

Siem Reap 90-Day Survival Guide

Long-stay city guide for budget nomads.

For The Lean Nomad — Built 2026-07-16

0. City Overview & Quick Facts

The Hard Numbers

Fact	Detail
Location	Northwestern Cambodia, near Tonlé Sap Lake
Population	245,494 (2019 census); ~300,000 (metro estimate)
Area	City proper; Siem Reap Province is larger
Coordinates	13 deg 2144N 103 deg 5135E
Language	Khmer (official), English widely spoken in tourist areas
Currency	Cambodian Riel (KHR); US Dollar widely accepted
Timezone	UTC+7 (Indochina Time)
Calling Code	+855 (country); 063 (Siem Reap area)
Climate Classification	Tropical savanna (Aw)
Postal Code	17000 (general)
Airport	Siem Reap-Angkor International Airport (SAI) — opened October 2023
Nickname	“Temple Town”

What This Town Actually Is

Siem Reap (Khmer: , IPA:) is the second-largest city of Cambodia, as well as the capital and largest city of Siem Reap Province in northwestern Cambodia. The name literally means ‘Siam Defeated’ (siem in Khmer), commemorating a (possibly apocryphal) victory over invading Thais in 1549.

Siem Reap is the primary access point for the Angkor Archaeological Park, just north of the city. It is quite laid-back and a pleasant place to stay while touring the temples. It is a nice compromise between observing Cambodian life and enjoying the amenities of modern services and entertainment, thanks to a large foreign community.

The vibe: A major tourist town that has transformed from a once-quiet village. New high-quality tarmac roads and beautiful wide paved sidewalks have replaced the red dirt potholed roads. The building boom is mostly over, and it’s now a very pleasant town with lots of beautiful shady trees, especially along the

riverbanks and roads around Angkor Wat. The city possesses French-colonial and Chinese-style architecture in the Old French Quarter and around the Old Market.

Siem Reap was named the ASEAN City of Culture for the period 2021–2022. The city has seen a massive increase in tourist arrivals in the decades since the end of the Khmer Rouge era. By 2012, tourist numbers had reached over two million annually.

Named Places Profiled

Neighborhoods & Areas

- **Old Market (Psar Chas) / Downtown** — Central hub, restaurants, bars, shops, Old Market.
- **Pub Street Area** — Tourist center, nightlife, neon-lit street scene, budget accommodation.
- **Wat Bo** — Quiet residential area, cafés, guesthouses, local feel.
- **River Road / Sok San Road** — Riverside area, upscale hotels, restaurants.
- **Airport Road (National Route 6)** — Main artery to airport, hospitals, some resorts.

Key Landmarks

- **Angkor Wat** — World’s largest religious monument; sunrise icon. UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- **Angkor Thom** — Walled city with Bayon temple at center.
- **Bayon Temple** — Stone-face temple at the center of Angkor Thom.
- **Ta Prohm** — Jungle temple famous for tree roots (Tomb Raider temple).
- **Old Market (Psar Chas)** — Central market for food, clothing, souvenirs.
- **Pub Street** — Bars, clubs, neon-lit tourist street scene.
- **Siem Reap River** — Runs through town, riverside cafés and walks.
- **Wat Damnak** — Active Buddhist temple in town.
- **Wat Preah Prom Rath** — Active riverside pagoda.

Angkor Temples (Grand Circuit & Small Circuit)

- **Preah Khan** — Large atmospheric temple on the Grand Circuit.
- **Neak Pean** — Island temple in a baray reservoir.
- **Banteay Srei** — Pink-sandstone temple 30 km north (the “Citadel of Women”).
- **Ta Som** — Small temple with a strangler fig gate.
- **East Mebon** — Temple-mountain with elephant statues.
- **Pre Rup** — Popular sunset spot on the Grand Circuit.

1. Landing — First 72 Hours

Airport Arrival

Siem Reap-Angkor International Airport (SAI): Opened in October 2023, replacing the old airport. This clean and modern space is the country's largest airport, located about 50 km out of town.

Getting to Town: - **Minibus (Shared): \$8 per person.** 45–60 min. Book at airport counter or via hotel. - **Private Minivan Transfer: \$40.** 45–60 min. Good for families/groups. - **Taxi: \$35–50.** 45–60 min. Negotiate before leaving airport. - **Tuk-tuk:** Not recommended for airport transfer (too far, ~\$20–25 if negotiated).

Airlines: Served by international direct flights from Bangkok (both airports), Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Luang Prabang, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh, Da Nang, Phu Quoc. Cambodia Angkor Air flies domestic from Phnom Penh and Siem Reap.

First Night Options

If arriving late, consider staying near Pub Street or Old Market for easy orientation.

Budget: Lub d Cambodia Siem Reap (7 Makara Street, Wat Bo) — Modern hostel and private rooms near Pub Street. ~\$10–25/night. Onederz Hostel Siem Reap (Sivatha Boulevard) — Hostel with rooftop pool near Pub Street. ~\$8–20/night.

