

Frizz, Tuk tuks and the Tonle Sap

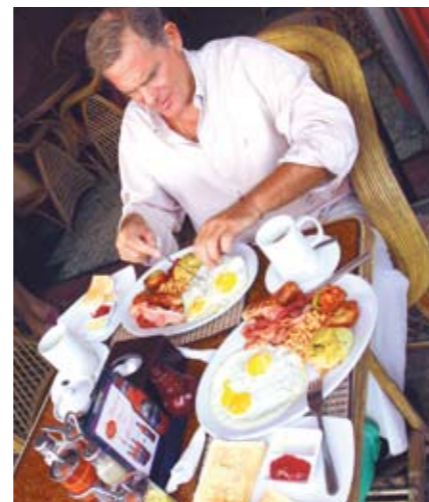
The sights of Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Dalam deskripsinya tentang Phnom Penh, Kamboja, Devid seorang relawan Korps Perdamaian menunjukkan kepada kita keterampilannya menggambarkan tempat ini melebihi dari sebuah buku panduan di Lonely Planet.

In his inviting description of Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Peace Corps volunteer Dave shows us writing skills that would more than enhance the pages of a Lonely Planet Guide Book.



● The Royal Palace, Phnom Penh



- Tuk tuk
- Old area Phnom Penh
- World's biggest breakfast
- The comfortable Anise Hotel, Beoung Keng Kang I - nicest area to stay in Phnom Penh

Nongkrong di bar di Phnom Penh, sudah pasti Anda akan bertemu dengan salah satu dari mereka. Anda pasti tahu semacam apa itu: selalu menceritakan bagaimana mereka menemukan tempat liburan yang saya pijak sekarang, serta memberitahukan betapa banyak tempat ini telah berubah dan berkembang. Phnom Penh tidak berbeda. Karakter ini ada hampir disetiap bar-bar asing di Phnom Penh dan jika Anda beruntung, Anda akan duduk di samping salah satu dari mereka, mereka akan mulai bercerita bagaimana Kamboja sepuluh tahun, dua puluh tahun bahkan tiga puluh tahun yang lalu: jalan beraspal dengan lubang yang cukup besar. Senjata api berceletoh di kota pada malam hari. Gerobak-gerobak turun ke jalan-jalan utama. Cukup dan hampir-bebas obat bius untuk membius gajah selama sehari-hari. Sayang sekali semua itu sudah pergi. Phnom Penh 'nya yang dulu' tidak ada lagi, dan sekarang terlihat seperti kota-kota Asia Tenggara lainnya.

Untungnya, dia salah.

Phnom Penh, berbeda dibandingkan dengan dekade setelah perang saudara yang menghancurkan Kamboja

Hang out in bars in Phnom Penh long enough and you're bound to run into one of those "it's-not-how-it-used-to-be people." You know the kind: always lamenting how they pretty much discovered whatever vacation spot you've landed yourself in, telling you how much this place has changed and become developed. Phnom Penh is no different. These characters inhabit the foreign bars in Phnom Penh and if you're fortunate/unfortunate enough to be sitting next to one of them, he'll start telling you how different Cambodia's capital city was ten, twenty, even thirty years ago: unpaved roads with potholes big enough to swallow a horse. Machine-gun fire chattering over the city at night. Ox carts going down the main streets. And enough nearly-free drugs to keep an elephant anesthetized for days. Too bad that's all gone, he'll tell you. "His" Phnom Penh is no longer in existence; what's left is a watered-down remnant that looks just like any other Southeast Asian city.

Thankfully, he's wrong.

Phnom Penh, while different than it was in those heady decades after Cambodia's devastating

saat itu, tidak begitu memikat, hanya sebuah kota beruap kumuh yang dahulu kala pernah Anda baca. Phnom Penh hari ini adalah mikrokosmos dari realitas yang lebih besar dari Kamboja modern: sebuah permata yang belum dipoles, yang siap untuk bersinar. Kamboja saat ini lebih aman, menjelajahi daerah ini lebih bebas untuk menikmati keindahan Kamboja. Serta memiliki peninggalan sejarah kerajaan Angkor yang menakjubkan, tidak ketinggalan dengan pusat-pusat perbelanjaan dan restorannya. Berikut adalah beberapa highlights kota yang menarik ini.

Royal Palace: **The Royal Palace Kamboja** ini mirip dengan yang ada di Bangkok, sangat indah dan tidak begitu ramai. Salah satu dari itu adalah Pagoda Perak, yang lantai keramik hem...ya, dengan ubin perak; sebuah aula dimana raja Kamboja mengadakan upacara mereka, dan paviliun besi yang diberikan kepada Kamboja oleh Napoleon. Memiliki taman yang indah, pergilah lebih awal di pagi hari atau di sore hari untuk menghindari panas. Biaya masuk \$ 2 untuk orang asing.

