



Cambodia with Kids: Travel Resources & Tips

Greenfeet Guides is not a travel service, but we do have a fair amount of experience travelling the world with kids. We have found that reading even just one good book or seeing one good video about a travel destination can make all the difference in a kid's level of interest and enthusiasm for sightseeing. This list of family travel tips just scratches the surface, but we hope it's a good place to start. Happy Travels!

BOOKS TO READ

THE LAST KING OF ANGKOR BY GRAEME BASE (3-6) This picture book is set in the forests surrounding Angkor Wat, introducing kids to the landscape and animals of the ancient Khmer Empire.

JACK STALWART: THE SECRET OF THE SACRED TEMPLE BY ELIZABETH SINGER HUNT (ages 7-11) Kids will enjoy reading about 9 year old secret agent Jack Stalwart and how he solves a mystery at Angkor Wat, the famous temple which draws so many visitors to Cambodia each year.

THE ILLUSTRATED RAMAYANA AND ILLUSTRATED MAHABHARAT BY WILCO BOOKS (ages 7+) Kids visiting the temple Angkor Wat will see many elaborate carvings which are all based on Hindu mythology. Reading the stories from the Indian epics the Ramayana and Mahabharat will help kids recognize many of the characters and stories they will see: King Rama, the demon King Ravana, Hanuman the Monkey God, and Krishna, among others.

PRINCE SIDDHARTHA: THE STORY OF BUDDHA BY JONATHAN LANDAW (ages 7+) Kids traveling in Cambodia will see a lot of statues of Buddha. This illustrated book brings to life the story of Buddha and will help kids understand why there are so many statues of him throughout Cambodia.

ROTTEN RULERS BY HORRIBLE HISTORIES (ages 8+) For an introduction to Cambodia's difficult recent history during the brutal reign of the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s, the popular "Horrible Histories" series has a short section on the Khmer Rouge leader, Pol Pot.

VIDEOS & INTERNET SITES TO CHECK OUT

ANCIENT MEGASTRUCTURES: ANGKOR WAT BY NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC (ages 7+)- This excellent series of videos recreates the ancient Khmer Empire and the construction of Angkor Wat, so kids have an idea of what the people and temple looked like when it was first built. The entire video series is long, but some particularly interesting segments include: Angkor Wat City on Water, How Was it Built? and The Moat Explained. (natgeotv.com/ca/ancient-megastructures/videos)

KID-FRIENDLY FOODS

AMOK CURRY	Fish in coconut curry, often served in a banana leaf.
BAI SACH CHROUK	BBQ meat & rice with soy & coconut flavours.
KHMER NOODLES	Rice noodles with mint, veggies & green curry (often served for breakfast).
GREEN MANGO SALAD	Raw mango with basil, mint, lime juice & veggies.
PUMPKIN CUSTARD	Pumpkin dessert with shaved ice & coconut milk.
TROPICAL FRUITS	Dragonfruit, longan, rambutan, grilled bananas to name a few!

KID-FRIENDLY RESTAURANTS

BLUE PUMPKIN, PHNOM PENH & SIEM REAP Local and western cafe-style food and ice cream, where you can enjoy your meal in fun way, eating off trays while lounging on sofas! (bluepumpkin.asia)

FRIENDS THE RESTAURANT, PHNOM PENH - Good local Cambodian cuisine and western cuisine. And also runs a training program to help at-risk street children find jobs in tourism. (tree-alliance.org)

HAVEN TRAINING RESTAURANT, SIEM REAP - Delicious local and western food in a lovely setting; the ingredients are carefully and consciously sourced (the pumpkin burger is a must-try!). The restaurant itself is a job training & life skills program for Cambodian youth. (havencambodia.com)

KID-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

PHNOM PENH

PHNOM TAMAO WILDLIFE RESCUE CENTER, OUTSIDE PHNOM PENH

This animal park is very worthwhile IF you go on the Wildlife Alliance's "Behind the Scenes Tour" which offers an excellent opportunity to learn about their work to prevent illegal trafficking of endangered species and rehabilitate rescued animals. You may also experience a close encounter with elephants! (wildlifealliance.org/wildlife-tours)

SIEM REAP

ANGKOR NATIONAL MUSEUM, SIEM REAP

This archaeological museum is a good way to beat the heat and help kids learn about the ancient history of Cambodia. Kids will enjoy watching the videos describing ancient life and reading the stories about the gods of the ancient civilization. They will also see many sculptures, temple models, and artifacts from the Khmer Empire. (angkornationalmuseum.com)

BIKE THE COUNTRYSIDE, OUTSIDE OF SIEM REAP

Families can take a guided tour on flat roads to see the villages, temples, and markets just outside of Siem Reap. The Grasshopper Adventure tour company was well-equipped with helmets and also trail-a-bikes for kids who are not biking independently. (grasshopperadventures.com)

CAMBODIAN LAND MINE MUSEUM, OUTSIDE OF SIEM REAP

(ages 8+) - For families wanting to learn more about Cambodia's difficult recent history and the Khmer Rouge, the Land Mine Museum is a good way to start. The information and images are presented in a meaningful and educational manner, but is not visually disturbing to children. (cambodialandminemuseum.org)

HIKE TO KPAL SPEAN, OUTSIDE OF SIEM REAP

This is a hike through a lovely forest and along a river to interesting rock carvings in the river bed. Kids will enjoy the chance to explore and look at the drawings etched in the rocks.

PHARE CAMBODIAN CIRCUS, SIEM REAP

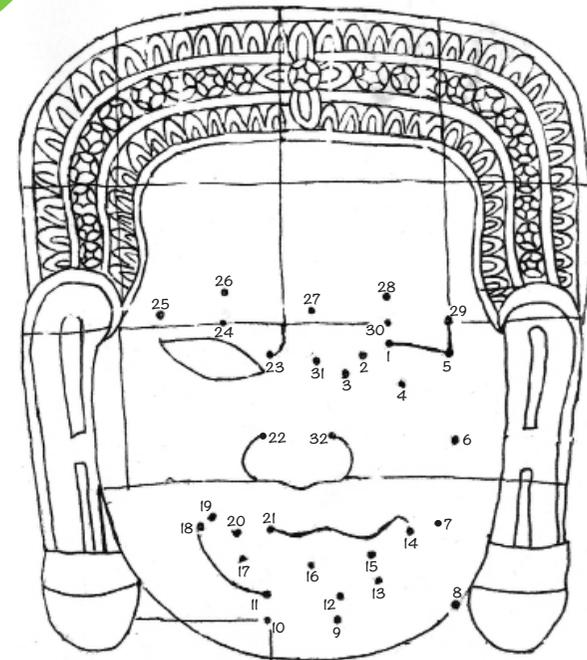
Kids will enjoy watching the acrobatics & tricks at this circus show, whose performers are street children training in the performing arts. Even though some shows tackle tough social issues, the storyline often goes above young kids heads, and they still enjoy the theatrics. (pharecircus.org)

SMILE OF ANGKOR SHOW, SIEM REAP

The dialogue in this show is incredibly cheesy (for adults!) and the price high, but kids seem to love this theatrical show telling the story of Angkor Wat, complete with elaborate sets, costumes and lights. We saw the show before visiting Angkor Wat, and it set the stage for the sights and stories we would experience when we toured the temple the next day. (smileofangkor.info)

SAMPLE ACTIVITY FROM THE CAMBODIA KIDS! TRAVEL BOOK

This is a famous stone carving you can see at the Temple of Bayon in Cambodia. This face is everywhere, but no one knows who Bayon is! A king? A god? Buddha?



Connect the dots to see Bayon's face.
Who do YOU think Bayon is?