Mid-range: Soria Moria Boutique Hotel (Wat Bo area) — Boutique hotel; Norwegian-Cambodian social enterprise. ~\$50–90/night. Sala Lodges Siem Reap (National Route 6) — Boutique hotel with traditional Khmer houses. ~\$70–120/night.

Upscale: Park Hyatt Siem Reap (Sivutha Boulevard) — Upscale hotel near Old Market. ~\$200–400/night. Belmond La Résidence d'Angkor (River Road) — Riverside luxury resort. ~\$250–500/night. Sokha Angkor Resort (National Route 6) — Large resort near city centre and Old Market. ~\$150–300/night.

Getting Your Bearings

Day 1 priorities:

1. **Check into accommodation** — Pub Street, Old Market, or Wat Bo are central for tourists.
2. **Get a local SIM** — Cellcard, Smart, Metfone. Airport has providers, or visit shops in town.
3. **Buy Angkor Pass** — Angkor Enterprise ticket office (Airport Road). 1-day (\$37), 3-day (\$62), 7-day (\$72). Required for temple visits.

4. **Walk Pub Street / Old Market** — Get oriented, find restaurants, bars, shops.
5. **Find the nearest minimart** — Lucky Supermarket, Angkor Market for water, snacks, essentials.

Essential Errands (First Week)

- **Open a local bank account** — If staying long-term. ABA, ACLEDA have branches.
 - **Visit a supermarket** — Lucky Supermarket, Angkor Market for groceries.
 - **Find your nearest pharmacy** — Pharmacies are common; many medications available OTC.
 - **Get oriented with tuk-tuks** — Download PassApp or Grab for ride-hailing.
 - **Plan temple circuit** — Small Circuit (1 day), Grand Circuit (1 day), Banteay Srei (half day).
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2. Visa & Immigration

Visa Types Available

Tourist Visa (T-class): 30 days, extendable once for 30 days. Apply on arrival or e-visa before travel. **\$30–36** on arrival.

Ordinary Visa (E-class): 30 days, extendable for 6 or 12 months. Required for long-term stays, work, retirement. **\$35** on arrival.

E-Visa: Available online before travel. **\$37** including processing. Valid for 30 days. Accepted at Siem Reap airport.

Visa Exemption: ASEAN citizens (except Myanmar) get 14–30 days visa-free depending on nationality.

Extensions

Tourist Visa Extension: 30 days, once only. **\$45–50**. Processed in 3–7 days.

Ordinary Visa Extension: 6 months (multiple entry) or 12 months (multiple entry). **\$100–300** depending on type and agent fees.

Where to Extend: - **Immigration Department:** Siem Reap Provincial Immigration Office. - **Travel Agents:** Most guesthouses and travel agencies can process extensions for a small fee.

90-Day Reporting

Cambodia does not have a 90-day reporting requirement like Thailand. However, if staying more than 6 months on an extended ordinary visa, you may need to do a “change of address” notification.

Overstay Fines

\$10 per day for overstaying your visa. Can lead to detention or deportation for extended overstays.

3. Money & Banking

Currency & Exchange

Currencies: Cambodia uses both US Dollar (USD) and Cambodian Riel (KHR).

- **US Dollar:** Widely accepted everywhere. Bills must be in good condition (no tears, marks, or old series).
- **Cambodian Riel:** Used for small transactions, change, local markets.
Exchange rate: ~4,100 riel = \$1 USD.

Coins: Cambodia does not use coins. Change is given in riel (e.g., \$0.50 = 2,000 riel).

Exchange: - **Street money changers:** Competitive rates, but verify count carefully. - **Banks:** ABA, ACLEDA, Canadia. Slightly lower rates but reliable. - **ATMs:** Dispense USD (mostly \$100 bills, some \$10, \$20, \$50). **Fee:** \$5–7 per withdrawal.

Tip: Bring fresh, crisp USD bills (2013 series or newer). Old or damaged bills will be rejected.

ATMs

Availability: Throughout the city — Pub Street, Old Market, Sivutha Boulevard, Airport Road.

Fees: \$5–7 per withdrawal for foreign cards (on top of your bank’s fee).

Withdrawal Limits: Typically \$500–1,000 per transaction.

Tip: Withdraw larger amounts less frequently to minimize fees. Always count your money before leaving the ATM.

Local Banking

Banks in Siem Reap: - **ABA Bank** — Sivutha Boulevard. Excellent mobile app, popular with expats. - **ACLEDA Bank** — Multiple branches. Largest local bank, good English support. - **Canadia Bank** — Reliable, widespread.

Requirements to Open Account: - Passport - Visa (ordinary visa preferred for long-term accounts) - Proof of address (rental contract, utility bill, letter from hotel) - Some banks require reference letter or employment verification

Tip: ABA Bank is popular with expats for its user-friendly English app and low fees.

4. Neighborhoods & Housing

Pub Street / Old Market Area

Vibe: Tourist center, nightlife, bustling, restaurants, bars, shops.

Accommodation: Mix of budget hostels, mid-range hotels, some upscale.