Wat Phnom: pagoda ini terletak di sebuah bukit di jantung kota, Anda akan mengetahuinya dengan tampilan jam raksasa di sisi bukit. Belilah beberapa pisang untuk memberi makan monyet-monyet di

civil war, is no less alluring than the steamy, seedy city of yore you read about. Phnom Penh of today is a microcosm of the larger reality of modern Cambodia: a still-scruffy, unpolished gem with bright bits and pieces starting to poke out. Today it's safer, which makes exploring all the more worry-free and rewarding, and it offers a fascinating slice of Cambodia, from the history-steeped reminders of the mighty Angkor empire to the shiny new empires of shopping malls and gourmet restaurants. Here are some of the highlights of this charming city.

Royal Palace: **The Cambodian Royal Palace** is similar to the one in Bangkok, but it's worth a look and it's usually less crowded. Among the highlights are the Silver Pagoda, whose floor is tiled with, yes, silver tiles; the throne hall where the Cambodian kings hold their ceremonies; and the strange iron pavilion given to Cambodia by Napoleon. It has exquisite landscaping; go early in the morning or in the late afternoon to escape the heat. There is a \$2 fee for foreigners.

Wat Phnom: This pagoda is on a hill in the heart of the city; you'll know it by the giant clock face set into the hillside. Buy some bananas to feed the



• The Royal Palace, Phnom Penh

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• River front restaurants, Phnom Penh

sana, tetapi waspadalah karena mereka mungkin mencoba untuk mencuri barang-barang Anda! Biaya masuk hanya \$ 1 yang akan membawa Anda ke dalam pagoda di bagian atas di mana Anda dapat membayar penghormatan kepada puluhan patung-patung Buddha antik, atau Anda dapat mengunjungi toko-toko "Buddha-Mart" yang terlihat seperti toko yang menjual barang-barang religius.

Tepi sungai: disinilah tempat orang-orang Phnom Penh untuk datang dan bersantai. Sisowath Quay adalah jalan yang membentang sepanjang Sungai Tonle Sap yang indah, sungai yang berubah arah dua kali setahun. Bar, restoran, dan bar lagi berbaris disisi jalan, makanan dan minuman yang menawarkan rasa apapun, dan jalan bagi pejalan kaki menyusuri garis sungai di sisi lain. Datang di malam hari untuk menyaksikan orang-orang Khmer sedang ber aerobik-menari, atau bergabung dengan mereka. Kemudian mendinginkan diri dengan minuman segar di salah satu pub di sepanjang jalan Quay. Sebuah cara yang menyenangkan untuk mengakhiri hari yang sibuk di ibukota.

Central Market: Anda dapat melihat kubah besar Phnom Penh di Central Market. Baru saja direnovasi, sebuah pasar yang besar, memiliki segalanya dari souvenir, pakaian hingga perangkat keras, semua

monkeys there, but beware because they may try to steal your things! The \$1 entrance fee will get you into the pagoda at the top where you can pay homage to the scores of antique Buddha statues, or you can visit the Chinese-run "Buddha-Mart" which looks like a convenience store dealing in religious items.

Riverside: This is where Phnom Penh comes to play. Sisowath Quay is the road that runs along the picturesque Tonle Sap River, a river that changes direction twice a year. Bars, restaurants, and more bars line one side of the street, offering food and drink for any taste, and a river walk-style park lines the other side. Come in the evening to watch the Khmer people engage in some dance-aerobics, or join in yourself. Cool off afterward with a drink or five at one of the many pubs along the Quay. A fun way to end a busy day in the capital.

Central Market: You can see the massive dome of Phnom Penh's Central Market (Psa Thmey in Khmer) from kilometers around. Newly-renovated, this big, airy market has everything, from souvenirs to clothing to hardware, all at rock-bottom prices. Practice your bargaining with some of the friendly sellers; you'll be amazed at what you can walk away with! If you're hot and thirsty don't worry;

