



**RAILWAY
ADVENTURES**

2023



CAMBODIA

BY PRIVATE TRAIN



With Scott McGregor & Friends

05 - 13 March 2023

• PHNOM PENH • SIHANOUKVILLE • BATTAMBANG • SIEM REAP •

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to your special 'one-off' rail tour of the fascinating kingdom of Cambodia by private train covering every section of the royal Cambodian railways.

The Kingdom of Cambodia in South-East Asia has recently refurbished its former French Colonial metre-gauge railway, which is now an active freight carrier with a skeleton passenger service. There are two rail lines, totalling 612km of single-track with passing loops. One route goes north-west from Phnom Penh the capital, to Poipet, where there's a connection to the Thai railway network. The other line goes southwest to the port at Sihanoukville on the south coast. We are chartering a train to give us a week of rail travel in a program to traverse the whole of the Royal Railway network using YDM4 locomotives to haul our train to both Poipet and Sihanoukville.

Cambodia is full of diversity and offers a variety of interests for travellers. In the capital Phnom Penh, there are Palaces, Pagodas and, from a dark period in its history, the infamous Kymer Rouge Prison and the Choeung Ek genocide centre. Winding through the country is the magnificent Mekong River and in the centre is the Tonle Sap Lake, containing comprehensive floating villages to the northwest. Finally, adjacent to the vibrant city of Seim Reap there's the world-famous temple complex of Angkor Wat.

Our special train will be formed of fresh-air stock (with opening windows) in which we will have room to circulate during the tour and your local guides, your English and Australian hosts and the train crew will be on hand to help make the journey enlightening, comfortable, safe and enjoyable.

MEET YOUR TOUR LEADER



Scott McGregor

A Mudgee native, Scott has been involved in the media for over 30 years as an actor, presenter, writer and producer. His love of travel, particularly railway travel, is where his passion now lies. Graduating from NIDA in 1979, he appeared in a wide range of stage, film and TV roles and presented numerous prime-time ratings winners. He presented two series of his own *Railway Adventures* for Channels 7 and 10 and programs for The History Channel. He established Railway Adventures in 2012 and owns and operates RUWENZORI—an Orient Express-style tourist retreat on the Great Dividing Range near Mudgee.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Travel the length and breadth of the Cambodian rail network
- Private train charter with numerous different locos and excursions
- Visit the astounding World Heritage complex of Angkor Watt
- Ride the rails south to Sihanoukville and the resort coast
- Explore the wonders, culture, and history of Phnom Penh
- Enjoy many cultural side trips, great dinners, and lunches
- Plenty of free time for shopping, browsing, and relaxing

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- 8 nights' accommodation in quality, centrally located 4 and 5-star hotels
- Breakfast daily, meals as per itinerary
- Drinks included with welcome dinner
- Luxury chartered coach, with luggage transport throughout the tour
- Comprehensive sightseeing with expert local guides
- All excursions and entrance fees, as listed in the itinerary
- Airport transfers on arrival and departure

WHAT WE DON'T INCLUDE

- International flights
- Meals and services not mentioned in the itinerary
- All other personal expenses such as drinks, phone calls, laundry services, and camera fees where applicable
- Excursions listed as optional and extra in the brochure



Passenger train at Phnom Penh station

PRICE

Twinette..... \$5,485 per person
Sole room supplement \$895 per person
Deposit (per person) \$1000 at time of booking
Final payment due by 05 January 2023

Tour Code: 2303CAM

Day 1 • Sunday 05 March: ARRIVE PHNOM PENH

On arrival, you'll be met at the airport for your private transfer to your centrally located hotel. Later this evening, enjoy a welcome dinner with your tour leader and fellow travellers.

Overnight: Phnom Penh (D)

Day 2 • Monday 06 March: PHNOM PENH - SIHANOUKVILLE

The first day with our charter train, formed of three carriages with opening windows and hauled by one of the YDM4 locomotives. We will have plenty of photo stops as we travel from Phnom Penh to the coast at the important port city of Sihanoukville. The town of Sihanoukville is surrounded on 3 sides by the Bay of Thailand. From the beaches and surrounding hills, many of the bay's small islands can be seen. Many of the beaches are filled with grass hut restaurants and bars, some of the beaches are rocky, there are a couple are large resorts, and some are pure sandy beaches.

Overnight: Sihanoukville (B, D)

Day 3 • Tuesday 07 March: SIHANOUKVILLE - KAMPOT - SIHANOUKVILLE

It's a short day today as we head from Sihanoukville to Kampot and back to Sihanoukville. The line is built on the land between the sea and the Preah Monivong Bokor National Park. The Park is located at the southern tip of the Elephant Mountains near the Cambodia – Vietnam border. Preah Monivong National Park, also known as Bokor National Park, encompasses 982 square miles of evergreen rainforests south of Phnom Penh. It is home to several endangered species. Again, we should have plenty of time for photo stops and at least one change of locomotive. We return to Sihanoukville and continue through the station and into the docks area. This is only a short branch as we are almost certainly the first passenger train to ever visit it. We should be back in Sihanoukville by mid-afternoon so plenty of free time.