Pros: Walkable to everything, tuk-tuks everywhere, vibrant nightlife, restaurants.

Cons: Noisy (especially weekends), touristy prices, crowded.

Price Range: - Budget: \$8–25/night (hostels, guesthouses) - Mid-range: \$40–100/night - Upscale: \$150–300/night

Wat Bo

Vibe: Quiet residential, local feel, cafés, guesthouses, temples.

Accommodation: Guesthouses, boutique hotels, some apartments.

Pros: Quiet streets, good cafés, close to Old Market, authentic local feel.

Cons: Less nightlife, fewer tourist services.

Price Range: - Studios: \$300–500/month - 1-bedroom: \$400–700/month - 2-bedroom: \$600–1,000/month

River Road / Sok San Road

Vibe: Riverside, upscale hotels, restaurants, quieter.

Accommodation: Upscale resorts, boutique hotels.

Pros: Beautiful river views, quiet, good restaurants.

Cons: Higher prices, less local feel.

Price Range: - 1-bedroom: \$500–900/month - 2-bedroom: \$800–1,500/month
- Resorts: \$150–500/night

Airport Road (National Route 6)

Vibe: Main artery, hospitals, some resorts, mixed commercial.

Accommodation: Resorts, some hotels.

Pros: Easy airport access, near hospitals.

Cons: Traffic, less walkable to center.

Price Range: - Studios: \$350–600/month - 1-bedroom: \$500–900/month -
Resorts: \$100–300/night

Long-Stay Properties

Lub d Cambodia Siem Reap — Modern hostel with private rooms. ~\$10–25/night.

Onederz Hostel Siem Reap — Hostel with rooftop pool. ~\$8–20/night.

Soria Moria Boutique Hotel — Norwegian-Cambodian social enterprise. ~\$50–90/night.

Sala Lodges Siem Reap — Traditional Khmer houses. ~\$70–120/night.

Park Hyatt Siem Reap — Upscale near Old Market. ~\$200–400/night.

Belmond La Résidence d’Angkor — Riverside luxury. ~\$250–500/night.

Sokha Angkor Resort — Large resort near Old Market. ~\$150–300/night.

Shinta Mani Angkor — Boutique luxury by Bensley Collection. ~\$300–600/night.

Finding Accommodation

Online: - Facebook Marketplace — Active expat groups (Siem Reap Expats, Cambodia Housing) - Khmer24.com — General property site - Realestate.com.kh — Property listings - Airbnb — Short-term, higher prices

On the Ground: - Walk around target area — “For Rent” signs common - Ask at hotel/guesthouse management offices - Local agents — Common in Pub Street and Wat Bo areas

Tip: Negotiate. Monthly rates often 20–30% lower than advertised. Inspect for water pressure, AC, and internet before committing.

5. Transport

Tuk-tuks

Coverage: Throughout the city and to Angkor temples. The primary mode of transport for tourists.

Fares: - **Short trips (within town):** \$1.50–3 - **Temple circuits (Small Circuit):** \$15–20/day - **Temple circuits (Grand Circuit):** \$20–30/day - **Airport:** \$35–50 (too far; use minibus/taxi)

How to Ride: - Flag down on street, or use PassApp/Grab - Tell driver destination - Agree on price before getting in (if not using app) - Pay when exiting

Ride-Hailing Apps: - **PassApp:** Cambodian app, cheapest option. Tuk-tuks, taxis, food delivery. - **Grab:** Regional app, slightly more expensive but reliable.

Motorbike Taxis (Motodops)

Availability: Throughout town, especially at street corners and markets.

Fares: - Within town: \$0.50–2 (2,000–8,000 riel) - Night/bad weather: Prices can double - Full day: ~\$10

Note: Helmets for passengers are rare but may be available if requested.

Bicycle

Rental: \$1–8/day depending on quality. Discounts for longer rentals.

Cycle Paths: Green scenic cycle paths painted near roads leading to and around Angkor Wat. Green cycle path along the river, starting at Hard Rock Cafe, heading north.

Tip: Rent the day before if you want to cycle to Angkor Wat early morning (shops open ~07:00).

Motorbike Rental

Availability: No longer prohibited. Plenty of options available.

Prices: - Gasoline scooters: From ~\$8/day - Small electric scooters (1 person, 25 km/h): ~\$10/day - Larger electric scooters (2 people, 60 km/h): ~\$15/day - Half-day rental: Often available at half the daily rate

Requirements: Passport or \$100–300 deposit (some places only take photo, no deposit).

Safety: Wear a helmet. Police have checkpoints and fine \$15 without one.

Car Rental

Daily: \$30–50/day **Monthly:** \$600–1,000/month **Requirements:** Valid license, passport, deposit.

Bus

Main Bus Station: Out-of-town station to the east of Siem Reap. Tuk-tuk from station to town: \$2–3.

