CAMBODIA, VIETNAM

Ho Chi Minh To Angkor Wat Cycle







Duration: 12 days

Cycle through beautiful rural landscapes dotted with ruins of ancient civilisations and small towns where Buddhist temples nestle amongst graceful French colonial buildings and ramshackle houses.

Our challenge takes us from Vietnamese Saigon, now Ho Chi Minh City, through the rice-paddies and waterways of the beautiful Mekong Delta into Cambodia. We pedal on through this friendly country towards one of the most impressive sights in Southeast Asia, the Royal Temples of Angkor Wat. The fascinating insight into the region's cultures, ancient and modern, are a real highlight of the trip.

Is trekking more your pace? Check out our Trek to Angkor Wat.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Depart London

Day 2: Arrive Ho Chi Minh City

On arrival we transfer to our hotel and have a trip briefing before getting a good night's sleep, ready for the start of our challenge! Night hotel.

Day 3: Ho Chi Minh City – Tra Vinh

After an early breakfast we drive (approx. 1.5 hours) out of the bustling city of Ho Chi Minh to the famous Cu Chi Tunnels. A sanctuary for the Vietcong at the height of the Vietnam War, they give us a good insight into the country's relatively recent history. We then drive south towards the Mekong Delta (approx. 2.5 hours). We stop near Ben Tre, the gateway to the Mekong Delta, and after lunch and ensuring our bikes are comfortable, we set off! It's a wonderful place to start our ride. We cycle on narrow lanes and tracks through the heart of this rural area, passing banana plantations, sugar cane fields and the lush rural landscape of the Delta. We have a short ferry crossing before reaching Tra Vinh. Night hotel.

Drive approx. 1.5 & 2.5 hours; cycle approx. 42-50km

Day 4: Tra Vinh – Cau Ke – Can Tho

Our first full day's cycle takes us along quiet backroads to Can Tho, the largest city in the Mekong Delta, known for its picturesque canals full of scenes of everyday life. En route we pass numerous Khmer temples and pagodas, and cross several waterways – some by footbridges, some on ferry crossings. We will start to get a great feel for the friendly Vietnamese culture, and the traditional rural scenes we see are fascinating. We ride today on a mix of roads and tracks; most of it is very quiet, but the last section gets busier as we approach Can Tho. Night hotel.

Cycle approx. 90-95km

Day 5: Can Tho – Long Xuyen

After an early breakfast we set off by boat through the Can Tho floating market, seeing a multitude of boats trading livestock, fruits, rice and fish. We then get back on our bikes and cycle along the banks of the busy river continuing towards Sa Dec. After lunch we cycle upstream alongside the river towards Long Xuyen. This is a beautiful day, with some wonderful photo opportunities. We end our ride at a bird sanctuary, home to thousands of storks – we can have a quick visit to see them before loading up into the vehicles for a short transfer (approx. 45 mins) into Long Xuyen. Night hotel.

Cycle approx. 75km

Day 6: Long Xuyen – Tri Tron – Chau Doc

Our last day of cycling in Vietnam! A short transfer (30 mins) allows us to avoid the traffic, and we set off. Our route starts to undulate a little as we near the hills near Chau Doc; although these climbs are fairly gentle, our leg muscles have become used to flat terrain so they often feel harder than they really are! The heat, moreover, makes them feel tougher. We cycle via the Killing Fields at Ba Chuc, where Pol Pot's regime massacred over 3000 Vietnamese people in 1978; harrowing history. We continue our ride to the busy town of Chau Doc. Night hotel (near border).

Cycle approx. 90-100km

Day 7: Chau Doc – Takeo – Phnom Penh

Today we set off early, heading north towards Phnom Penh. After around 20km we reach the border with Cambodia

and meet our new guides who will be waiting for us. We then head off through the lovely rural landscapes of Cambodia. At the small town of Takeo we load up into the buses, which take us the remaining distance to Phnom Penh, stopping en route to visit the infamous Killing Fields, which are harrowing but compelling at the same time. We then arrive at our hotel in Phnom Penh; once considered one of the most beautiful cities in the Orient and which, despite its turbulent recent history, retains a colonial charm. Night hotel.

