LOCAL TIPS

Eat tapas bugs paired with cocktails

Pub Street, in the middle of Siem Reap, is packed with tourists, scalpers, loud bars, overpriced everything, and even a few scams. You will see food carts selling bugs to eat and, for a price, to photograph. Before you scream and capture the moment for Instagram, consider that people in Southeast Asia, as well as many other parts of the world, eat insects out of necessity. Insects pack a lot of protein into a small package and are essential for nutrition. In Cambodia they have a special significance, given that anyone who survived the Khmer Rouge regime and aftermath did so by eating insects. If you want to try them, please do, but don’t make a scene out of it and risk disrespecting your Cambodian hosts. A better alternative than Pub Street carts is Bugs Cafe. This cafe serves delicious and nutritious versions of local insects using French and Khmer techniques and seasonings. No need to worry about the food safety risks of tarantula spending too long on the street cart. Try Bugs Cafe’s scorpions, grasshoppers, crickets, spiders, and more, paired with original cocktails. Start off with bugs prepared in a non-threatening way, such as a guava and Parmesan salad with flying ants that taste like crunchy green apples. For anyone
squeamish, dishes can be prepared insect-free too.

SELF-GUIDED

Answers from the local expert

When is the best time to visit?

Evenings and nights.

Open daily at 5 PM until late

How much does it cost?

About KHR4 - KHR50.

Do you have any tips?

Eat inside in air conditioning or upstairs on a traditional Khmer wooden terrace

Is there an official website?

Yes, you can visit bugs-cafe.e-monsite.com
About the local expert

Local recommendation from

Johanna Read

Johanna Read is a Canadian freelance writer/photographer specializing in travel, food and responsible tourism. Based in Vancouver, she loves the city’s ocean location and fabulous food. Find links to her articles for in-flight magazines, Fodor’s, USA Today, and others at TravelEater.net.

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