Destinations: - **Phnom Penh:** \$7–12, 5–7 hours (Mekong Express, Giant Ibis, Capitol, Phnom Penh Sorya) - **Battambang:** \$6–8, 3–4 hours - **Poipet (Thai border):** \$10–15, 4–5 hours - **Sihanoukville:** \$15–25, 10–12 hours (overnight sleeping bus) - **Bangkok (Thailand):** Service suspended since June 2025 due to border clashes

6. Food & Dining

Budget Eats (Under \$5)

Street Food: Old Market, Pub Street area, night markets. Khmer noodles, rice dishes, grilled meats. \$1.50–4.

Local Restaurants: Small Khmer restaurants throughout town. Rice and curry, noodle soups. \$2–5 per meal.

Food Courts: Angkor Night Market, local markets. \$3–6.

Mid-Range (\$5–20)

Khmer Restaurants: Khmer Kitchen Restaurant (Pub Street area), Haven (social enterprise), Marum (Friends International). \$8–20 per person.

International Cuisine: Italian, French, Japanese, Korean, Indian options throughout town. \$8–20 per person.

Cafés: The Little Red Fox Espresso (Wat Bo), Sister Srey Café (riverside), New Hope Coffee. \$5–12.

Splurge (Over \$20)

Upscale Restaurants: Cuisine Wat Damnak (fine-dining Khmer tasting menu; seasonal hours), The Old House Restaurant. \$25–50+ per person.

Hotel Restaurants: Park Hyatt, Belmond, Sokha have fine dining restaurants.

Markets

Old Market (Psar Chas): Central market with food stalls. Khmer noodles, rice, snacks, fruit.

Angkor Night Market: Tourist-oriented handicraft and food market. Grilled meat, noodles, fruit shakes, souvenirs.

Pub Street Restaurant Strip: Tourist-oriented Khmer, Western, and seafood restaurants.

Supermarkets

Lucky Supermarket: Sivutha Boulevard. Western grocery items, imported goods.

Angkor Market: Sivutha Boulevard. Supermarket with imported goods.

Old Market Produce: Fresh produce, meat, and household goods.

7. Remote Work & Coworking

Coworking Spaces

AngkorHub Co-working: Wat Bo area. Dedicated co-working space. \$80–200/month.

Cafés with Wi-Fi

In Siem Reap: - **The Little Red Fox Espresso:** Wat Bo area. Specialty coffee café, laptop-friendly. - **Sister Srey Café:** Pokambor Avenue. Riverside, ethical sourcing, laptop-friendly. - **Haven Training Restaurant:** Wat Damnak area. Social enterprise, work-friendly. - **New Hope Coffee:** Community projects, coffee shop.

Internet Infrastructure

Home Internet: - **Fiber:** Available in most areas. 50–100 Mbps typical. \$25–50/month. - **4G/5G Home:** Cellcard, Smart, Metfone. Wireless alternative.

Mobile Data: - **4G/5G:** Good coverage in Siem Reap. - **SIM Cards:** Cellcard, Smart, Metfone. Tourist SIMs \$5–15 (30 days, high-cap or unlimited data). - **Speeds:** 20–100 Mbps typical in good coverage areas.

8. Healthcare

Hospitals

Siem Reap has several hospitals catering to tourists and locals. For serious conditions, medical evacuation to Phnom Penh or Bangkok may be recommended.

Royal Angkor International Hospital

Address: National Route 6 (Airport Road), Phum Kasekam, Khum Sra Ngea, Siem Reap 17000, Cambodia **Phone:** +855 63 761 888 **Tier:** Private international hospital **Best for:** Serious conditions, surgery, specialist care

Caters for both tourists and wealthy Cambodians. High standard of care, ideal if you have good travel/health insurance. Fully stocked pharmacy, general surgeon, orthopedic surgeon, paediatrician, and other hospital services. Not cheap but quality care.

Angkor Hospital for Children (AHC)

Address: Taphul Road, Siem Reap 17000, Cambodia **Phone:** +855 63 963 409 **Tier:** Non-profit paediatric hospital **Best for:** Pediatric care

Non-profit paediatric hospital. Specialized care for children.

Siem Reap Provincial Hospital

Address: 59 2 Thnou Street, Siem Reap, Cambodia **Phone:** +855 63 764 091 **Tier:** Public hospital **Best for:** Basic emergencies, budget care

Public hospital for basic care. Less comfortable than private options.

777 Siem Reap Polyclinic

Address: National Route 6, Siem Reap **Phone:** +855 12 410 778 **Tier:** Private polyclinic, 24/7 **Best for:** Emergency services, surgeries, vaccinations

Caters for locals and tourists, adults and children. Emergency services, surgeries, vaccinations (rabies ~\$25 per jab). Very good and cheap care. Many staff speak English well. Open 24/7.

Royal Phnom Penh Hospital (Evacuation)

Address: 888 Russian Federation Blvd, Phnom Penh 12000, Cambodia **Phone:** +855 23 991 000 **Tier:** International-standard care (BDMS-affiliated) **Best for:** Serious conditions requiring evacuation

For serious conditions requiring evacuation from Siem Reap.

