

## PV03 3 days - Preah Vihear with Koh Ker

Ancient and recent Khmer history in this exciting tour; visiting the Khmer Rouge strongholds and the spectacular mountain temple of Preah Vihear.

The spectacular temple of Preah Vihear is set on the edge of a 550 metre cliff on the Dangrek Mountains on the Thai Border.

This trip is a fascinating journey through the Cambodian countryside. We pass through remote farming communities and visit some of the last strongholds of the Khmer Rouge.



New road links have now made access to this area a lot easier it only takes 4 to 5 hours nonstop from Siem Reap to Preah Vihear. We prefer to take time to enjoy the journey to the former Pol Pot stronghold of Anlong Veng. We visit the house of Tamok\*\* the Khmer Rouge Commander and the grave of Pol Pot in the hills above the small and now friendly town.

*Preah Vihear achieved notoriety as it was the stage for the final surrender of the Khmer Rouge in 1998. A border dispute over a small area of land adjoining the temple is still causing tension between the two countries. There is a large military presence on the mountain with Cambodian and Thai Troops along the now closed border crossing. The Cambodian Positions have been subject to attacks from Thailand in 2008 and April 2009 when the village was destroyed by a rocket attack by the Thais.*



Tension has now eased (Late 2009) so visitors are now allowed up the mountain. Please be aware this is a military area; so access can be restricted at short notice.

Photography around the temples is allowed; but there may be localized restrictions on photography especially along the border and Army Camps

We always check first before running the tour and will only run the tour if it safe to do so.

*Picture above was taken by me with permission. Don't try and photograph the military without it!*

### Day 1 Siem Reap to Preah Vihear.

Depart 07:00 drive to the small but magnificent temple of Banteay Srey with the finest of all the carvings of the temples of Angkor - drive to Kbal Spean and walk to the River of 1000 Lingas - continue to Along Veng for lunch.

Optional drive to Thai Border and short walk to Pol Pot's grave. - continue to Preah Vihear .

Accommodation will be in the village as the hill village where guest housed were destroyed early in 2009; The village is being reconstructed in December 2009 so it's unlikely there will be accommodation on the mountain at present

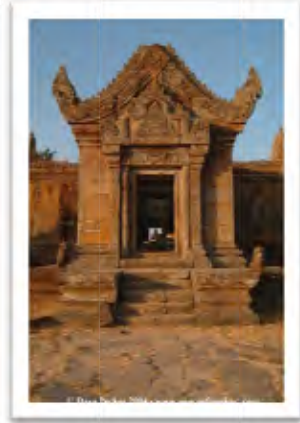


*Pol Pots Grave*

\*\* Tamok's house is not open in at present (Dec 2009) as it is now a military HQ;

### Day 2 Preah Vihear mountain

Drive up Preah Vihear mountain for temple visit. It is a very steep drive with up to 30% gradients. The roller coaster ride is one of the highlights of Cambodia with fabulous views. Although now concrete; the road is only accessible by 4wd vehicles and pickup trucks.



We can enjoy the views of the 800 metre long temple in the morning light. The style is similar to Banteay Srey; with fine carvings and ornate gables

We drive via Tbeang Meanchey or Kulen for lunch and continue to Koh Ker. If time we will see the Prasat Thom Pyramid in the late afternoon.



We stay in basic local guest house in remote village near Koh Ker

### Day 3 Koh Ker

Day visit to Koh Ker exploring the 1000 year old temple city which was the capital of the Khmer Empire for less than 20 years. Much of the history and original temple names were unknown; but this just adds to the mystery. Koh Ker has some of the largest Lingas and a set of recently discovered animal carvings on rocks at Ang Khna.

We have options to drive to the unique Pilgrimage site of **Pearng Kunmaou** on the fringes of Kulen Mountain. It has weird landscape of house sized boulders and unique rock carvings.



**Beng Mealea** is one of our old favorites; being our most visited jungle temple since 2004. It an amazing ruin similar in style and 2/3rds the size of Angkor Wat. Draped in vegetation with huge trees growing from the ruins. Although now becoming busier it remains one of the most atmospheric temple sites in Cambodia and not to be missed.

(Please note If you have visited Beng Mealea or any of the other places on this itinerary we will be able to customize the tour for you.



**Cost \$435 each depends on options: Min No 2 persons on tour**

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