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Lotus Bayview

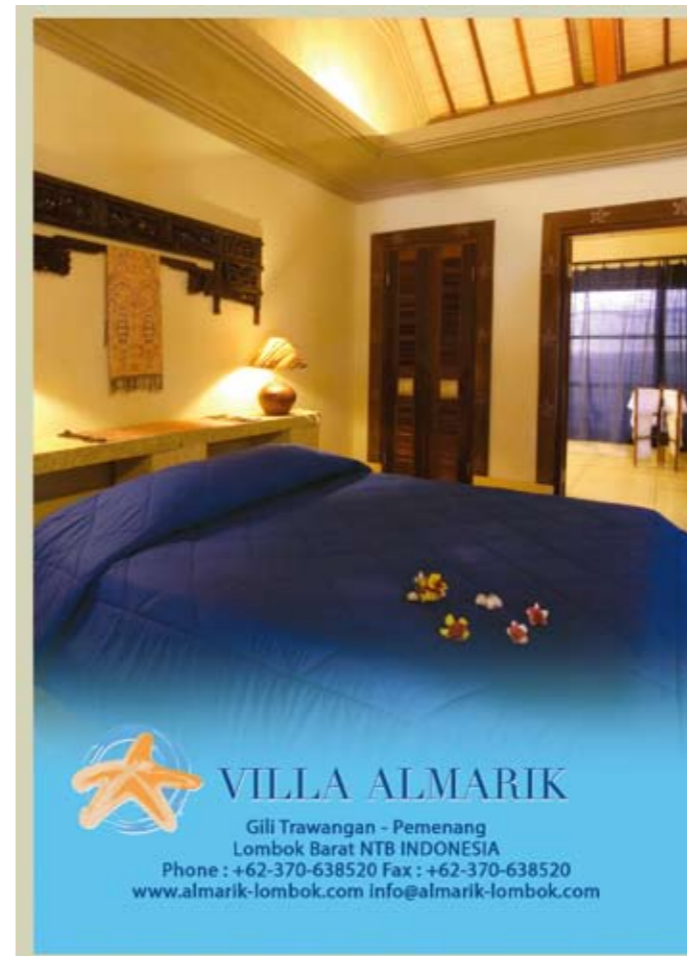
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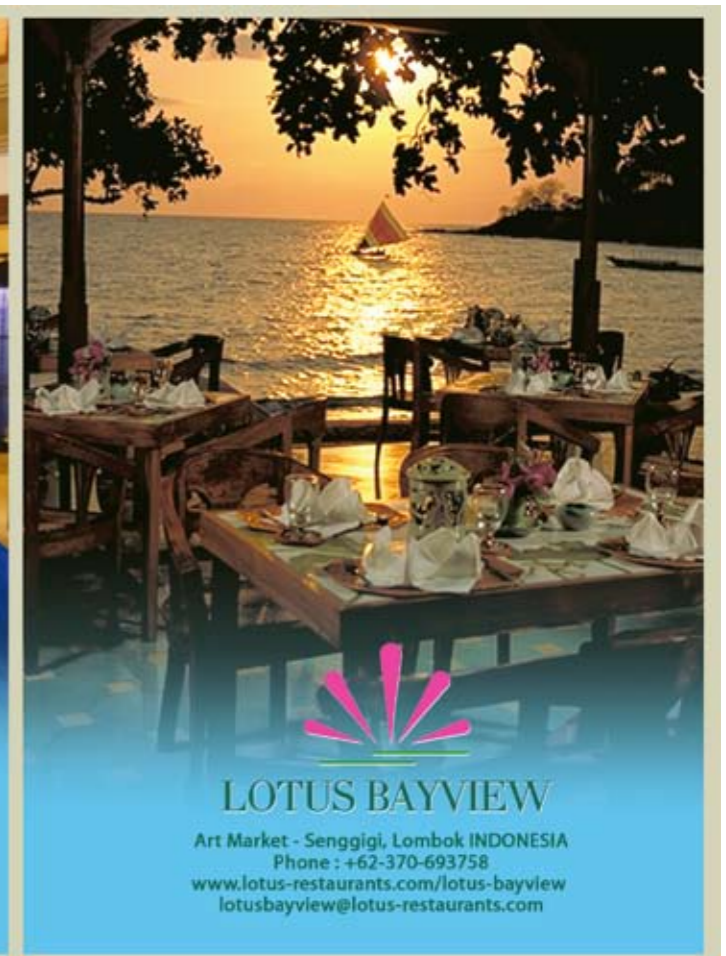
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dengan harga murah. Praktekkan kemampuan Anda untuk tawar-menawar. Anda akan kagum dengan apa yang Anda bisa dapatkan! Jika Anda panas dan haus jangan khawatir; kafe di pinggir jalan disekitar Central Market akan melayani dengan es kopi susunya yang nikmat.

Pasar lain: Di Phnom Penh dimana orang-orang Kamboja biasa berbelanja, cobalah ke salah satu pasar yang tersebar di seluruh kota, Anda akan melihat orang-orang Kamboja dari 24 provinsi. Transaksi yang luar biasa. Setiap pasar memiliki spesialisasinya sendiri. Pasar Rusia populer dengan turis pencari sutra berkualitas, DVD, atau souvenir, sedangkan Pasar Olimpiade dan Pasar O'Russey menawarkan rasa "Kamboja asli." Hati-hati: pasar-pasar ini biasanya cukup ramai dan sesak. Perhatikan barang bawaan Anda dan segera cari jalan keluar jika mulai terasa panas dan mulai berdesak-desakan.