Emergency Numbers

- **115:** National emergency medical hotline (free, 24/7)
- **117:** Police emergency
- **118:** Fire department

What's Treatable Locally

Can Handle: - Fever, infections, respiratory illness - Minor injuries, cuts, sprains - Gastrointestinal issues - Routine check-ups, lab work - Dental emergencies

May Require Evacuation: - Highly specialized treatments - Major trauma requiring advanced ICU - Certain cancers

For serious conditions, medical evacuation to Phnom Penh or Bangkok may be recommended. Ensure travel insurance covers medical evacuation.

Pharmacies

Availability: Throughout the city — standalone pharmacies, hospital pharmacies.

Prescription Requirements: Varies — many antibiotics available without prescription, controlled substances require Rx.

Common Brands: Panadol (paracetamol), Ibuprofen, antihistamines, antidiarrheals all available OTC.

Cost: \$1–10 for common medications.

Health Insurance

Travel Insurance: Essential — covers accidents, emergency treatment, evacuation.

Local Insurance: Available for long-stay residents, more affordable than Western insurance.

Hospital Billing: Private hospitals often bill insurance directly — keep your policy details handy.

9. Dental

Dental Clinics

Siem Reap has numerous dental clinics catering to foreigners. Quality is generally high, prices 50–70% lower than Western countries.

Local Clinics: - Multiple dental clinics throughout town - English-speaking staff common - Walk-ins often accepted

Common Procedures & Prices (2026 approx.)

Procedure	Siem Reap Price	US/EU Equivalent
Cleaning	\$20–40	\$100–200
Filling	\$25–60	\$150–400
Root Canal	\$100–200	\$800–1,500
Crown	\$200–400	\$1,000–2,000
Implant	\$600–1,000	\$3,000–5,000
Teeth Whitening	\$150–300	\$400–800
Extraction	\$20–80	\$200–500

Tips

- **Consultations:** Often free or low-cost (\$10–20)
- **Appointments:** Recommended, but walk-ins often accepted
- **Payment:** Cash (USD) preferred, cards accepted at larger clinics
- **Insurance:** Most travel insurance doesn't cover routine dental — check your policy

10. Safety & Emergency

Where It's Genuinely Safe

- **Pub Street / Old Market:** Heavy tourist presence, regular police patrols
- **Wat Bo:** Quiet residential area, good security
- **Shopping Centers:** Lucky Supermarket, Angkor Market — security guards
- **Residential Sois:** Quiet, low crime rates

Where to Be More Careful

- **Late night on quiet sois:** Poor lighting, occasional opportunistic theft
- **ATMs at night:** Isolated machines — use inside malls or hotels when possible
- **Motorbike parking:** Theft is common — always lock, park in attended lots when available
- **Crowded markets:** Pickpocketing can occur

What Actually Happens Here

Most Common: 1. **Bag Snatching:** Perpetrators on motorbikes grab bags, phones, cameras from pedestrians. Don't carry bags on street side of sidewalk. 2. **Petty Theft:** Phones, wallets, bags left unattended in cafés or on motorbikes 3. **Motorbike Accidents:** The #1 cause of serious injury to tourists

Violent Crime: Rare against tourists. Most incidents involve: - Disputes over money or relationships - Late-night altercations outside bars

Street Vendors and Beggars

Beggar Army: Young children will come up to you in crowds and grab your hands, leading you to a shop where they try to have you buy food, baby milk, or water for them. Once you leave, the goods are sold back to the shop and cash goes to an adult.

Donation Collectors: May approach claiming to be volunteer workers from orphanages, showing photos and clipboards. Donations may go directly into their pockets. A donation to a recognised charity might be a better way to help.

NGO Safari: Do not schedule orphanage visits unless this is the main purpose of your trip.

Dollar Bills

Fake dollar bills are widespread and can even be issued from ATMs. Bills with tiny cuts will be rejected. Check all bills carefully.

Emergency Numbers

- **117:** Police
- **115:** Emergency Medical
- **118:** Fire Department

Safety Tips

- **Helmets:** Always wear on motorbikes. Police enforce with \$15 fines.
- **Valuables:** Use hotel/condo safes. Don't flash expensive jewelry or watches.
- **Bag Safety:** Carry bags on the side away from the street. Don't hang bags on chair backs in outdoor cafés.
- **Scams:** If it sounds too good to be true (gem deals, "today only" tours), it is.
- **Underage Sex:** Obviously illegal. Foreign tourists have been arrested. Do not stay alone with young people or respond to favors they ask.

Environmental Hazards & Natural Disasters

Air Quality

Wet Season (May–October): Generally good air quality.

Dry Season (November–April): Can be poor due to dust, construction, and occasional burning. Sensitive individuals may experience respiratory issues.

Monitoring: Check AirVisual or Plume Air Report apps for real-time AQI.

Flooding

Timing: September–October (peak of rainy season).

