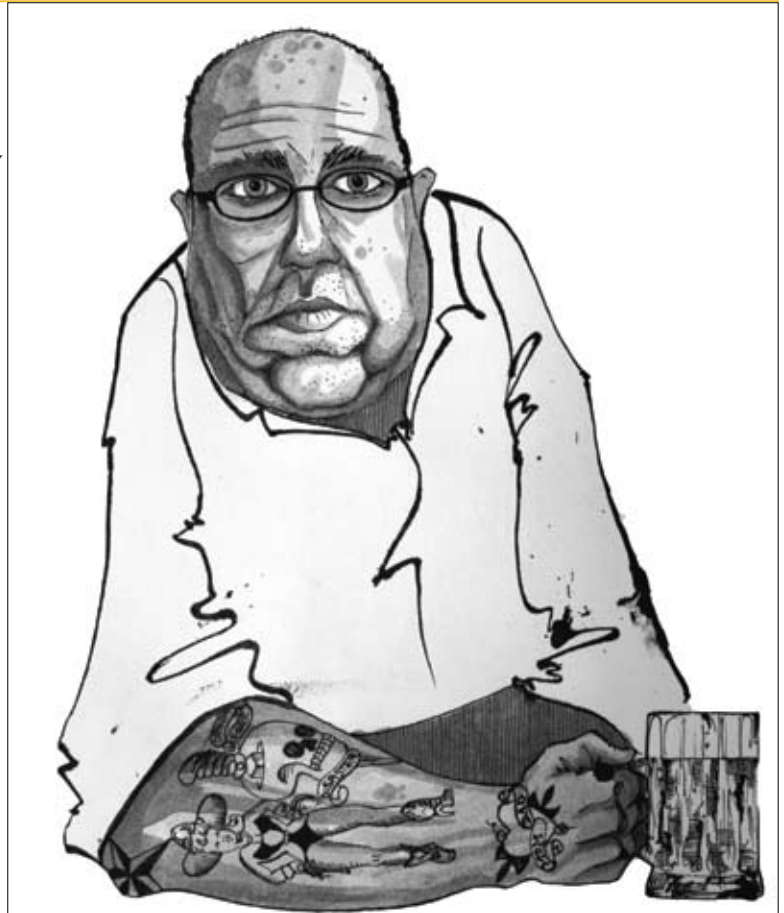
Not that it was really my decision – or my bar for that matter. All credit for my entrance into the Phnom Penh bar owning fraternity rests with the first Mrs T. Mind you, I should have known better. After all a knack for up-selling clients at Martini Bar is hardly the ideal CV for managing a smoking den. And it's hardly like I didn't know about her history. The first time our paths crossed, she was hustling a client on the pool table. The second time she was having a quickie in the washroom.

Two months and a few drug-induced late night transactions later, she announced that A.T. Jnr. was on his way. Short of catching the first bus to Thailand, I didn't really have much choice, especially when the future first Mrs. T moved her whole family in. Anyway my passport was getting its visa renewed at the time.

At first, I thought Happy Happy would keep her on the straight and narrow. And so it did. Though, I guess the fact she was seven months up the duff by the time we finally opened put most potential punters off.

Looking back, those were probably the best days of my Phnom Penh life. Everything changed when A.T. Jnr. popped his tiny little head into this world.

Not that I regret having him. Don't take me wrong. That



little sod is the best thing that's ever happened to me. I was so proud when he spoke his first words – not that I understood them. Never been too good at learning the local lingo. No it wasn't little Alfie per se, but the changes it made in my relationship with the first Mrs. T that was the problem.

First, trade picked up. Not that I was averse to taking a few extra knicker – just that it wasn't the sort of customer we normally attracted. Our laissez faire attitude to the weed tended to attract a younger, more grungy type of clientele. The new customers were older, had a few more bob behind them, and were prepared to spend it.

Then the staff began to change. The old dears we used to have were great sport and fantastic at rolling joints, but they weren't exactly Premier League lookers. Though they might have been in their day, to be fair. The new girls were far softer on the eye and a lot more upfront in their customer service skills, if you take my drift.

Not that I ever really twigged on, to tell the truth. Most days I didn't know what planet I was on let alone what tricks my missus was getting up to.

One day, I came back a bit earlier and more stoned than usual from my tour of duty around town, to find the bar packed with customers, but no

trace of Mrs T. Not that I registered this, I was far too wasted to take much in. But the bar went quiet just like that scene in American Werewolf. This freaked my already pretty freaked-out state even further. Realising that I had to lie down before I passed out, I lunged towards the back room. Sensing I knew much more than I actually did, a couple of the girls tipped Mrs T off and tried to block my path. Now, I've never hit a lady, but at the same time nobody stands in my way, if you get my drift. Whatever anyone else might say, I only brushed the girls away and that's the God's truth. Not that the police saw it that way.

I literally broke the door off its hinges as I burst into the back room. There I caught my better half with one of our more loyal customers in flagrante, so to speak. Fortunately for me, I was in no state to act the part of the wronged husband neither physically nor morally – after all she knew what I got up to

at Martinis from her pals who still worked there. Instead, I did the only thing a man in my state could have done. I passed out on the mattress beside the adulterous couple.

Why do I mention this tale now? Well, it taught me one invaluable lesson about doing business in Phnom Penh. One that I remembered long after the former Mrs T ran off with a policeman from Dusseldorf on the back of his vespa, leaving me to look after little Alfie. The public can do whatever it wants, and the customer is never wrong. And down the Monarch, our customers can do whatever they want to, just so long as they settle their tab at the end of the day. Have a nice one, Alf.