Museum Nasional: Banyak artefak yang diselamatkan dari Angkor Wat dan daerah sekitarnya disimpan di sini. Di dalamnya menyimpan sejarah mengenai Kamboja. Menjelajahi patung-patung, lingas, dan potongan lain warisan Kamboja. Biaya masuk ke museum ini \$ 2 untuk orang asing.

Makan: masakan Kamboja jauh berbeda dari rekan-rekan-nya Thailand dan Vietnam. Rasa Kamboja sangatlah luas: mulai dari sup asam hingga melon pahit, atau hidangan yang diterjemahkan menjadi "gorengan panas", masakan Kamboja memiliki sesuatu untuk semua orang. Ada banyak restoran di sekitar Phnom Penh yang mengubah masakan Khmer menjadi

cafés serving some of the best iced coffee with milk line the streets surrounding the Central Market.

Other Markets: Phnom Penh is where Cambodia comes to shop; go into one of the many markets around the city and you will see people from all of Cambodia's 24 provinces. Great deals can be had with some persistent bargaining, and each market has its own specialty. The famous Russian Market is popular with tourists looking for quality silk, DVDs, or souvenirs, while Olympic Market and Psa O'Russey offer a taste of "real Cambodia." Beware: these markets can get quite crowded and claustrophobic. Watch your belongings and have an escape route should the heat and the crowds get too much for you.

National Museum: Many artifacts that were rescued from Angkor Wat and the surrounding countryside are housed here. Soak in some of Cambodia's storied history. Browse among the statues, lingas, and other pieces of Cambodia's legacy. There is a \$2 entrance fee for foreigners.

Eat: Cambodian cuisine is much different from its Thai and Vietnamese counterparts. The Cambodian palate is surprisingly broad: from sour soups to bitter melons, to a dish that translates into "fried hot", Cambodian cooking has something for everyone. There are plenty of restaurants around Phnom Penh that translate Khmer cooking into Western-friendly dishes; try Friends, Khmer Surin, or Frizz. Or, if you're feeling adventurous, you can pop into any of the thousands of Khmer restaurants all over the city. If you see a big crowd and a red Angkor Beer sign, you know you're in the right place.

Shoot: There is a gun range outside of Phnom Penh where you can shoot machine guns, grenade launchers, and bazookas. The prices vary according to the munitions; after a long, hot day in the markets, blowing off some steam by blowing up some coconuts might be right up your alley.

- Independence Monument
- The Royal Palace are



• Tonle Sap river* the sinking cargo boat*

masakan Barat; coba, Khmer Surin, atau Frizz. Atau, jika Anda suka berpetualang, Anda bisa mencoba ke salah satu restoran Khmer yang tersebar di seluruh kota. Jika Anda melihat kerumunan orang banyak dan tanda merah Angkor Beer, Anda tahu bahwa Anda di tempat yang benar.

Tembak: Ada berbagai senjata di luar Phnom Penh di mana Anda dapat mencoba menembak senapan mesin, meluncurkan granat, dan bazoka. Harga bervariasi sesuai dengan amunisi. Setelah hari yang panjang dan panas di pasar, alangkah nikmatnya dapat meneguk es kelapa muda yang menyegarkan.

Semua daerah di Phnom Penh dapat diakses oleh tuk tuk, Anda akan bertemu supir yang menyenangkan dan dengan senang hati akan memandu Anda sepanjang hari. Supir yang baik tahu semua tujuan yang tercantum tetapi tidak semua. Mereka semua berusaha untuk membuat uang, tapi jangan khawatir, supir tuk tuk di Phnom Penh pada umumnya baik. Jika mereka tidak tahu bagaimana untuk mendapatkan tujuan Anda, mereka akan berusaha mencari seseorang yang tahu dan tidak akan meninggalkan Anda sampai Anda aman di jalan.

David Kierski adalah seorang relawan yang tinggal di Takeo Kamboja, sekitar 1.5 jam dari Phnom Penh.

All of Phnom Penh is accessible by tuk tuk; find a driver who is worth his salt and he'll make an indispensable guide for the whole day. The good ones know all the destinations listed above and then some. While they all are trying to make some money, the tuk tuk drivers in Phnom Penh generally aren't crooks. If they don't know how to get you to your destination, they will find someone who will and won't leave your side 'till you're safely on your way.

David Kierski is a volunteer living in Takeo, Cambodia, about 1.5 hours' very bumpy ride from Phnom Penh.



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