Characteristics: - Low-lying areas can flood during heavy downpours - Streets may become impassable for hours - Motorbikes and tuk-tuks can still navigate most flooded areas

Preparation: - Check weather forecasts daily - Avoid traveling through deep floodwaters - Keep important documents in waterproof bags

Earthquakes & Natural Disasters

Earthquakes: Rare in Cambodia. Not on major fault lines.

Typhoons: Cambodia is generally not directly hit by typhoons, but tropical storms can bring heavy rain and flooding.

Emergency Services

Fire: 118 **Police:** 117 **Medical:** 115

11. Shopping & Daily Life

Angkor Night Market

Location: Near Pub Street / Old Market.

What's Inside: - Handicrafts, souvenirs - Clothing, textiles - Food stalls - Evening atmosphere

Hours: Evening until late.

Vibe: Tourist-focused, haggle for prices.

Old Market (Psar Chas)

Location: Central Siem Reap.

What's Inside: - Fresh produce, meat - Clothing, textiles - Souvenirs, handicrafts - Food stalls

Hours: Early morning to evening.

Vibe: Local market with tourist section.

Lucky Supermarket

Location: Sivutha Boulevard.

What's Inside: - Supermarket - Western grocery items - Imported goods - Some household items

Hours: 08:00–20:00.

Vibe: Modern supermarket for expats and tourists.

12. Groceries, Markets & Meat

Wet Markets

Old Market (Psar Chas): Morning fresh produce, meat, seafood. Also sells clothing, jewellery, souvenirs.

Local Markets: Various neighborhood markets with fresh produce and meat.

Supermarkets

Lucky Supermarket: Sivutha Boulevard. Wide selection, competitive prices, imported goods.

Angkor Market: Sivutha Boulevard. Supermarket with imported goods.

Meat & Seafood

Wet markets — Fresh chicken, pork, beef, seafood daily. Prices lower than supermarkets.

Supermarkets — Packaged meat, consistent quality, longer hours.

Crime & Safety

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13. Weather by Month

Siem Reap has a tropical savanna climate with high humidity year-round:

Dry Season (November–April)

Month	Avg High	Avg Low	Rainfall
November	31 deg C (88 deg F)	23 deg C (73 deg F)	51mm
December	31 deg C (87 deg F)	21 deg C (69 deg F)	3.7mm
January	32 deg C (89 deg F)	20 deg C (68 deg F)	4.7mm
February	34 deg C (92 deg F)	22 deg C (72 deg F)	4.7mm
March	35 deg C (95 deg F)	24 deg C (75 deg F)	29mm
April	36 deg C (96 deg F)	25 deg C (78 deg F)	57mm

Characteristics: Hot and mostly dry. March–April hottest. Pleasant December–February.

Rainy Season (May–October)

Month	Avg High	Avg Low	Rainfall
May	35 deg C (95 deg F)	25 deg C (77 deg F)	150mm
June	34 deg C (92 deg F)	25 deg C (77 deg F)	214mm
July	33 deg C (91 deg F)	25 deg C (77 deg F)	193mm
August	32 deg C (90 deg F)	25 deg C (76 deg F)	209mm
September	32 deg C (89 deg F)	25 deg C (76 deg F)	288mm
October	32 deg C (89 deg F)	25 deg C (76 deg F)	200mm

Characteristics: Afternoon downpours (often 1–2 hours), otherwise sunny. September wettest. Occasional flooding in low-lying areas.

Best Time to Visit

For Weather: November–February (cooler, drier, comfortable).

For Budget: May–October (lower accommodation rates, fewer crowds).

For Temples: Early morning (sunrise at Angkor Wat) or late afternoon (sunset at Pre Rup).

14. Language & Local Etiquette

Language

Official: Khmer (Cambodian)

English: Widely spoken in tourist areas, restaurants, hotels, and by younger Cambodians. Most signs in Siem Reap are bilingual (Khmer/English).

Useful Khmer Phrases:

English	Khmer phrase (pronunciation)
Hello	suos-dey
Thank you	or-kun
Yes (male/female)	bat / chah
No	teh
How much?	tom-lai pon-man?
Stop	chhob
To Angkor Wat	tov Angkor Wat
To Old Market	tov Psar Chas

Local Etiquette

The Sampeah: Traditional Khmer greeting (palms together, slight bow). Return when offered by service staff, but not required from foreigners.

Respect for Monarchy: Deeply respected in Cambodia. Never speak disrespectfully about the royal family.

Temple Etiquette: - Dress modestly (shoulders and knees covered) - Remove shoes before entering - Sit with feet pointing away from Buddha images - Women should not touch monks

Feet: Considered the lowest/dirtiest part of the body. Never point feet at people or Buddha images.

Head: Considered sacred. Don't touch people's heads (even children).

Public Behavior: - Public displays of affection: Keep minimal - Losing your temper: Seen as losing face. Stay calm. - Dress: Modest dress appreciated outside tourist areas, especially at temples

Tipping

Not mandatory but appreciated for good service.

