LOCAL TIPS

Take a cooking class that helps locals

Cambodia has plenty of voluntourism activities on offer, but you need to choose them carefully. Too often they exploit the people they’re purported to help and take jobs away from locals. At best, money better spent on people in need is spent ensuring tourists have a western toilet, cold drinks, training, and other comforts. The ConCERT NGO vets Siem Reap charities to help you choose. An excellent choice is activities booked through Sojourn Boutique Villas. They partner with the two villages near their small boutique hotel and work together to enhance opportunities, empower Cambodians, and make a meaningful difference through their HUSK NGO. The NGO works to help in the short- and long-term, finds ways for families to stay together, and minimizes outside influences on their cultural and religious beliefs. The hotel is in Treak Village, about 20 minutes from downtown Siem Reap, and the majority of Sojourn’s staff are Treak residents. Activities include a cooking class where you first visit a local family and learn from them about their traditions and beliefs. Returning to the hotel’s outdoor kitchen classroom, you’ll learn Cambodian dishes from a local chef and then can dine on your creations in a traditional over-water patio.
You’re gently encouraged to help fund village projects, such as vertical gardens which can survive the monsoon.

SELF-GUIDED

Answers from the local expert

When is the best time to visit?

Mornings and afternoons.

How much does it cost?

From KHR80.

Is there an official website?

Yes, you can visit sojournsiemreap.com
Location

Sojourn Boutique Villas Siem Reap, Treak Village, Sojourn Ln, Krong Siem Reap, Cambodia

Directions

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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