Overnight: Sihanoukville (B, D)

Day 4 • Wednesday 08 March: SIHANOUKVILLE - PHNOM PENH

With hopefully a different YDM4 loco in charge, we head back to Phnom Penh. Phnom Penh is Cambodia's capital and largest city, located at the junction of the Mekong and Tonle Sap rivers. Temples and museums are part of the cultural and historical attractions of the city. It is easily accessible due to a vast infrastructure catering to visitors, and many believe it to be one of the nicest cities in Asia since Cambodians have not yet grown jaded by mass tourism. We expect to arrive by 4 pm to give you free time for your own exploration from our city centre hotel.

Overnight: Phnom Penh (B, D)

Day 5 • Thursday 09 March: PHNOM PENH - BATTAMBANG

It's a longer day today and we expect to start at 9 am and complete our journey by 6 pm. With a different YDM4 loco in charge, we head north-west to the city of Battambang (the 3rd largest, after Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville). Battambang is a classically quaint provincial capital – old-world architecture and even older pagodas set picturesquely along a river, and even though the city is one of the country's largest, it is still lightly touristed. In town, charming colonial-era buildings line narrow lanes, including the 'walking district' near the market where contemporary art galleries, local and foreign cafes, shops and bars inhabit the old shophouses. Again, we will have plenty of photo opportunities. The railway line lies between the Cardamom Mountains and the vast Tonle Sap Lake. Spanning more than 4.4 million hectares of rainforest in southwestern Cambodia, the Cardamom Mountains remain Southeast Asia's largest remaining rainforest. Inhabited by a swathe of endangered wildlife, the expansive woodland is also home to about 25,000 people, many of whom are ethnic minorities. The Tonle Sap Lake is the largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia and one of the most productive inland fisheries in the world.

Overnight: Battambang (B, D)

Day 6 • Friday 10 March: BATTAMBANG - POIPEP - BATTAMBANG

Today, we complete the railway, as we head north from Battambang to the border town of Poipet (Poi Pet). Our train will go beyond the station and right to the Thai border (and possibly into Thailand itself). The line north of here was closed for many years but reopened in 2018. There is a strip of land here between the Cambodia and Thailand border posts. Once the no-go part of Cambodia for tourists, notorious for its squalor, scams and sleaze, Poipet has recently had a facelift. Due mainly to patronage from neighbouring Thais, where gambling is illegal, casino resorts such as Tropicana and Grand Diamond City are turning the town into a Cambodian Las Vegas! After a short break, head south again and back to Battambang for our overnight stay. Again, plenty of photo stops and we expect our day to last from 09:00 to 16:00.

Overnight: Battambang (B, D)

Day 7 • Saturday 11 March: BATTAMBANG - SIEM REAP

This morning we explore Battambang, known for its colonial buildings such as Sala Khaet, the former Governor's Residence and enjoy the local market. For the adventurous, there may be the option to ride on the Bamboo train through the rice fields north of the city. After lunch, head via coach to Siem Reap the gateway to Angkor Wat. An option to visit Angkor Wat for sunset is on offer. Dinner this evening is in the hotel.

Overnight: Siem Reap (B, D)

Day 8 • Sunday 12 March: SIEM REAP

Your full day at Siem Reap will be hosted with our local guide and will involve visits to the World Heritage site of Angkor Wat and the outlying complexes of Angkor Thom and Bayon.

Angkor Wat is one of the most significant remnants of the vast and powerful Khmer civilisation dating from the twelfth century and is the largest religious monument in the world. Originally constructed as a Hindu temple it evolved into a Buddhist temple with the spread of Buddhism in the thirteenth century and even after it was abandoned has remained a striking reminder of this glorious empire. Dinner this evening is at leisure to explore Siem Reap.

Overnight: Siem Reap (B)

Day 9 • Monday 13 March: SIEM REAP - HO CHI MINH

After breakfast, we transfer to Siem Reap airport for our flight to Ho Chi Minh. (Not included in tour cost).





**RAILWAY
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1300 800 977
railwayadventures.com



THE RAILWAY ADVENTURES **STORY**

Railway Adventures was launched in 2012 by well-known Australian TV personality and self-confessed rail fan, Scott McGregor. A lifelong passion for travel has taken Scott to scores of countries and his preference for rail has seen him exploring many of the world's great train journeys, confirming his belief that the most relaxing, romantic and engaging way to see a country is by rail. He even has his own life-sized, fully-restored opulent train accommodation atop the Great Dividing Range near Mudgee, offering guests a rare and special bush retreat experience. You can obtain more information about this unique guest house at WWW.STAYINATRRAIN.COM

Since 2012 Railway Adventures has thrilled and delighted more than 1500 travellers on over 120 tours from Sweden to Sri Lanka, Tasmania to Transylvania, Britain to Burma, Venice to Vietnam and all manner of shorter adventures in our own wonderful country. Scott's numerous rail-themed TV documentaries, his ongoing involvement in rail heritage and his extensive connections with private train owners around the world, guarantee that every Railway Adventures tour is exclusive, entertaining and authentic. 25 November 2022.

MEET OUR **TRAVEL PARTNER**

"PTG tours: unique holidays since 1998" - PTG Tours has an unrivalled reputation as one of the world's leading companies offering rail-based holidays full of Culture and Heritage. Their customers travel with them time and time again, knowing that they will have a "holiday of a lifetime" every time. For a number of years now, Railway Adventures has partnered with PTG tours on successful tours to Cuba, Alaska, and Southern France. 2023 will see Railway Adventures and PTG expanding their collaboration with several new destinations including Slovenia, a repeat of the popular Southern France tour and now this revealing and unusual adventure to Cambodia.

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