- **Restaurants:** 5–10% if no service charge, or leave small change
 - **Tuk-tuks:** Round up or add \$0.50–1
 - **Temple Guides:** \$5–10/day depending on service
 - **Hotel staff:** \$1–2 for porters, housekeeping
 - **Massage:** \$2–5 for 1–2 hour sessions
-

15. History & Culture Snapshot

Name Origin

Siem Reap (Khmer: , IPA:) literally means ‘Siam Defeated’ (siem in Khmer), commemorating a (possibly apocryphal) victory over invading Thais in 1549. According to oral tradition, King Ang Chan (1516–1566) named the town after repulsing an army sent by the Thai king Maha Chakkraphat in 1549. Scholars consider this derivation to be modern folk etymology; the actual origin is unknown.

Historical Development

Before 968: Initial settlement established.

968–970 CE: During the Angkor period, the site was known as Dvijendrapura. Princess Indralakṣmī and her husband Divākara-bhaṭṭa made religious endowments including an image of Vishnu called Dvijendra.

1431: Angkor Wat and the Angkor Empire declined. Siem Reap area came under Siamese influence.

1549: Alleged Siamese invasion repulsed by King Ang Chan. Town supposedly named “Siem Reap” (Siam Defeated).

1795–1907: Siem Reap, along with Battambang and Sisophon, under Siamese administration (known as Inner Cambodia).

1907: Ceded to French Indochina following Franco-Siamese treaty. Siem Reap begins to grow with Angkor tourism.

1929: Grand Hotel d’Angkor opens.

1975: Khmer Rouge captures Siem Reap. Population driven into countryside.

1979: Vietnamese forces liberate Siem Reap from Khmer Rouge.

1990s–Present: Tourism boom. Siem Reap transforms from village to major tourist town. By 2012, over 2 million tourists annually.

2021–2022: Named ASEAN City of Culture.

October 2023: Siem Reap-Angkor International Airport (SAI) opens, replacing old airport.

Cultural Identity

Temple Town: Siem Reap is the gateway to Angkor Wat and the Angkor Archaeological Park. The city's identity is deeply tied to the temples.

Expat Community: Significant population of foreign residents, particularly from Europe, Asia, and other Western countries. Many work in tourism, NGOs, or hospitality.

Local Khmer Community: Working population serving tourism industry, plus traditional families.

Vibe: A laid-back and pleasant town with modern amenities. Good compromise between observing Cambodian life and enjoying tourist services.

Religious Sites

Wat Damnak: Active Buddhist temple in town. Important religious site.

Wat Preah Prom Rath: Active riverside pagoda.

Wat Bo: Historic temple in Wat Bo neighborhood.

Annual Events

Khmer New Year (Mid-April): 3-day celebration. Water fights, temple visits, family gatherings.

Pchum Ben (September/October): Ancestors' day. Cambodians make offerings at pagodas.

Water Festival (Bon Om Touk, November): Celebrates reversal of Tonlé Sap River flow. Boat races, fireworks.

Apsara Dance

Traditional Khmer classical dance performed at restaurants, hotels, and dedicated venues. Apsara dancers are iconic symbols of Cambodian culture.

16. Tourism & Day Trips

Within Siem Reap

Site	What it is	Practical
Angkor Wat	World's largest religious monument, sunrise icon	1-day pass ~\$37; 3-day pass ~\$62; 7-day pass ~\$72
Angkor Thom	Walled city with Bayon temple	Included in Angkor pass
Bayon Temple	Stone-face temple at centre of Angkor Thom	Included in Angkor pass
Ta Prohm	Jungle temple famous for tree roots	Included in Angkor pass
Banteay Srei	Pink-sandstone temple 30 km north	Included in Angkor pass
Old Market (Psar Chas)	Central market for food, clothing, souvenirs	Free entry
Pub Street	Tourist nightlife strip	Free to walk
Siem Reap River	Riverside cafés and walks	Free
Wat Damnak	Active Buddhist temple in town	Free / donation
Wat Preah Prom Rath	Active riverside pagoda	Free / donation

Day trips

- **Tonlé Sap Lake floating villages** — half-day boat trip.
- **Kulen Mountain** — waterfall, reclining Buddha, river of 1,000 lingas.
- **Beng Mealea** — jungle temple, ~60 km east.
- **Koh Ker** — remote temple complex, full day.
- **Phnom Krom** — hilltop temple and sunset spot.
- **Phnom Penh** — capital city, ~5–6 hours by bus or 45-minute flight.
- **Battambang** — colonial town, bamboo train, ~3 hours.

Practical temple tips

- Buy Angkor passes the afternoon before for free entry the next evening after 5 PM.
- Hire a tuk-tuk driver for the Small Circuit (~\$15–20/day) or Grand Circuit.
- sunrise at Angkor Wat is crowded; arrive very early or consider sunset alternatives.
- Dress modestly: shoulders and knees covered.

