

Cambodia is Magic



My favorite Buddha shrine in Angkor

Most Spiritual Purchases

WHAT TO BUY:

Tiny Ganesh from monk at Ta Prohm

Bomb t-shirt from Mine Museum

Lacquered pumpkin dish from art center

Airvata cocktail at Elephant bar

WHAT TO SEE & DO:

☞ Apsara bas-reliefs of Angkor Thom

☞ Ruins of over grown trees of Ta Prohm

☞ Lounge at the pool & get a manicure
at Grand Hotel d'Angkor

☞ Take elephant ride for sunset view from
Phnom Bakheng

☞ Share candy with village children

☞ Listen to local music

☞ Swap adventure stories with other
travelers at the Elephant Bar

☞ Light incense with a lady monk at a cave
temple

Cocktail Hour



Famous 'tourism' poster in the Elephant Bar

Elephant Bar

Après temple-hopping, I confess I never made it out of my hotel. I wouldn't say I was a fixture at the **Elephant Bar**, but a refreshing *Airvata* cocktail after a long day in the sweltering heat sure hit the spot (named after an elephant with 3 heads.) I was also fascinated by the poster of Angkor during its heyday with a vintage auto in front of ancient ruins, because it made a good ice breaker for sharing tour stories with other adventurers at the bar.

INTERESTING INFO: more than 200 tourists arrived in 1907, the trip involved a steam launch crossing the Great Lake, a sampan upriver and buffalo-drawn cart. No hotel, so guests brought their bedding and stayed inside temples on piles of straw. It was thought "*mystery should not go hand in hand with discomfort*" so improving the trip along with conservation became the focus.

Elephant Boy



Me with "elephant boy"

www.AnitaRosenberg.com

Unexpected Love Advice

If my mother could have sent anyone to Cambodia to bug me about still being single, it would have been "elephant boy." "Are you married or are you alone," he asked in perfect English (he spoke Japanese as well). "Well, I prefer to call it being single," I replied. "So you don't have a husband," he went on. I couldn't hear him through the elephant farts so I turned the tables, "So, why aren't you married?" "Because I am too poor," was his answer. That made me sad. His lack of a current relationship did not however detour him from giving me an earful of love advice on the ride to the top of **Phnom Bakheng** to watch the sunset.

TIPPING GUIDE: a "tip" pocket was sewn into the back of his uniform, I hope my tip helped him find true love.

Lost Empires



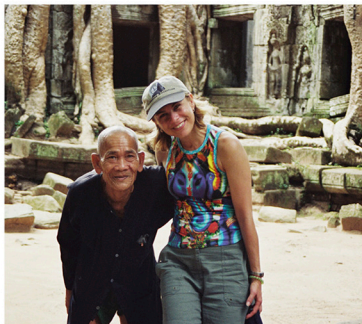
Camera, pith helmet & suitcases

Romance of Exploration

French hunters in the 19th c. with their safari gear and sense of adventure were hunting for big game in Angkor when they started climbing a jungle mountain, which ended up being a temple covered in vines and growth. After further exploration and much digging, they uncovered an entire empire hidden for 400 years under thick forest. One ambitious hunter hired local labor to uncover the hidden fortresses and when he refused to pay them, he was beheaded.

EARLY EXPLORER: French missionary *Charles-Emile Bouillevaux* arrived in 1858 as a tourist and published his journals, *"There are few things that can stir melancholy feelings as the sight of places that were once the scene of some glorious or pleasurable event, but are now deserted."*

The Monk of Ta Prohm



Me with the famous monk of Ta Prohm

My Golden Ganesh

My Ganesh dharma began in Cambodia. It was at the mysterious overgrown jungle temple of **Ta Prohm** where I received my first Ganesh statue. I met the wizened monk who sweeps the steps to ensure the gods will have safe passage up the steep and narrow stairways, and bought a bamboo cowbell from him and posed for a photo. As I left, the monk placed a tiny golden Ganesh in my hand. *"He protects travelers and will help you find your way,"* he told me as my guide translated. A sort of golden light washed over me in that moment, and then the monk was gone, and I began to wonder... *why did he think I was lost?*

INTERESTING INFO: this monk was featured on the cover of Lonely Planet Cambodia, I didn't realize he was such a superstar!

Naked Laughing Children



Naked siblings on a village road

Bring Gifts for Kids

Handing out candy, cookies, or balloons is something I learned from my visits to remote mountain towns in Mainland China, while visiting the factory making my hand-painted collection. We stopped at each village to hand out sweets, as little ones and big ones ran out of their huts to see us. It was the most heart warming thing I had ever done, so in Cambodia I wanted to re-create that touching day. I highly suggest doing your own version of charity. The kids ran out to greet me, holding out their little hands and bowing politely in appreciation. After they unwrapped and popped the candy into their mouths, they tagged along behind me giddy with excitement and a slight sugar buzz.

ANITA'S THOUGHT: next time I would bring coloring books and crayons.