Cycle approx. 50km

Day 8: Phnom Penh – Kampong Chhnang

We start our day with a visit to the Tuol Sleung Museum, or School 21, a former school which was turned into the notorious Khmer Rouge interrogation camp during the Pol Pot regime. Although it tells a tragic story, it is a fascinating place to visit and essential to understanding present-day Cambodia. We then leave Phnom Penh by bus (approx. 1 hour) to avoid the city traffic before we start our ride. As we head to Udong we see the rice paddies stretching out for miles, busy with workers in the fields. The roads in the region tend to be a rich red which is very striking against the dazzling green paddy-fields – be prepared to take lots of photos! We ride through Udong, once the ancient capital, and pass by a hill temple with stunning views of the fertile region and many of the old Royal Palaces. Continuing on, we cycle towards Kampong Chhang and the enormous Tonlé Sap Lake. Night hotel.

Cycle approx. 75km

Day 9: Kampong Chhnang – Siem Reap

A beautiful boat ride awaits us this morning, as we cross the immense Tonlé Sap. The largest freshwater lake in South-East Asia, it features an incredible biodiversity and has UNESCO biosphere status. We enjoy a rest from our bikes as we soak up the views of fishing communities and calm waters. Leaving the boat at Kampong Khlaeng, we ride on small roads through beautiful landscapes and villages, heading towards Siem Reap. This area is unspoilt and very traditional, and it's a lovely quiet ride to savour before reaching the main tourist draw of Angkor. Meeting our vehicles, we load up before reaching the busy streets and drive (approx 30 mins) into Siem Reap, the closest town to the temples. Night hotel.

Boat ride approx. 5 hours; cycle approx. 30-40km

Day 10: Angkor Wat Cycle

Today we ride to the famous World Heritage site of Angkor Wat. The area is dotted with many ancient buildings and temples amidst dense forest; the sheer scale of the complex will astound you. We ride a circuit around some of the temples, including Ta Prohm, the best-known of the temples overgrown by trees and reminiscent of scenes from Tomb Raider. Our ride also takes in the Bayon in Angkor Thom, the old city central to the area. It is a fascinating ruin, featuring many mysterious giant carved faces and some incredible wall carvings, and is one of the most remarkable sights in the area. Our ride ends at Angkor Wat itself, one of the most impressive and best-preserved temples of the complex. If there's time, it is worth climbing the remarkably steep and narrow steps of the central spire for the view over the whole temple surrounded by jungle. It's a wonderful place to finish our challenge after 500 hot kilometres across two countries! After the obligatory group photos we transfer back to our hotel (approx. 30 mins) and should have some free time this afternoon to spend as you wish – relax at the hotel, or explore Siem

Reap's markets for last-minute shopping opportunities, or visit more of the temples. We meet again in the evening to celebrate our achievements. Night hotel.

Cycle approx. 30km

Day 11: Free time; flight departs

We will have some time free for further exploration of the incredible temples and ruins that make up the Angkor complex; or simply relax or haggle in the markets if you prefer. How much time we have free depends on our flight schedules. We meet again at the hotel, say a fond farewell to Cambodia and transfer to the airport for our flight. *(Lunch not included)*

Day 12: Arrive UK

THE TOUR COST INCLUDES:

- Scheduled flights and all transport
- All accommodation
- All meals (exceptions detailed in itinerary)
- Celebration meal
- Discover Adventure leaders/mechanics and doctor (depending on final group size)
- Full vehicle support and local guides, cooks, drivers, etc.
- 21-speed mountain bike

THE TOUR COST DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- 1 meal as detailed in itinerary (lunch day 11)
- Cycle helmet
- Personal travel insurance (to cover personal injury, cancellation/curtailment, lost items etc

GRADE | YELLOW

Trips are graded Yellow, Orange or Red, in increasing level of challenge. This trip lies within the **YELLOW** range.



The grade is determined by factors such as terrain, distance, climate, altitude, etc. Each colour grade has a **spectrum** which reflects the difficulty of these factors; trip duration, accommodation and living conditions (see icon) are also taken

into account.

Trip grading explained

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Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

Please note: This document was downloaded on 28 Mar 2024, and the challenge is subject to change.