17. Master Links

Resource	URL / Contact	Use For
Cambodia eVisa	evisa.gov.kh	Visa application
Tourism Cambodia	tourismcambodia.org	Official travel info
Royal Angkor International Hospital	royalangkorhospital.com / +855 63 761 888	Hospital
Siem Reap Angkor International Airport	cambodia-airports.aero	Flight info
Angkor Enterprise	angkorenterprise.gov.kh	Angkor pass prices
Wikivoyage Siem Reap	en.wikivoyage.org/wiki/Siem_Reap	Travel guidance

18. Final Budget Table

90-Day Budget Estimates (Single Person)

Category	Lean Nomad	Comfortable Nomad	Premium Nomad
Room	\$180 (fan guesthouse / local room near Old Market or Wat Bo)	\$750 (1BR modern apartment or boutique hotel)	\$1,300 (serviced 1BR / villa with pool near Pub Street area)
Food	\$140 (street food, local Khmer restaurants, market meals)	\$280 (mix of local + cafés + occasional Western)	\$550 (daily restaurants, imported groceries, alcohol)
Transport	\$40 (bicycle + occasional tuk-tuk / Grab)	\$90 (regular tuk-tuk / Grab + some taxis)	\$180 (private driver / car on call)
Coworking	\$0 (cafés / hotel Wi-Fi)	\$80 (monthly hot desk or café spend)	\$180 (dedicated desk / private office)
Insurance	\$70 (travel insurance)	\$130 (travel + outpatient)	\$220 (comprehensive nomad insurance)
Visa	\$40 (e-visa + one extension amortised)	\$80 (e-visa + extensions / agent)	\$150 (longer-stay visa path / agent)

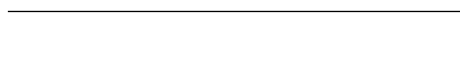
Category	Lean Nomad	Comfortable Nomad	Premium Nomad
Entertainment	\$90 (temple pass amortised, local markets, free/low-cost sights)	\$300 (Angkor multi-day pass, tours, dining out)	\$600 (private Angkor guide, spa, fine dining, frequent trips)
Buffer	\$20	\$40	\$80
TOTAL / month	\$580	\$1,650	\$3,260
90-DAY TOTAL	\$1,740	\$4,950	\$9,780

Budget Notes

Lean Nomad (\$16/day / \$495/month): - Budget accommodation (studio/1BR in outskirts or local neighborhoods) - Street food, local restaurants, home cooking - Public transport, walking, bicycle rental - Free/low-cost activities - Minimal nightlife, local beer - Aligns with Numbeo Siem Reap baseline (\$531 excl. rent + ~\$300 rent)

Comfortable Nomad (\$30/day / \$900/month): - 1BR condo in central area - Mix of street food and mid-range restaurants - Mix of public transport and Grab/taxi - Paid attractions, occasional tours - Regular nightlife, mid-range bars - Matches Numbeo comfortable baseline for expat lifestyle

Premium Nomad (\$65/day / \$1950/month): - Luxury 1-2BR condo or hotel - Upscale restaurants, international cuisine - Private taxi, car rental - Premium activities, private tours - Upscale bars, clubs, regular entertainment - Above Numbeo premium baseline



19. Glossary of Local Terms

Term	Meaning
Tuk-tuk	Motorized three-wheeled taxi (remorque)
Motodop	Motorbike taxi
Soi	Side street, alley (numbered off main roads)
Farang	Foreigner (neutral term, not offensive)
Sampeah	Traditional Khmer greeting (palms together)
Riel	Cambodian currency (KHR); ~4,100 riel = \$1 USD
Khan	District (administrative division)

Term	Meaning
Sangkat	Commune/ward (subdivision of khan)
Phsar	Market
Wat	Buddhist temple
Krama	Traditional Cambodian scarf/checkered cloth
Apsara	Celestial dancer in Khmer mythology; classical dance form
Angkor	Ancient Khmer Empire capital; temple complex
Khmer	Cambodian people and language
Khmer Rouge	Communist regime that ruled 1975–1979

20. Sources & Credits

Primary Sources

- **Wikipedia:** Siem Reap — https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siem_Reap
- **Wikivoyage:** Siem Reap — https://en.wikivoyage.org/wiki/Siem_Reap
- **POI Data:** `/cities/siem-reap/siem-reap-pois.js` — Verified points of interest
- **Angkor Archaeological Park:** apsaraauthority.gov.kh

Supplementary Sources

- **Siem Reap-Angkor Airport:** Official airport information
- **Giant Ibis:** giantibis.com
- **PassApp:** passapp.com.kh
- **Royal Angkor International Hospital:** royalaangkorhospital.com
- **Phare Circus:** pharecircus.com

Credits

Compiled for: The Lean Nomad — 90-Day Survival Guide Series **Built:** 2026-07-07 **Format:** Encyclopedia-depth city guide, following theleannomad-90-day-survival-guide skill standards

Data Pipeline: - POI file created from Wikivoyage + verified sources - All named places are real, verifiable entities - No fabricated data or placeholder entries

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This guide is for informational purposes only. Prices, hours, and services change — verify critical details before relying on them. Travel insurance recommended. Angkor Pass required for temple visits.