Alf Taylor is the landlord of the Monarch, Street 104, Phnom Penh. If you want any advice on running a pub in Phnom Penh or cross-cultural relationships, you can contact him at: alfiaylorpublican@gmail.com.

Sudoku Answers



We can't give you a puzzle without providing the answers. So here is the completed puzzle from the previous issue of AsiaLIFE.

Gwan Ching Lee

6	8	7	1	9	3	5	4	2
5	2	3	6	4	7	8	9	1
1	9	4	5	2	8	7	3	6
8	3	6	4	7	5	1	2	9
9	1	5	8	3	2	6	7	4
4	7	2	9	6	1	3	8	5
2	4	1	3	8	6	9	5	7
7	6	8	2	5	9	4	1	3
3	5	9	7	1	4	2	6	8

ANSWERS TO NUMBER PUZZLES

Answer to Q1: 13, in each line down the number in the middle is the sum of the first and last numbers, in each line across the first two numbers added together produce the third number.

Answer to Q2: 42. $13+17 = 30$, divide by $10 = 3$. Similarly $38 + 42 = 80$, divide by $10 = 8$

Answer to Q3: 36,36. x1, x2,x3 repeated

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The QuizMaster

■ THERE MUST BE AN ANGEL...

- 1) The U2 hit Angel of Harlem was a tribute song to which legendary singer?
- 2) In which film did Marlene Dietrich sing Falling in Love Again?
- 3) What was sculpted by Anthony Gormley near Gateshead, England?
- 4) Which country is home to the Angel Falls, the world's highest waterfalls?
- 5) Which song contains the line, "Peace on Earth and mercy mild, God and sinner reconciled"?
- 6) Which organisation was founded by Curtis Sliwa?
- 7) Which best selling author wrote the novel Angels and Demons?
- 8) In which film did Eli Wallach call Lee Van Cleef, Angel Eyes?
- 9) Who played the role of Dylan Sanders in the 2000 film version of Charlie's Angels?
- 10) In the 1996 film Michael, who played an angel?

■ ALIAS SMITH AND JONES

- 11) Who was the first male artist to record U.K. hits on nine different record labels?
- 12) Whose diary was written by Helen Fielding?
- 13) Who was once known as the Fresh Prince?
- 14) Who played Mr. and Mrs. Smith in the 2005 film?
- 15) Which Australian was crowned Formula One world champion in 1980?

- 16) Who provided the voice of Darth Vader in Star Wars?
- 17) Who provides lead vocals for The Cure?
- 18) Who was born David Robert Hayward Jones?
- 19) What was the title of the third film in which Harrison Ford played Indiana Jones?
- 20) Who worked for The Ministry of Truth and had an affair with Julia?

■ IN THE PAST

- 21) During the course of which war did the charge of the light brigade take place?
- 22) What happened in the 1960s at the Sea of Tranquility?
- 23) Which electrician won the 1983 Nobel peace prize?
- 24) Who conquered Egypt in 332 BC?
- 25) Who succeeded Boris Yeltsin as Russian president?
- 26) Which country was ruled by King Zog?
- 27) Who was the only person to win both an Oscar and The Nobel Prize for Literature?
- 28) What was the American codename for the development of the atom bomb?
- 29) How did baker, Thomas Farriner (or Farynor) become famous, or infamous?
- 30) Who was the sixth wife of Henry VIII?

■ ANSWERS ON PAGE 93

Quote Unquote

■ OBAMA TALK

He might only have been just elected, and there's no way that he can ever surpass the comic genius of his predecessor, but over the course of the interminable election campaign, President Elect Obama did come out with one cracker.

NUMBER 1:

"You can put lipstick on a pig, but it's still a pig." (Sep. 9, 2008).

He might have been referring to Republican policy, but was the choice of Sarah Palin as John McCain's running mate more than a mere coincidence?

Sudoku MIND GAMES TO KEEP YOU THINKING

S.I. COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY SUDOKU PRIZE COMPETITION

Congratulations to Prum Sopheap, last issue's Sudoku Prize Competition winner, who received the prize of a 2GB flash drive, provided by SI Computer Technology.

This issue's competition also carries a prize by SI Computer Technology. To have a chance of winning a 2GB flash drive send an SMS to 012 182 8237 with the four numbers from the cells shaded grey, starting from the top left hand square and moving in a clockwise direction.

All winning entries will enter the prize draw on Dec. 16. Good luck!

Level: Difficult

Gwan Ching Lee's time: 25 mins

	9		4				2	
		4		1				
7				2		3		
	1			9			8	
3								5
	2			4			6	
		5		7				4
				3		9		
	6				8		1	

■ INUMBER PUZZLES

Here are three additional number puzzles for you to try. Each one is solved in a different way and none of them require complex mathematics to solve. The answers together with a full explanation can be found on Page 101.

What number should appear next in this sequence?
8, 24, 12, 36, 18, 54, 27, ?

Question 2.

What number should replace the question mark in the grid?

2	7	9	3	6
5	1	6	2	4
6	2	8	5	3
4	3	7	6	1
2	2	4	1	?

Question 3

What number should replace the question mark?

2	3	2	9	1	7	1	3
4	6	8	7	6	8	?	5



Fujitsu recommends Windows Vista® Business.

LifeBook S6520
SlimEdge Design, Wider View

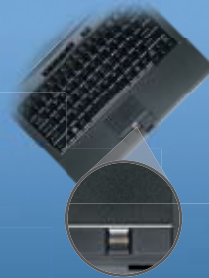


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Advanced Security

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