

HONEYMOONS

## 8 Reasons to Choose Cambodia for Your Honeymoon

*It's a beach vacation and cultural immersion wrapped up into one luxurious package.*

By Kathryn Romeyn Published on August 2, 2018



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Where do you go if you **love the beach**, but also want to experience a unique culture? If you want to feel like you're in unexplored territory, but also want to feel wrapped in luxury? And if you're seeking incredible food along with a **sense of history**, surprise and **adventure**? One unexpected option: Cambodia. Here, a handful of compelling reasons to consider the Southeast Asian country full of infectiously smiling faces for your romantic trip of a lifetime.

### 1. The people.

Sure, it may sound odd that one of the reasons to book your honeymoon somewhere is because the natives are so lovely—after all it's about you and hubs. But in Cambodia the locals are so friendly, sweet and smiling (even more of a shocker considering the trauma and hardship many have born in the nation's tragic past) that it will bring that much more love to the whole experience. The care and passion Cambodians—like one standout, memory-making guide with **Abercrombie & Kent** named Yous Sopanha—have for both educating about and illuminating their history and traditions is truly a service to us all.

### 2. Angkor Wat.

The 12th century temple complex is actually the world's largest religious monument. It started out Hindu, and later became Buddhist (as the country is primarily now), and features some of the most spectacular architecture and unbelievable carvings anywhere. It's grand beyond belief, and absolutely worth every second spent. Sunrise is an epic time to go, but plan to spend a few hours and don't skimp on a solid guide (like A&K's).



### 3. All the other temples.

And depending on your preference for architecture and ambience you may find them even more magical. Angkor Wat is far from the only worthy temple to tour. There's Ta Prohm, whose ruins are seemingly held together by twisting strangler figs, and the pink sandstone Banteay Srai, the pyramid-shaped Koh Ker and mystical overgrown Beng Mealea, where you'll want to have a **professional photographer** along to capture you in the most dreamy way (A&K can set up photo lessons or sessions with John McDermott, who more than enhances the entire experience)

### 4. The food.

Do lemongrass, ginger, coconut milk and chilis make you salivate? Khmer food is **a bit like Thai**, only the Cambodian people will tell you the Thai stole it from them. Think fragrant and amazingly spiced fish and meat dishes, plus plenty of vegetables cooked in mouthwatering ways. Siem Reap's standout restaurants include Malis, where you'll want to—and should—order way too much food; Kroya, serving savory new spins on royal dishes; and Mie Cafe, a romantic little indoor-outdoor spot with its own garden and flavor-packed plates.



Courtesy of Six-Senses Krabey Island

## 5. There are beaches! And islands!

Again, Cambodia's southern portion looks like something you'd find in Thailand: white sand, graceful palms and turquoise water. Check into private island idylls like [Song Saa](#) and the upcoming [Six Senses Krabey Island](#) at the end of your lovers' holiday for the ultimate lazy, sexy beach retreat.

## 6. Major design inspo.

Any great trip should involve a little shopping, or at least the opportunity to browse. A visit to NGO [Golden Silk](#) farm is fascinating, since you get to see the entire process of making silk, worm to gorgeous finished product. Fashion designer [Eric Raisina's](#) shop is a must-go for vivid pieces that allow you to bring the happiness of Cambodia home with you. The traditionally styled gallery-slash-shop [Theam's House](#) gives everyone who wanders through a rich education into the Khmer past with attractive pieces to take back, while [One Eleven Gallery](#) offers a cool modern art experience.



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## 7. Rare cultural experiences.

It's impossible not to be charmed by the apsara dancers carved into almost every ancient temple around Siem Reap, and it would be a shame to not see it come to life in a magical golden performance by the Sacred Dancers of Angkor, a non-profit troupe that show off their intricate grace and skill (accompanied by live music) several nights a week. Get out on a sunset boat cruise on the largest lake in Southeast Asia and see the way people live in a floating village, where life couldn't be more unique—or colorful.

## 8. Pure and utter luxury and pampering.

An essential for your honeymoon. Abercrombie & Kent's Tailor Made journeys include the most deluxe arrival and departure possible—they handle immigration and customs while you go on ahead to your hotel, and at the end they leave early with your luggage to check you in so you can enjoy every last minute of your vacation. There's a significant array of *five-star glamour* to be had in Cambodia, especially in Siem Reap. (And on the aforementioned islands, plus in places beyond, like Phnom Penh where there's a new *Rosewood*, and down south with the forthcoming *Shinta Mani Wild*). There, *Amansara* has long led the charge on low-key opulence: think supremely comfortable and minimalistic rooms with tubs and private pools, plus an architecturally exciting main restaurant and pool, restored from its origins as a royal retreat. Eat as many meals as possible there, and book not only a classic couple's massage, but spend more time in the spa and maybe even try a blind massage, performed by a local masseuse whose intuitive touch is spectacularly healing. A totally different vibe is on offer at the new *Shinta Mani Angkor – Bensley Collection*, an intimate 10-villa stunner designed by prolific and inspired architect Bill Bensley. There are Instagram-worthy bold, sumptuous and vibrant surprises at every turn, as well as private rooftop gardens, lavish outdoor tubs, Art Deco-tiled lap pools and fabulous butlers. The only trouble with this veritable Eden is that you won't want to leave to do anything (after all, you can get massages in your villa)—something to keep in mind when planning so you have enough time to relax *and* soak up all Cambodia has to offer.

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