

# Floating Villages And Cardamom

*Itinerary:* Phnom Penh, Cardamom Mountains, Pursat, Battambang, Siem Reap

*Duration:* 5 Days/4 Nights

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## 1ST DAY : PHNOM PENH - KAMPONG CHNAING

⇒ Departure towards **Pursat** province along National Road 5.

⊗ First stop in **Kampong Loung**, to visit a silver handicraft maker. This village is famous all over Cambodia for the quality of products, providing articles to main temples in the capital and the royal family. Proceed to **Oudong**, 40 km north of Phnom Penh, and former capital itself. Not many remains of its ancient splendour, but the landscape are beautiful, between two hills with stupa on top. Browse through local market, before continuing westbound. Optional stops to explore small villages and country pagodas, enchanting for their tranquil



atmosphere and simple spirituality. Reach **Kampong Chnaing** in the afternoon, a small provincial capital specialized in pottery.

⚓ Boat trip to explore another **Kampong Loung** – a floating village inhabited by over 7,000 souls, grouped in 3,000 families of Khmer, Vietnamese and Cham origin. Far away from mass tourism roads, this settlement is absolutely fascinating, showing a very authentic side of Cambodia.



- ☉ Lunch and dinner included
- ➔ Overnight in guest-house

## 2<sup>ND</sup> DAY : KAMPONG CHNAING - CARDAMOM MOUNTAINS

➔ Proceed northbound along Road 5 to **Pursat**. Turn left south-west on a dirt track to reach the village of **Vil Veng** – departure point to the Cardamom Mountains. Continue to **Ou Som**, a village of *khmers leu* minority, and settle down for overnight.

⊗ Visit to a farm less 2 km from the village, to discover a **cardamom plantation**. The site is particularly beautiful in July, before harvest. Rest of the afternoon at leisure in the village, watch people activities and familiarize with them.

- ☉ Lunch and dinner included
- ➔ Overnight in guest-house

**Amarita Note:** *Accommodation in Ou Som is very simple. Rooms have 2 beds, without the possibility of joining an extra one. No air-con nor fan, but nights are cool enough to be comfortable without. Shared bathroom and facilities, hot water prepared on demand.*



## 3<sup>RD</sup> DAY : CARDAMOM MOUNTAINS - BATTAMBANG

⊗ Visit the **Lake of Crocodiles**, which can be reached after 7km track and 1km walk. This is one of the last wild crocodiles sanctuaries in Cambodia, that can be seen sunbathing on the shores. Then, proceed to **Chhay Pruy** waterfalls, a 100m high jump feeding a power plant used by surrounding villages.

- ➔ Back to **Vil Veng**, proceed to Battambang. Arrival in the afternoon, check in hotel.
- ☉ Lunch and dinner included
- ➔ Overnight in hotel

## 4<sup>TH</sup> DAY : BATTAMBANG

⊗ The day is spent to discover Battambang and its surroundings at a very leisurely rhythm. Start the day visiting



a grape plantation, and taste the best wine produced in Cambodia. Try other local fruits grown here: oranges, bananas, dragon fruits, jujube. Proceed to **Phnom Bannon**, about 20 km from town, and climb the 337 steps (80 m high) to reach the temple, built during the Angkorian reign in the 11th century, and consisting of five towers (*prasat*). Then **Preah Ang Teuk**, the Holy Water Cave, where some nice stalactites hang from the ceiling. Proceed to **Wat Ek Phnom**, built in the 11th century as a Hindu temple by King Suryavarman I, and enjoy its very countryside peaceful atmosphere, surrounded by trees and lily ponds. End the day riding on



**Bamboo Train**, a very funny transport running for just few km between the villages of O'Saloea and O'Tambang.

☉ Lunch and dinner free or included

↔ Overnight in hotel

## 5<sup>TH</sup> DAY: BATTAMBANG - SIEM REAP

🚢 Back to Siem Reap by boat along Sanké River and Tonle Sap Lake (about 5h).

⚡ Along the way, stop to visit **Wat Chheu Khmao** (Black Wood pagoda), an ancient temple built by people living in the floating villages. They are inhabited by ethnic minorities of various origins, installed in houses built on stilts, mostly living on fishing and farming. This journey provides an excellent opportunity to enjoy the flora and fauna around the lake, and great bird-watching, since the Tonle Sap Lake is the largest bird sanctuary in South-East Asia.

🚗 Arrival Siem Reap in the afternoon, transfer to the airport.

☉ Lunch free or included

**End of services.**

